



Bad Boy Orbán: Hungary Refuses To Bow To the EU's Imperial Technocracy

The European Union was created by policies and early members of the Trilateral Commission, so it is not surprising that it is called a Technocracy today. Hungary is the only nation that truly understands this, and it is a perceived threat to EU Technocrats. □ TN Editor

Brussels fears Hungary because it refuses to bow to imperial technocracy.

According to the political establishment that runs the EU, Hungary has become a xenophobic, authoritarian society. The Hungarian government and in particular the prime minister, Viktor Orbán, are continually denounced for their alleged violations of EU values. The mainstream Western media have picked up the message that it is okay to hate Hungary. They give the impression that Hungary is a totalitarian and viciously anti-Semitic society in which critics of the regime are silenced

and the government dominates the media.

Calls to expel Hungary from the EU by pro-EU voices in the *Guardian* and elsewhere echo an intolerant outlook that is growing within the Brussels oligarchy. Recently, members of the European Parliament's Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs Committee voted for a resolution that says the situation in Hungary constitutes 'a clear risk of a serious breach' of the EU's values.

Denunciations of the Hungarian government are often justified on the basis that this is a nation that refuses to go along with the migration policies that German chancellor Angela Merkel effectively imposed on the continent. Other Hungarian sins cited by the 'Kick Hungary out of the EU' lobby include a new law that makes life difficult for NGOs funded by George Soros.

However, the campaign against Hungary actually has little to do with recent policies adopted by the Orban government. For almost a decade now, Western European critics of Hungary have been calling for its expulsion from the EU. This anti-Hungarian animosity was vividly demonstrated in a debate in the European Parliament in January 2012. The debate, titled ['Recent Political Developments in Hungary'](#), was organised in response to concerns expressed by the European Commission (EC) about various recent Hungarian laws. The commission followed up its concerns by launching infringement proceedings against Hungary on three issues: the independence of the national central bank; the retirement age of judges; and the independence of the data-protection authority. Outwardly, at least, this controversy seemed to be a dispute over relatively routine technical matters; but as the debate unfolded, it became clear that the main protagonists were in fact divided by, and motivated by, very different visions of what the best values are.

Before the debate, Europhile commentators in the media had singled out the Hungarian government and its recently enacted constitution - known as the Fundamental Law - as serious challenges to the secular, democratic, liberal values of the EU. That the constitution references Hungary's national and Christian traditions was seen as bad, and even dangerous. Such sentiments could unleash the xenophobic nationalism

of the 1940s that the EU believed had been left behind, we were told.

José Manuel Barroso, then president of the EC, set the tone when he introduced the debate. He characterised his differences with the Hungarian government as an 'extremely sensitive matter, where I believe we have to be clear on values'. He did not clarify what values were at stake; however, the implication was clear that Hungarian laws and its new constitution violated European values.

During the debate, speaker after speaker condemned the Hungarian government. The Flemish Belgian politician, Guy Verhofstadt, leader of the Group of the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe, took to the floor to denounce Hungary's affronts to European values. He warned that there was more at stake here than technical issues - the fundamental principles on which the EU is constructed were being threatened, he said. He declared:

'What is necessary here is not a debate on technical issues, as we had at the beginning of the year. This is about checking the conformity of the [Hungarian] constitution and cardinal laws with the European values that are enshrined in Article 2 of the treaty: democracy, the rule of law, freedom of religion, freedom of expression and so on.'

Verhofstadt demanded that the EU's Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs draw up a report into the actions of the Hungarian government to find out whether 'there exists a clear risk or a serious breach of our values'. His use of the term 'our values' conveyed the idea that our way of life is very different to 'theirs'.

The oddity of this demand - that a member state of the EU, a sovereign nation, should have its values policed - went unnoticed, or at least unremarked upon. This demand for value-policing suggested that the EU's highly acclaimed celebration of diversity did not apply to different approaches to values across national boundaries. Tolerance for the diversity of values, which has historically been a central feature of liberal thought, was clearly not considered important by those condemning Hungary.

Some of the criticisms of Orban were couched in a more openly hostile language than the legalistic jargon used by Verhofstadt. Daniel Cohn-Bendit of the Greens-European Free Alliance condemned Hungary and lectured Orban that ‘we are here to tell you that you are going in the direction of Hugo Chavez, Fidel Castro, and all the other totalitarian authoritarian governments’.

Strip away all the heated talk, and the fundamental value at stake between the **EU technocracy** and Hungary is that of national sovereignty. The ideal of sovereignty directly challenges the authority of the EU technocracy. That is why those who support national independence and popular sovereignty are frequently accused of the crime of xenophobia. From the standpoint of the EU, what is truly unforgivable is the refusal of the Hungarian government to play the role of neocolonial supplicant in the EU’s imperial drama.

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China Elevates Technocrat To Lead Communist Youth League

China is a Technocracy and its actions and appointments continually bear this out. The Communist Youth League is one of the most important political structures in China and is now being led by a recognized Technocrat. One key object of Technocracy is the 'science of social engineering'. □ TN Editor

A 49-year-old aerospace technocrat has been named to lead the 81 million-plus members of China's Communist Youth League, highlighting what could be the start of a bigger push for younger officials in the administration.

The league announced on Friday that He Junke would be its new head, becoming the youngest person in the country to hold ministerial-level office.

The league has long been regarded as a cradle of China's leadership, with former president Hu Jintao and Premier Li Keqiang among those to have served in the organisation's top job before going on to higher office.

All of the present members of the Communist Party's innermost Politburo Standing Committee, except for President Xi Jinping and top party theorist Wang Huning, have been at least a provincial deputy chief in the league system.

He Junke graduated from the space technology department at the National University of Defence Technology in Changsha, Hunan province, in 1991 and spent 14 years in the aerospace industry.

In 2005, during the league's heyday under the Hu presidency, he was appointed one of the organisation's handful of top leaders.

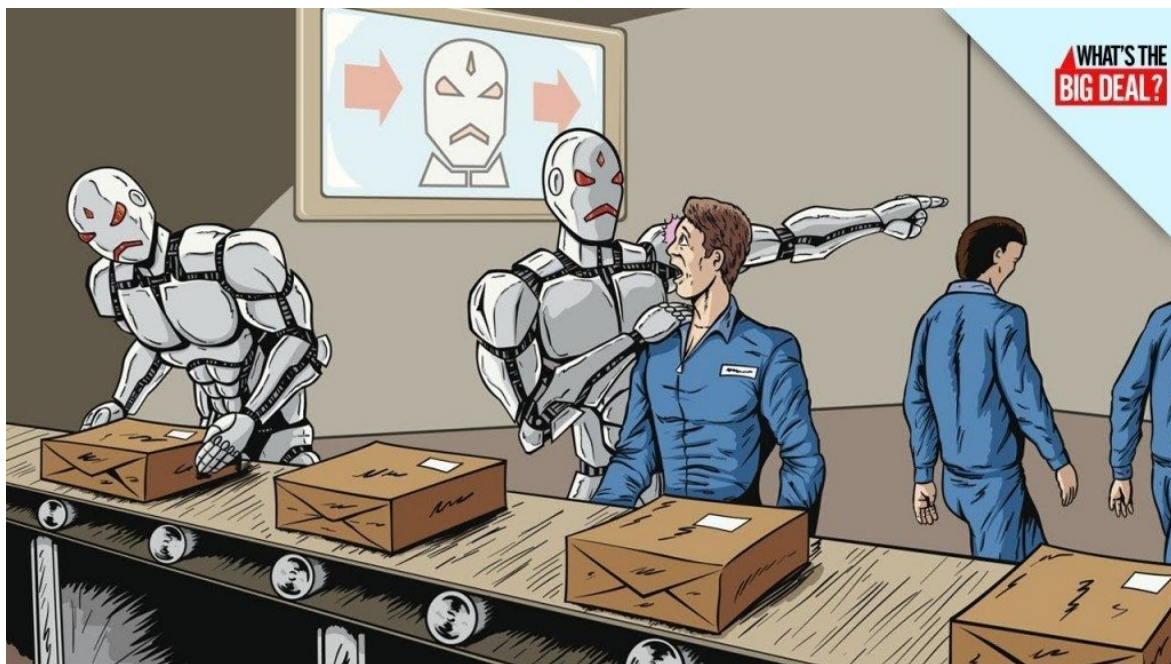
The league has appeared to lose some of its sway since 2012 when Xi came to power, with the president giving greater weight to governing experience and political loyalty in promotions rather than the opinions of

colleagues, examinations, economic growth and age.

As a result, the average age for ministerial officials has risen.

But youth could be making a comeback with He's appointment and Xi's focus on the need for young talent at a Politburo meeting on Friday.

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Claim: Robots Don't Destroy Employment, Politicians Do

This article is thought-provoking, attempting to make the case that robotization will make the world better and create more employment. Although there are individual instances where this may be true, there are horrible pitfalls that are ignored. □ TN Editor

I'm not worried about artificial intelligence, I'm terrified of human stupidity.

The debate about technology and its role in society that we need to have

is being used to deceive citizens and scare them about the future so they accept to submit to politicians who cannot nor will protect us from the challenges of robotization.

However, there are many studies that tell us that in 50 years the vast majority of work will be done by robots. What can we do?

We have lived the fallacies of dystopian estimates for decades.

I always explain to my students that, if we believed the fifty-year-forward studies of the past, it has been seventeen years since we have run out of water, oil, and jobs. Fifty-year estimates always suffer from the same mistakes. First, presentism. Take the current situation and exaggerate it. Second, sweeten the past. No, no past time was better. Third, always estimate an impossible and negative future by ignoring the evidence of human ingenuity and innovation.

The reality is that today, the world population has grown to 7.5 billion, and we have more work despite the technology revolution. Global unemployment is at historic lows, 5%, global poverty has fallen to unprecedented levels, from 80% in 1820 to 10% today. Infant mortality has been reduced to less than half, from 64.8 deaths per thousand births in 1990 to 30.5 in 2016.

We have plenty of natural resources, proven oil reserves have grown and we have more diversified sources of supply. All this has happened with - and thanks to- the greatest technological revolution ever seen.

More than half of the jobs that exist today were not even known twenty years ago. The empirical demonstration is that data from more than 140 years shows that technology creates much more employment than it destroys and that it is a lie that low-skilled jobs disappear forever. Others are created. A study by [Ian Stewart, Debapratim De, and Alex Cole](#) shows clearly that technology displaces the most boring, dangerous and hard jobs, that is, those that we do not want anyway, and creates many more jobs in service sectors, human knowledge, and interaction.

In fact, Deloitte studies, Ernst / Young, and others also foresee that we

will need many more jobs in the future in support tasks and services adjacent to the new technology activities. What the prophets of doom always forget is that **as long as the customer is human, the experience and interaction with other humans is not reduced.**

The most robotized societies do not suffer more unemployment, they have much less. According to data from the OECD of 2016, South Korea, Singapore, Japan, and Germany have the highest rates of robotization of work functions (530, 400, 305 and 301 robots per 1,000 employees respectively) and unemployment is less than 3.9%. Meanwhile, countries that subsidize low-productivity sectors and place the State as a “protective” agent have higher unemployment rates. France, which has less than half the robots of South Korea or Singapore (127 per thousand employees), has almost a three times higher unemployment rate than highly robotized countries. Spain has less still, 60% fewer robots than the leaders, and five times higher unemployment rate. McKinsey estimates that almost half of the competitiveness gain of the next 50 years will be explained by digitization and automation. This means higher salaries in all sectors, even lower-skilled labor.

I am sure that, as in the past, those estimates will fall short, both in the improvement of productivity and quality of life and in the advance of creative robotization. It will create many more and better jobs. Even for the sectors with low qualification, because they move to services and support.

The most representative companies in this phenomenon are denominated under the union of their initials: FAANG (Facebook, Amazon, Apple, Netflix, and Google). The spectacular development of these companies has not reduced employment. Unemployment in the United States has been reduced to the lowest level since 1968 while the companies that were supposed to lose due to technological progress have been strengthened by having to compete.

In the world, unemployment has continued to decline despite the fact that these companies were growing to be 27% of the joint capitalization of the US S&P 500, with business models that have created services and jobs that did not exist only a few decades ago. These companies have

created many more indirect jobs than they have “destroyed”.

The excuse of “what happens with less qualified jobs?” hides the fallacy of interventionism.

Protectionism, subsidies, and welfare assistance neither protect nor create those positions in obsolescent sectors. The way to adapt low-skilled workers to technology is with training, but real training, at work. Technology has created up to 40% more unskilled jobs in addition to those it destroys, as we have seen in California, Texas or Illinois and in Asian countries.

A first positive impact on the use of digitalization is caused directly by these companies, which together employ more than 800,000 people worldwide, with a productivity level that is clearly superior to the companies in traditional sectors, and with better salaries.

Companies like Facebook and Google have more than 27,000 and 88,000 workers on their payroll, respectively, and pay more than 50% on top of the average salary of industrial sectors. Their business model is based mainly on advertising in digital media, a market that did not exist until a few years ago. Another 115,000 net creation of jobs came from new technologies in the US. Amazon, meanwhile, with a 44% share in the e-commerce market, is one of the main groups responsible for the creation of the more than 400,000 jobs generated by e-commerce companies in the United States, according to Michael Mandel. In addition, in the case of this company, the impact has to be extended to sectors close to electronic commerce, such as logistics, parcels, electronic payments, etc.

In Asia, a continent where robotization is a usual element in companies and production methods, they already know the positive effects of this phenomenon. According to the Asian Development Bank, the greater economic dynamism generated by robotization in 12 Asian developing economies between 2005 and 2015 has compensated for the destruction of employment derived from the implementation of automation processes and has created more additional employment. This transformation has led to the creation of 134 million jobs a year, a figure clearly higher than

the 104 million jobs a year “transformed” by the substitution effect of labor due to automated processes. Between 43% and 57% of the new jobs created in India, Malaysia, and the Philippines during the last 10 years come from the technology sector. But the most important thing is that the increase in employment in services, tourism, hotels and adjacent sectors has doubled.

In Europe, digitalization is measured through the DESI (Digital Economy and Society Index), measured by the European Commission. Denmark, Finland, Sweden, the Netherlands, Luxembourg and the United Kingdom are the leaders in the digital economy. All of them stand out for three factors: A very high level of liberalization reflected in the Economic Freedom Index, a high labor flexibility and a superior level of digitization and robotization. All these countries have historically low unemployment rates (below 6%) and saw minor impacts on the labor market derived from economic shocks.

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Smart Cities: How Technocrats Use Government As Propaganda Machine

Like 1984's Ministry of Truth, Technocrats use the government propaganda machine to redefine their goals into customer benefits, for instance, "Smart technology should be seen as a means to an end to deliver outcomes, rather than an end in itself." □ TN Editor

Scepticism of smart technology and confusion around what 'smart city' means risks alienating the public and hampering progress, a parliamentary group has warned.

Beyond improving messaging and better-communicating the benefits around smart cities, central government must develop a coherent approach to deploying smart technologies across the UK, according to findings by the [All-Party Parliamentary Group \(APPG\) for Smart Cities](#).

Titled *Intelligent Leadership: how government strategy can unlock the potential of smart cities in the UK*, the MPs' report also called for greater cooperation between businesses and local government, and for local authorities to adopt a 'thinking smart' mentality.



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"Scepticism and even concern around the advancement of smart technologies is not uncommon. At best, 'smart' is often equated to expensive gimmicks — at worst, as a threat to the security and livelihood of citizens," said Iain Stewart MP, chair of the inquiry.

"Therefore, central government has a leading role to play in challenging these misconceptions and misunderstandings: the role of smart cities is not to create a society of automation and alienation, but to bring communities together."

The report represents the culmination of an inquiry launched by the group of MPs towards the end of last year, gathering responses from organisations ranging from SMBs to trade associations, and nonprofits, before hosting roundtable evidence sessions in Parliament.

Summarising its findings in a 17-page report, the MPs encountered four main themes; the importance of a citizen-centred approach, the role of central government in fostering collaboration between individual cities, how local government can achieve their goals through smart technologies, and how pilots can be supported to scale up.

“Many UK cities are already on this journey, and it is vital that central government provides them with the tools to make this change, step by step,” Stewart continued.

“Becoming a smart city should not be seen as an extra burden forced upon authorities, but as a way to become more efficient operators, to offer better services, to delivering better outcomes, and ultimately to become a better place to live.”

The main benefits of smart technologies, according to the report, including improved accessibility for physically-impaired members of the public, reduced strain on the NHS by joining-up services and promoting data sharing, and a more flexible transport network with the deployment of technologies such as smart ticketing, among others.

The findings of the inquiry also examined a number of case studies that the UK could learn from, including a data-sharing scheme in Estonia, dubbed “the most advanced digital society in the world”, in which citizens are able to easily view their education, medical and employment records through an online portal, and even request changes.

The APPG’s main recommendations for government centred on promoting a ‘smart culture’, convening smart standards and data, as well as facilitating smart exports. Developing smart technologies, and deploying these in towns and cities, should be outcomes-focused, and should involve collaboration, and not competition between cities.

“Smart cities need to be driven by citizens’ needs, strengthening our

influence over our surroundings, increasing our quality of life and enhancing connectivity in all senses,” the report said.

“Smart technology should be seen as a means to an end to deliver outcomes, rather than an end in itself,” and “should underpin the approach of all central government departments, and likewise be a cross departmental function of organisations.”

Smart technology has in recent months gained more attention from lawmakers across the country, with the Mayor of London recently [outlining his roadmap to turn London into a smart city](#), with more than 20 initiatives underway ranging from rolling out full fibre broadband to all new homes and supporting bids to test 5G.

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European Democracies In The Age Of Populisms And Technocracies

Technocrats in Europe are masters of interjecting fear at just the right moment in order to shift political power to themselves. Politicians and citizens are little more than 'useful idiots' used to further the Technocrat agenda, or the scientific social engineering of the whole continent. □ TN Editor

In Europe, home to one of the most ambitious political and institutional experiments in recent history, the European Union, populist movements and technocratic elites have been among the most active actors in taking advantage of the use of fear, beginning immediately after the global financial and economic crisis of 2008.

The nature of populisms and technocracies differs in many aspects. Populist movements build their success substantially upon what we may define as "input legitimacy", or popular legitimacy, while technocratic elites are supported by "output legitimacy", in other words legitimacy derived from the implementation of efficient policies. This dualism is particularly visible in the EU and its peculiar typology of multi-level governance, with Institutions such as the European Commission acting at the supra-national level, often in contrast with EU Member States' politics at the domestic level.

The difference between populist movements and technocratic elites is reflected in the strategies adopted by the two: the nature of the arguments, the uses made of them, the languages and the strategies of timing adopted, are utterly far apart. However, on closer analysis, populist movements and technocratic elites in Europe share one key element: mastering the art of influencing the political debate by producing and evoking fear and anxiety through an effective use of communication tools.

Populist Fears: The Force Of Simple And Vivid Language

In Hungary, the growing political hostility over the role of international NGOs, with their alleged aim of secretly influencing the national agenda or even worse, culminated in the crackdown on George Soros's Open Society Foundation; in Poland, school textbooks are changed following nationalistic and anti-intellectualistic arguments, portraying minorities as a danger for the country; Italy is continuously depicted as being a German colony. The arguments of European populists are indeed simple and of a generalizing nature, evoking with concrete, vivid images fears such as of invasion, unfairness and conspiracy, to mobilize masses of citizens. These anxious feelings are easily stoked by fallacious narratives such as the "conspiracy of the financial sector" or of the elites, the "immigrant invasion" or the "Muslim threat" (trivial reduction of the Clash of Civilizations thesis).

Technocratic Fears: The Mis(Use) Of Complexity

Fears produced by technocratic elites in Europe are based on complex and specific arguments, posed in technical and bureaucratic language, with masterly timing: using specific moments of political instability or paralysis that result in uncertainty to justify the necessity of implementing the political agenda they support. Mentioning the possible reaction of financial markets, the "spread" (the differential between interest rates on local public debts and Germany's) or the action of the Troika (EU Commission, IMF and European Central Bank), has become increasingly common, in what takes on the traits of a self-fulfilling prophecy. More and more frequently, we record statements from high-level EU bureaucrats or politicians such as "the risk of default will eventually lead to...", etc. In particular, before and after referendums or elections, continual references are made to possible sovereign debt defaults or the risk deriving from re-defining the Maastricht criteria (in Italy, from 2011 until recently) or the economic price to be paid for leaving the EU (in the United Kingdom, in the wake of the Brexit in

2016), resulting in limiting *de facto* the space for political debate.

A Mutual Reinforcement: The Example Of Italy

The result of the strategy of building up fear, implemented by populist movements and technocratic elites in Europe alike, is a dialectical relationship between the two that paradoxically brings mutual reinforcement. For instance, the irrational nature of populist economic policies triggers crisis and turmoil, favouring indirectly the recourse to top-down approaches by national and supra-national elites, based upon their recognised competences and expertise. However, their action is often unsupported by transparent democratic legitimacy, especially when the tasks at hand consist of implementing severe cuts in spending upon social policies. This, in turn, fosters a reinforcement of populist movements, with the process following that pattern, as can be seen by the recent history of Italy: the action of a technical government (PM Monti), born from the inadequacy of the policies implemented by the previous executive (PM Berlusconi), lead after some years of centre-left governments, to one of the most populist governments of the EU (the *Five Stars* and *Lega* “yellow-green” coalition government).

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Government Of The Google, By The Google And For The Google

Google has subsumed the very fabric of our nation, from the top levels of government down to the smallest details of an individual's life. Technocrats see a technological answer for every problem and issue. In Google's case, it left its motto, "Don't be evil", far behind several years ago. □ TN Editor

Amid growing calls to break up Google, are we missing a quiet alignment between "smart" government and the universal information engine?

Google exists to answer our small questions. But how will we answer larger questions about Google itself? Is it a monopoly? Does it exert too much power over our lives? Should the government regulate it as a public utility — or even break it up?

In recent months, public concerns about Google have become more pronounced. This February, the *New York Times Magazine* published

[“The Case Against Google,”](#) a blistering account of how “the search giant is squelching competition before it begins.” The *Wall Street Journal* published a similar article in January on the [“antitrust case”](#) against Google, along with Facebook and Amazon, whose market shares it compared to Standard Oil and AT&T at their peaks. Here and [elsewhere](#), a wide array of reporters and commentators have reflected on Google’s immense power — not only over its competitors, but over each of us and the information we access — and suggested that the traditional antitrust remedies of regulation or breakup may be necessary to rein Google in.

Dreams of war between Google and government, however, obscure a much different relationship that may emerge between them — particularly between Google and progressive government. For eight years, Google and the Obama administration forged a uniquely close relationship. Their special bond is best ascribed not to the revolving door, although hundreds of meetings were held between the two; nor to crony capitalism, although hundreds of people have switched jobs from Google to the Obama administration or vice versa; nor to lobbying prowess, although Google is one of the top corporate lobbyists.

Rather, the ultimate source of the special bond between Google and the Obama White House — and modern progressive government more broadly — has been their common ethos. Both view society’s challenges today as social-engineering problems, whose resolutions depend mainly on facts and objective reasoning. Both view information as being at once ruthlessly value-free and yet, when properly grasped, a powerful force for ideological and social reform. And so both aspire to reshape Americans’ informational context, ensuring that we make choices based only upon what they consider the right kinds of facts — while denying that there would be any values or politics embedded in the effort.

[Follow The New Atlantis](#) Addressing an M.I.T. sports-analytics conference in February, [former President Obama said](#) that Google, Facebook, and prominent Internet services are “not just an invisible platform, but they are shaping our culture in powerful ways.” Focusing specifically on recent outcries over “fake news,” he warned that if Google and other platforms enable every American to personalize his or

her own news sources, it is “very difficult to figure out how democracy works over the long term.” But instead of treating these tech companies as public *threats* to be regulated or broken up, Obama offered a much more conciliatory resolution, calling for them to be treated as public *goods*:

I do think that the large platforms — Google and Facebook being the most obvious, but Twitter and others as well that are part of that ecosystem — have to have a conversation about their business model that recognizes they are a public good as well as a commercial enterprise.

This approach, if Google were to accept it, could be immensely consequential. As we will see, during the Obama years, Google became aligned with progressive politics on a number of issues — net neutrality, intellectual property, payday loans, and others. If Google were to think of itself as a genuine public good in a manner calling upon it to give users not only the results they want but the results that Google thinks they *need*, the results that informed consumers and democratic citizens *ought* to have, then it will become an indispensable adjunct to progressive government. The future might not be *U.S. v. Google* but Google.gov.

“To Organize the World’s Information”

Before thinking about why Google might begin to embrace a role of actively shaping the informational landscape, we must treat seriously Google’s stated ethos to the contrary, which presents the company’s services as merely helping people find the information they’re looking for using objective tools and metrics. From the start, Google had the highest aspirations for its search engine: “A perfect search engine will process and understand all the information in the world,” co-founder Sergey Brin announced in a [1999 press release](#). “Google’s mission is to organize the world’s information, making it universally accessible and useful.”

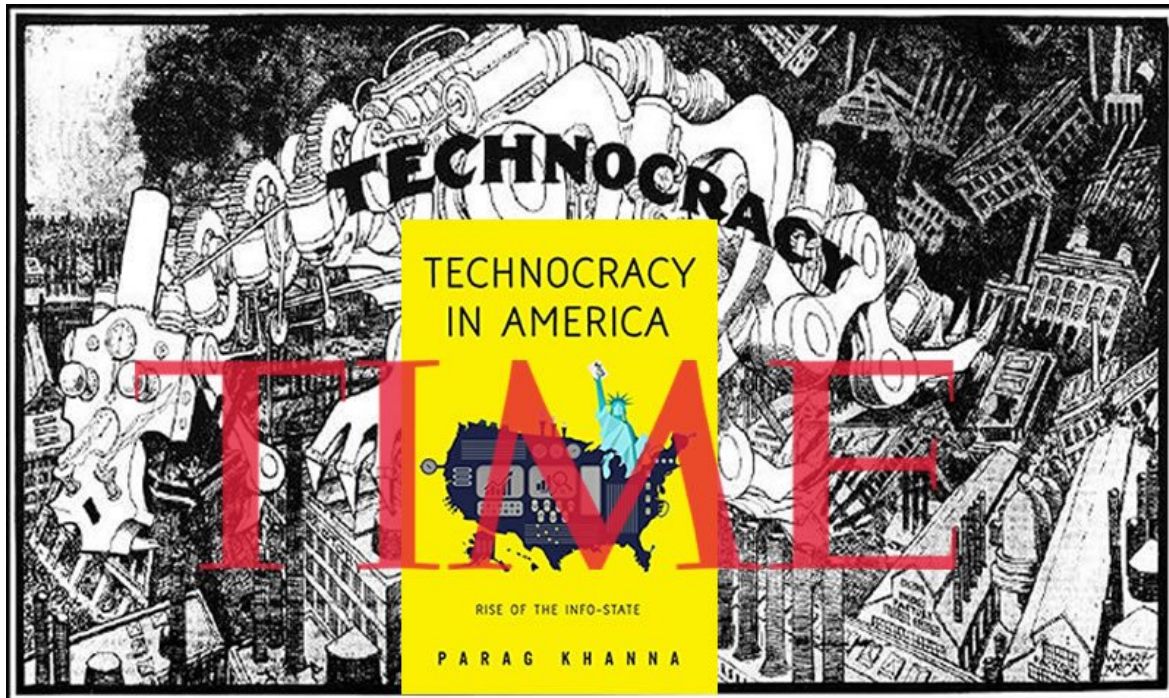
Google’s beginning is a story of two idealistic programmers, Brin and Larry Page, trying to impose order on a chaotic young World Wide Web,

not through an imposed hierarchy but lists of search results ranked algorithmically by their relevance. In 1995, five years after an English computer scientist [created](#) the [first web site](#), Page arrived at Stanford, entering the computer science department's graduate program and needing a dissertation topic. Focusing on the nascent Web, and inspired by modern academia's obsession with scholars' citations to other scholars' papers, Page devised BackRub, a search engine that rated the relevance of a web page based on how often other pages link back to it.

Because a web page does not itself identify the sites that link back to it, BackRub required a database of the Web's links. It also required an algorithm to rank the relevance of a given page on the basis of all the links to it — to quantify the intuition that “important pages tend to link to important pages,” as Page's collaborator Brin put it. Page and Brin called their ranking algorithm PageRank. The name PageRank “was a sly vanity,” Steven Levy later observed in his 2011 book [In the Plex](#) — “many people assumed the name referred to web pages, not a surname.”

Page and Brin quickly realized that their project's real value was in ranking not web pages but results for searches of those pages. They had developed a search engine that was far superior to AltaVista, Excite, Infoseek, and all the other now-forgotten rivals that preceded it, which could search for words on pages but did not have effective ways of determining the inherent importance of a page. Coupled with PageRank, BackRub — which would soon be renamed Google — was immensely useful at helping people find what they wanted. When combined with other signals of web page quality, PageRank generated “mind-blowing results,” writes Levy.

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More Calls For Direct Technocracy In America As Democracy Falters

This article casts Patrick Wood as a “conspiracy theory propagandist” who “indicts technocrats as leaders in globalist plots to control the masses.” This is the same technique used in the 1970s to deflect analysis of the Trilateral Commission. This is a must-read article that shows the nexus between populism and Technocracy, which will make way for full-blown Technopopulism in America. □ TN Editor

Policies grounded in ideology can't help but ignore information that may upset that ideological foundation.

According to [World Values Survey](#) data, 49% of Americans (60% of these under the age of 29) rather have decisions be made by experts than the government. Considering that lack of experience is rampant in US leadership today, it seems like this 49% is definitely losing the battle. In fact, the views of Americans hungry for evidence-based governing are nowhere to be found. But they exist among the mostly young progressives who don't fit into the quintessential radical-left mold.

If you've been reading any of the large news outlets since the 2016 election, you have probably been exposed to a broad array of various types of American conservatives — a smorgasbord of right-wing political figures and views. Reporters have spent weeks out in “Trump Country,” toiling in the hopes that they can show that the media has remembered these once forgotten people. Outlets have scurried to hire conservative voices to stave off the criticism that they are the “liberal media” and nothing more than “fake news,” as the president and his followers have dubbed them.

Take *The New York Times*, who hired Bret Stevens, the Pulitzer Prize-winning columnist from *The Wall Street Journal*, along with David Brooks, Ross Douthat and Bari Weiss. Meagan Kelly, the former Fox News anchor who promised us that Santa Clause is indeed white, secured a primetime spot at NBC. *The Atlantic* supplemented its preeminent #NeverTrumper and former George W. Bush speechwriter David Frum with the hiring of Kevin D. Williamson. While at the *National Review*, [Williamson asserted](#) that “women who have abortions should be hanged” and once [described](#) an African-American boy as a “three-fifths-scale Snoop Dogg,” harkening back to the time black Americans counted as three-fifths of the person in the Constitution.

In sustained efforts to regain the trust of Donald Trump's constituency — the “real Americans” — the general public has been subjected to focus group after focus group from the heartland. Conservatives come in every flavor and class; they are as Trump-hating as Jeb Bush's presidential campaign advisor Anna Navaro, as trolling as the cultural warriors Ben Shapiro and Jordan Peterson, and devout Trumpists like Paris Denard, Jefferey Loyd and Katrina Pierson. CNN hired Jason Miller, a Trump surrogate, just last year.

While it's wonderful to see that free thought is alive on the right, what is worrying is the platform for the expression of various points of view has become restricted to them. This brings us back to that 49%.

In America, the left gets painted with a much broader brush, but there are differences. The point is to talk about one segment — a group that isn't made up of cultural Marxists, social justice warriors and socialists.

This a group has been quietly generalized, overshadowed by our peers who scream about neoliberalism and subscribe to ideologies that are a mix of political prefixes and suffixes. Plodding, working, moseying along in the American left is a group often derogatorily called the technocrats. Some may hide their technocratic virtues, while others just don't know they have them yet.

THE END OF DEMOCRACY?

Exposure to the term technocrat usually comes from conspiracy theory propagandists like Alex Jones and Patrick Wood, who indict technocrats as leaders in globalist plots to control the masses. But outside of talk radio and conspiracy podcasts, technocrats are public servants with technical expertise — managers, budgeters. The term has often been associated with nerds or wonks. Technocrats do, while politicians give speeches. The 28th president of the United States, Woodrow Wilson, fit the bill. He was an academic — a political scientist who helped found the field of public administration, at a time when the discipline of public policy was fledgling and far from the science it is today.

Some would associate technocratic governance in the US with Micheal Dukakis, the governor of Massachusetts, and the Democratic opponent of George Bush Sr. in the 1988 presidential election. He was mocked for his penchant for wearing [tweed](#) and bore the brunt of one of the dirtiest ad campaigns in presidential election history. [Dukakis was not](#) an adept orator or charismatic leader. But he was an incorruptible, efficient administrator, known as the architect of the “[Massachusetts miracle](#)” — a 1970-1980s era of growth that turned a state reeling from the manufacturing industry collapse into the economic powerhouse Massachusetts still is today. That is the kind of leadership that comes with technocracy.

In *Technocracy: Rise of the Info-State*, Parag Khana explains why a little more technocracy would be good for America. Technocracy, he [argues](#), “is government built around expert analysis and long-term planning rather than narrow-minded and short-term populist whims. Technocrats are not to be confused with the complacent establishment elites that

were just stunned by Trump. Real technocracy has the virtues of being both utilitarian ... and meritocratic.”

You may be wondering if Khana knows what happened to Dukakis or has ever seen how the American “experiment” works. It’s often argued that generally the idea that democracy in and of itself is as good as it gets, needing no perversion or tampering. But polling data shows that Americans are beginning to lose faith in the idea that liberal democracy is all you need to have a good government. Not only do young Americans have a proclivity for expertise, like it or not, we’re not so sold on democracy as the solution to everything.

General dissatisfaction with government is currently very high. Some of it can be attributed to the economic crisis. Historically, economic worries have significantly attributed to a loss of trust in government, and millennials are characterized by their own Great Recession. But this time there is something interesting happening.

The charge for change is in the youth — as usual — but this charge doesn’t run counter to government rule but with government as the driver for change, with or without democracy. According to a [report by the Journal of Democracy](#), “only about 30% of Americans born in the 1980s think it’s ‘essential’ to live in a democracy. That’s compared to 75% of Americans born in the 1930s.” Unfortunately, this disaffection has led to countries like Austria, France and Germany seeing a resurgence of the far right thanks to the support of the youth.

In the UK and the United States, the youth have gravitated toward populists on the left end of the spectrum led by Bernie Sanders and Jeremy Corbyn. Despite the cantankerous nature of Donald Trump, his politics [mirrors](#) those of other nationalist, conservative, anti-minority leaders across the globe, like the Philippines’ Roderigo Duterte, Japan’s Shinzo Abe, China’s Xi Jinping and India’s Narendra Modi. Millennials are at the helm of all these movements.

The young of today are not the flower children that their parents were, nor are they believers in democracy like their grandparents have been. While millennials have begun to [distrust the government](#) at rates similar

to older citizens, for some reason the decline in trust has not been as drastic. Young Americans think politicians are corrupt, but still believe large government institutions can work. While it may seem like every young person is devoted to extreme ideas, one is reminded of Mark Twain's definition of a patriot as "the person who can holler the loudest without knowing what he's hollering about." Just because you don't hear technocrats, doesn't mean they aren't there.

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China Introduces Driverless Ambulances And Robot Doctors

Technocrats in China use herd management principles to automate every aspect of health care. It is theoretically possible for an sick citizen to never see a human in the care of their illness. Does China have enough people to educate more doctors and nurses? Of course, but Technocrats prefer engineering solutions to any problem. □ TN Editor

In the eastern Chinese city of Hangzhou, an ambulance speeds through traffic on a wave of green lights, helped along by an artificial intelligence (AI) system and big data.

The system, which involves sending information to a centralized computer linked to the city's transport networks, is part of a trial by Alibaba Group Holding Ltd. The Chinese tech giant is hoping to use its cloud and data systems to tackle issues hobbling China's healthcare system like snarled city traffic, long patient queues and a lack of doctors.

Alibaba's push into healthcare reflects a wider trend in China, where technology firms are racing to shake up a creaking state-run health sector and take a slice of spending that McKinsey & Co estimates will hit US\$1 trillion by 2020.

Tencent-backed WeDoctor, which offers online consultations and doctor appointments, raised US\$500 million in May at a valuation of US\$5.5 billion. Ping An Good Doctor, a similar platform backed by Ping An Insurance, raised US\$1.1 billion in an IPO this year.

"The opportunity is growing very fast," said Min Wanli, the Hangzhou-based chief machine intelligence scientist at Alibaba's cloud division.

Alibaba is working with a hospital in Shanghai using data to predict patient demand and allocate doctors. In Zhejiang province, the company is working on AI-assisted diagnosis tools to help analyze medical images such as CT scans and MRIs.

"You need to go through very specialized training in order to read these images, but we know that experts are a very scarce resource," said Min.

Chinese hospitals are increasingly using technology to bridge the gap between urban centers and remote parts of the country where doctors are in short supply. Using document-sharing systems and livestreaming video, specialists can direct more junior medical staff on-site doing patient diagnoses.

DXY, one of China's biggest online networks of doctors, offers consultations on the WeChat social media platform for patients with

chronic diseases such as diabetes, with a team of nurses and doctors providing medical advice.

China is pressing to reduce healthcare costs that are soaring as the population ages, putting huge strains on the state insurance system.

At the same time, Beijing has been promising better access to healthcare and improved grass-roots care – despite a lack of family doctors – which has brought technology into the spotlight as a way of maximizing stretched resources.

“Educating doctors is going to take too long,” said Rogier Janssens, Beijing-based general manager of Germany’s Merck KGaA’s biopharma business in China. He added that smartphones could help deliver primary care faster and cheaper.

“There are hundreds of millions of people who still go without care for relatively simple diseases.”

China’s healthcare system has long grappled with a shortage of doctors, exacerbated by low wages and a dearth of local clinics and general practitioners. That means patients often crowd into large, specialist hospitals for even minor ailments.

Beijing has been trying to fix the problem, setting targets to increase the number of family doctors across the country.

However, the government has been slow to embrace technology within the healthcare system, held back by the challenge of digitalizing a sprawling, fragmented hospital system still dominated by public hospitals and state-run firms.

The policy winds may be starting to change. Beijing has enacted legislation over the last two years that has included strong support for internet-based basic healthcare services.

Premier Li Keqiang said this year that healthcare tech could “help alleviate the problem of inaccessible and expensive public health services that have long been a big concern”.

Now, Beijing may be about approve the sale of some prescription drugs online, creating a major opportunity for local and global firms, according to companies in the sector.

Janssens of Merck KGaA said the company had “good indications” that policymakers were addressing the issue of pharmaceutical e-commerce “as we speak”.

Li Tiantian, the founder and chairman of DXY, said the health ministry had met with healthcare companies like his own and planned to soon release a policy on “internet hospitals”, which would open up some online sales.

“I think the new policy will be released very soon, potentially in July,” he said.

The policy would allow approved hospitals to consult, prescribe and sell drugs to chronic disease patients online. However, regulatory concerns over safety and pushback from state-run distributors sank a similar plan several years ago.

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China's Robo-Bird Drones Take Citizen Surveillance To New Heights

Technocrats in China constantly dream up new ways to gather data from the social environment. Robotic doves equipped with cameras are virtually undetectable from real birds, and can be deployed in flocks. The stealth birds might be covered with real feathers in order to avoid radar and sonic detection. □ TN Editor

If you've ever looked up to the sky and enjoyed the sight of a bird gliding above, be warned: it could be a Chinese drone monitoring your every move.

The idea might seem far fetched, but robotic birds are very much a reality, and China has been using them to surveil people across the country.

Sources told the *South China Morning Post* that more than 30 military and government agencies have deployed the birdlike drones and related devices in at least five provinces in recent years.

One part of the country that has seen the new technology used extensively is the [Xinjiang Uygur autonomous region](#) in China's far west. The vast area, which borders Mongolia, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Afghanistan, Pakistan and India, is home to a large Muslim population and has long been viewed by Beijing as a hotbed for separatism. As a result, the region and its people have been subjected to heavy surveillance from the central government.

The new "spy birds" programme, code-named "Dove", is being led by Song Bifeng, a professor at Northwestern Polytechnical University in Xian, capital of northwestern China's Shaanxi province. Song was formerly a senior scientist on the J-20 stealth jet programme and has already been honoured by the People's Liberation Army - China's military - for his work on Dove, according to information on the

university website.

Yang Wenqing, an associate professor at the School of Aeronautics at Northwestern and a member of Song's team, confirmed the use of the new technology but said it was not widespread.

"The scale is still small," compared to other types of drones in use today, she told the *South China Morning Post*.

"We believe the technology has good potential for large-scale use in the future ... it has some unique advantages to meet the demand for drones in the military and civilian sectors," she said.

Unlike unmanned aerial vehicles with fixed wings or rotor blades, the new drones actually mimic the flapping action of a bird's wings to climb, dive and turn in the air.

Another researcher involved in the Dove project said the aim was to develop a new generation of drones with biologically inspired engineering that could evade human detection and even radar.

The machines in China's current robot flock replicate about 90 per cent of the movements of a real dove, the person said, adding that they also produce very little noise, making them very hard to detect from the ground, and are so lifelike that actual birds often fly alongside them.

The team conducted almost 2,000 test flights before deploying the drones in real-life situations, said the researcher, who asked not to be named due to the sensitivity of the programme.

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Google And Facebook Are Fighting California's Privacy Rights Initiative

Big Tech joins a number of data hungry companies to defeat the California Consumer Privacy Act (CCPA), which will allow citizens to opt out of the collection and/or sale of their personal data. CCPA also expands the definition of personal data to include biometrics, geolocation and browsing history. □ TN Editor

largest technology and telecommunications firms have only three days to prevent the California Consumer Privacy Act, or CCPA, a ballot initiative that would usher in the strongest consumer privacy standards in the country, from going before state voters this November.

The initiative allows consumers to opt out of the sale and collection of their personal data, and vastly expands the definition of personal information to include geolocation, biometrics, and browsing history. The initiative also allows consumers to pursue legal action for violations

of the law.

The idea that Californians might gain sweeping new privacy rights has spooked Silicon Valley, internet service providers, and other industries that increasingly rely on data collection, leading to a lobbying push to defeat the initiative before it gains traction. Their best hope may be to convince the sponsors of the initiative, including San Francisco real estate developer Alastair Mactaggart, to pull the proposal in exchange for compromise privacy legislation, AB 375, which would achieve some of the same goals of the initiative. Lawmakers behind the legislation, led by state Assembly Member Ed Chau, D-Monterey Park, and state Sen. Robert Hertzberg, D-Van Nuys, have promised to swiftly pass their bill this week if sponsors withdraw the CCPA.

Emails obtained by The Intercept reveal that tech giants are fighting behind the scenes to water down the privacy legislation, hoping to prevent an expensive and potentially losing ballot fight this year.

Andrea Deveau, a lobbyist for TechNet, a trade group for Google, Facebook, and other tech companies, has continually updated an ad-hoc business lobbying coalition formed to defeat the CCPA. In an update sent on Sunday evening, Deveau provided a “compilation of feedback re: the most problematic aspects of AB 375.”

In her update, she listed a vast array of changes lobbyists are still seeking, including a rewrite of the privacy law’s description of what counts as personal information, changes to the conditions under which a consumer can seek legal action, the preservation of arbitration clauses in consumer contracts, and the removal of the mandate that firms display a button on their homepage giving consumers a clear way of opting out of data collection, among other changes.

Over the last few days, Deveau has continued to update a coalition of Sacramento lobbyists of her team’s efforts to ensure that if AB 375 passes, the bill provides significant changes compared to the original CCPA.

The lobbying coalition convened by Deveau over email includes Ryan Harkins, director of state affairs and public policy at Microsoft; Walter

Hughes, the state director of government affairs at Comcast; Mufaddal Ezzy, the California manager of public policy and government relations for Google; Ann Blackwood, the head of public policy for western states at Facebook; Lisa Kohn, the senior manager for public policy at Amazon; Curt Augustine, the senior director of policy and government affairs for the Alliance of Automobile Manufacturers; Brad Weltman, the vice president for public policy at the Interactive Advertising Bureau; and Kate Ijams, a public affairs specialist at AT&T.

The inclusion of a Facebook representative is notable, given the company's well-publicized announcement earlier this year that it would end its opposition to the initiative. In February, the company provided \$200,000 to an account set up by the California Chamber of Commerce designed to defeat the CCPA initiative. But in April, following revelations about the extent to which British consulting firm Cambridge Analytica provided the Donald Trump campaign with illicit access to Facebook user data, Facebook announced that it would withdraw its opposition to CCPA and not provide additional funding to the Chamber account.

Facebook's lobbyist this week joined conference calls to strategize about ways to undermine CCPA and the email chains show that Facebook representatives have continued to receive updates from industry allies on ways in which to undermine the CCPA. The firm, however, has maintained its promise not to pledge new money to the opposition effort.

Facebook confirmed its ongoing involvement fighting CCPA. "People should be in control of their information online and companies should be held to high standards in explaining what data they have and how they use it, especially when they sell data," read a statement provided to The Intercept and attributed to Will Castleberry, Facebook's vice president of state and local public policy. "We are committed to being clear with people about how our services work, including the fact that we do not sell people's data. In that spirit, while not perfect, we support AB375 and look forward to working with policymakers on an approach that protects consumers and promotes responsible innovation."

In addition to Facebook, Google, AT&T, Microsoft, Amazon, Verizon, and the California New Car Dealers Association have each contributed six

figure donations to the Chamber account set up to defeat CCPA. Uber, the Data & Marketing Association, Cox Communications, and the Interactive Advertising Bureau have each contributed \$50,000 to the account, according to disclosures.

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