

July 27, 2014

**Tunku Varadajan** says if the world community wants to punish Putin, they could yank the 2018 Soccer world cup from Russia and award it to the Netherlands.

*In the wake of the MH17 disaster, the world needs to make Vladimir Putin's pride—not the Russian people—pay. And a good first step would be to stop pretending sport is politically neutral.*

*Days after Malaysia Airlines flight MH17 was shot down over eastern Ukraine, killing all passengers and crew aboard, the world is contending with a fiendishly difficult question: What is the appropriate punitive response to this atrocity?*

*The civilian airliner was destroyed with a ground-to-air missile of Russian provenance, fired either by Russia-backed separatists or by the Russian military. Moral and political responsibility for the slaughter must lie, ultimately, with Moscow, even as we investigate the forensic sequence of a commander's chilling order—"Fire!"—and an underling's deadly compliance.*

*Three hundred people, 189 of them Dutch, are dead at the hands of forces who owe their loyalty to Vladimir Putin, Russia's president, the man who has thrown his weight behind the armed rebellion in Ukraine. He is in every way the separatists' godfather. The dismemberment of Ukraine is as much his cause as theirs. So any response has to make him hurt, personally; it has to puncture his ego, his pride. And one certain way to hurt him would be to strip from Russia the right to host the 2018 World Cup. ...*

**Michael Barone** writes on the problems governments have purchasing information technology (IT).

*Government don't do IT good. Not just here in the United States, but in Britain, as this Telegraph blogpost argues. "Most nations -- but especially the USA -- have a woeful record when it comes to IT procurement," writes blogger Willard Foxton, with a link to a subject that is familiar to American readers, the debacle of the Obama administration's healthcare.gov.*

*Foxton goes on to say that it's not only governments that have problems procuring information technology. So do private sector firms, he writes, citing a McKinsey & Co. report that half of large IT projects "go wildly over budget."*

*There's a difference here, though, between the private and public sectors. The private sector is held accountable in the marketplace. If IT doesn't work, or if cost overruns raise prices to uncompetitive levels, consumers have alternatives. When government IT fails, however, the citizen doesn't have any alternative. You stare at your computer, wondering if it might work if you hit it with a hammer.*

*All of which suggests that centralized command-and-control government is an unsuitable means of delivering services in the information age. ...*

Barone mentioned **Willard Foxton's** post in a Telegraph, UK Blog. Here that is.

*While I was phoning around this morning for an explanation to why the Government's latest big IT project has ended with £350 million being flushed down the lavatory, one respected contractor told*

me: "I just don't think the UK government should be allowed to buy IT at all. Maybe give them abacuses, but they could still get those wrong."

*It's not just a problem for the UK either. Most nations – but especially the USA – have a woeful record when it comes to IT procurement. Here's a list of the seven most expensive IT failures in US government history – and that was written before the Obama administration's healthcare.gov debacle.*

*It's not just government projects that go wrong, though. Private sector organisations, especially ones on the scale of government (like banks) have giant IT disasters all the time. According to this 2012 report by McKinsey, over half of all large IT projects go wildly over budget. 17 per cent go so badly that they threaten the commissioning company's existence, and more than 40 per cent of them fail absolutely. In another study, Computer World found that only 6.4 per cent of high budget IT projects succeeded in their own terms.*

*So one reason that large-scale IT projects fail is because they are incredibly hard, public or private. However, there are unique things about government projects that make the chances of success even lower. ...*

A blog named Refreshing News has a post on berry good cancer fighting fruits. *For disease prevention and health maintenance, berries of all colors have "emerged as champions." Research has focused mainly on cancer prevention and treatment. Studies show that the anticancer effects of berries are partially mediated through their abilities to counteract, reduce, and also repair damage resulting from oxidative stress and inflammation. Berries may also have many other positive effects, such as boosting detoxifying enzymes. ...*

NY Post article on the bullet from the sun we dodged a couple of years ago. *Two years ago, we were all going about our daily business, blissfully unaware that our planet almost plunged into global catastrophe.*

*A recent revelation by NASA explains how on July 23, 2012, Earth had a near miss with a solar flare, or coronal mass ejection (CME), from the most powerful storm on the sun in over 150 years, but nobody decided to mention it.*

*Err, what? Well, that's a sobering bit of news.*

*"If it had hit, we would still be picking up the pieces," says Daniel Baker of the University of Colorado.*

*We managed to just avoid the event through lucky timing as the sun's aim narrowly turned away from Earth. Had it occurred a week earlier, when it was pointing at us, the result could have been frighteningly different. ...*

The New Scientist, apropos of Kevin Williamson's article on the importance of property, says if you want to preserve forests give them to people who will value them. *The best way to protect rainforests is to keep people out, right? Absolutely not. The best way to keep the trees, and prevent the carbon in them from entering the atmosphere, is by letting people into the forests: local people with the legal right to control what happens there.*

*Given the chance, most communities protect rather than plunder their forests, says a new study by the World Resources Institute and Rights and Resources Initiative, both in Washington DC. The forests provide food, water, shelter, medicines and much else.*

*The report, Securing Rights, Combating Climate Change collates many existing studies. It concludes that forest communities only have legal control over one-eighth of the world's forests. The rest is mostly controlled by governments or leased for logging or mining, often in defiance of community claims.*

*But community-owned forests are often the best-protected. In the Amazon rainforest, deforestation rates in community-owned areas are far lower than outside. ...*

Victor Davis Hanson reminds us of Gen. George Patton's summer of 1944.

*Nearly 70 years ago, on Aug. 1, 1944, Lieutenant General George S. Patton took command of the American Third Army in France. For the next 30 days they rolled straight toward the German border.*

*Patton almost did not get a chance at his summer of glory. After brilliant service in North Africa and Sicily, fellow officers — and his German enemies — considered him the most gifted American field general of his generation. ...*

*... When Patton's Third Army finally became operational seven weeks after D-Day, it was supposed to play only a secondary role — guarding the southern flank of the armies of General Bradley and British Field Marshal Bernard Montgomery while securing the Atlantic ports.*

*Despite having the longest route to the German border, Patton headed east. The Third Army took off in a type of American blitzkrieg not seen since Union General William Tecumseh Sherman's rapid marches through Georgia and the Carolinas during the Civil War.*

*Throughout August 1944, Patton won back over the press. He was foul-mouthed, loud, and uncouth, and he led from the front in flamboyant style with a polished helmet and ivory-handled pistols.*

*In fact, his theatrics masked a deeply learned and analytical military mind. Patton sought to avoid casualties by encircling German armies. In innovative fashion, he partnered with American tactical air forces to cover his flanks as his armored columns raced around static German formations.*

*Naturally rambunctious American GIs fought best, Patton insisted, when "rolling" forward, especially in summertime. Only then, for a brief moment, might the clear skies facilitate overwhelming American air support. In August his soldiers could camp outside, while his speeding tanks still had dry roads.*

*In just 30 days, Patton finished his sweep across France and neared Germany. The Third Army had exhausted its fuel supplies and ground to a halt near the border in early September. ...*

**Andrew Malcolm** with late night humor.

*Fallon: A British firm is developing a new veggie -- Brussel-Kale. It's a combination of Brussels sprouts and kale. They got the idea from a child's nightmare.*

*Conan: Amazon has introduced its own smartphone. You can tell it's from Amazon because after you hang up with someone, the Amazon phone suggests other people you may want to call.*

---

---

---

## Daily Beast

### [Best Way to Punish Putin? No World Cup](#)

by Tunku Varadarjan

In the wake of the MH17 disaster, the world needs to make Vladimir Putin's pride—not the Russian people—pay. And a good first step would be to stop pretending sport is politically neutral.

Days after Malaysia Airlines flight MH17 was [shot down over eastern Ukraine](#), killing all passengers and crew aboard, the world is contending with a fiendishly difficult question: *What is the appropriate punitive response to this atrocity?*

The civilian airliner was destroyed with a ground-to-air missile of Russian provenance, fired either by Russia-backed separatists or by the Russian military. Moral and political responsibility for the slaughter must lie, ultimately, with Moscow, even as we investigate the forensic sequence of a commander's chilling order—"Fire!"—and an underling's deadly compliance.

Three hundred people, 189 of them Dutch, are dead at the hands of forces who owe their loyalty to Vladimir Putin, Russia's president, the man who has thrown his weight behind the armed rebellion in Ukraine. He is in every way the separatists' godfather. The dismemberment of Ukraine is as much his cause as theirs. So any response has to make him hurt, personally; it has to puncture his ego, his pride. And one certain way to hurt him would be to [strip from Russia](#) the right to host the 2018 World Cup.

States opposed to Putin's international lawlessness can (and should) contemplate all manner of economic sanctions against Russia in response to the shooting down of MH17. As it happens, the very day before the plane was felled, the U.S. had [restricted access to American capital markets](#) for Rosneft, the Russian oil company, and Gazprombank, the financial arm of gas-goliath Gazprom. Yet while sanctions like these can be painful, they can also make Putin more adamantly resistant to withdrawal from Ukraine. Given the nature of the Russian state and its undemocratic political system, Putin is perfectly equipped to survive a turning of the financial screws. He will, no doubt, portray sanctions as an act of aggression against the people of Russia. So punishing Putin, not the people of Russia, should be our primary aim.

How does one punish the autocratic, omnipotent president of a quasi-superpower? It is much harder to do so than to spank the piddling ruler of a smallish rogue state, but options exist. Putin believes that a World Cup in Russia can be sold to his people as an endorsement of his rule. Why should the world become an accomplice in a dictator's Ponzi scheme of pride? As he preened for the cameras at the [World Cup final](#) in Rio de Janeiro on July 13, it was clear that Putin regards Russia's staging of the Cup's next edition as [a propaganda godsend](#), a global vote for his achievements. Imagine his consternation if he were prevented from putting on such a show.

Putin preys on the fact that the West thinks money and sport are neutral, or at least civilizing influences. So when Russian money comes to Wall Street or the City of London, it stops being political for the West; it is also a peculiarly Western conceit that the gathering together for sport has a civilizing effect on the nations participating. But for Putin, money and sport are tools, or weapons. Hosting the World Cup is the weapon he uses to prove to his people that he is all-powerful, that there is no point in opposing him. In letting him host that Cup, we all become part of that weapon.

The Cup is four years away, perfect time for FIFA, the governing body of world soccer, to undo formal agreements with Moscow while giving another host every opportunity to provide for the entire infrastructure. Stadiums take up to two years to build; airports need to be upgraded; a range of hotels must be secured, as must the capacity for domestic rail and road transportation to cope with an influx of hundreds of thousands of fans.

As sponsorship contacts are being scripted and haggled over, a passionate drive is in place by pro-Ukraine opponents of Putin to [organize a boycott](#) of companies that will sponsor a World Cup in Russia. How long before those companies, which include Anheuser Busch, Visa, Kia Motors, and Sony, start to press FIFA for a change of host?

The World Cup is quite unlike the Olympics, where every nation has a right to participate. Qualification is exacting, and a majority of the teams that do qualify are from the West. The Asian powerhouses are Japan and South Korea, and the West African nations who tend to make up Africa's contribution to the roster are not beholden to Putin. Mustering a coalition of disapproval for the World Cup should be much easier than it would be for an Olympiad.

In all of this lies the chance, also, for FIFA to redeem itself. Under Sepp Blatter, its interminable head, the body has been opaque and corrupt. Now is the moment for FIFA and Blatter to take a rare moral stand and not act as obstacles to the revocation of Russia's hosting rights.

Who should host the Cup instead? May I propose the Dutch, who were among the original bidders for 2018. Unlike Russia, their country is a world soccer power, with an open, democratic society, a civic exemplar. And after the downing of MH17, in which so many of its innocent citizens were killed by men loyal to Putin, a World Cup in The Netherlands would be cosmic justice.

## **Examiner**

### **[Gummit don't do IT good, here and elsewhere](#)**

by Michael Barone

Government don't do IT good. Not just here in the United States, but in Britain, as this [Telegraph blogpost](#) argues. "Most nations -- but especially the USA -- have a woeful record when it comes to IT procurement," writes blogger Willard Foxton, with a link to a subject that is familiar to American readers, the debacle of the Obama administration's [healthcare.gov](#).

Foxton goes on to say that it's not only governments that have problems procuring [information technology](#). So do private sector firms, he writes, [citing a McKinsey & Co. report](#) that half of large IT projects “go wildly over budget.”

There's a difference here, though, between the private and public sectors. The private sector is held accountable in the marketplace. If IT doesn't work, or if cost overruns raise prices to uncompetitive levels, consumers have alternatives. When government IT fails, however, the citizen doesn't have any alternative. You stare at your computer, wondering if it might work if you hit it with a hammer.

All of which suggests that centralized command-and-control government is an unsuitable means of delivering services in the information age. When [Social Security](#) was enacted in 1935, in the industrial age, the government could hire armies of file clerks who could arrange pieces of standard-sized page in manila folders in steel filing cabinets. That wasn't too hard to organize. It took time to extract the appropriate piece of paper to address any individual request for information, but it could be done. The basic system didn't have to be overhauled every two years -- the time in which computer capacity doubles in line with Moore's Law. You just set up a schedule to procure more pieces of paper, manila folders and filing cabinets.

IT doesn't work that like. Government procedures are inevitably slow, for reasons that include the good (to prevent fraud on taxpayers) as well as the bad (employees can't be fired or otherwise held accountable). They can't match the pace of technological change.

More than half a century ago, Friedrich Hayek argued persuasively that centralized government could never process information as well as decentralized markets. Government's incompetence at IT procurement suggests that markets' superiority over centralized government is even greater than when Hayek was writing.

I've written several columns this year on the poor performance of government, focusing on recent books by [John Micklethwait and Adrian Wooldridge](#), [Peter Schuck](#) and [Philip Howard](#), all highly worth reading.

## **Telegraph, UK**

### **[Why do all government IT projects seem to fail?](#)**

by Willard Foxton

While I was phoning around this morning for an explanation to why the [Government's latest big IT project has ended with £350 million being flushed down the lavatory](#), one respected contractor told me: “I just don't think the UK government should be allowed to buy IT at all. Maybe give them abacuses, but they could still get those wrong.”

It's not just a problem for the UK either. Most nations – but especially the USA – have a woeful record when it comes to IT procurement. Here's a list of the seven most expensive IT failures in US government history – and that was written before the [Obama administration's healthcare.gov debacle](#).

It's not just government projects that go wrong, though. Private sector organisations, especially ones on the scale of government (like banks) have giant IT disasters all the time. According to this 2012 report by McKinsey, [over half of all large IT projects go wildly over budget](#). 17 per cent go so badly that they threaten the commissioning company's existence, and more than 40 per cent of

them fail absolutely. In another study, Computer World found that only [6.4 per cent of high budget IT projects succeeded in their own terms](#).

So one reason that large-scale IT projects fail is because they are incredibly hard, public or private. However, there are unique things about government projects that make the chances of success even lower.

First off, the attitude of government is wrong. Too often ministers think they can wave a wand and the geeks will sort it out. People are fooled by the ease of use of common programs, and think they must be easy to create, not appreciating just how hard it is to make something as "simple" as a database for millions of users.

Beyond that basic failing, new ministers want shiny new projects so they can make their mark. No one wants to say that "the IT project started by Labour is progressing well". On top of that, making their mark means meddling. The scathing contractor I spoke with said of government ministers that "their desire for excessive control is not matched by their ability to wield it effectively".

Others talked of a constant shifting of goalposts on government projects, deadlines moved to meet political priorities and of a failure to understand both the complexities of computing and of their own departments.

The problem isn't just limited to ministers, either. Civil servants often see an IT system for a department as a capital project, like building a road or a school. In reality, it's far more complex. When you're pouring concrete, you can have a realistic schedule. A successful software development works by getting one core feature right, then iterating and adding features and upgrades.

Many civil servants – especially senior ones – don't get this. They want the whole thing up and running, or nothing at all. Certainly, there are some who are brilliant – but the government is terrible at sharing their expertise. Promotions are based on time spent in grade and not on any particular skill or interest, so even a great IT project manager may end up moving diagonally up to shuffle paper at a completely different department.

Even worse, there are few incentives to succeed. Pay raises and bonuses are often not based on performance but the ability to continue in a job for many years. Even when people fail catastrophically there are no consequences. A particularly good example of this is the civil servants [who allowed contractors to monitor electronic tags for 1000 years](#), but were never named, fired or in any way disciplined.

The other main problem is on the private sector side. Most private sector companies dealing with the government hold these projects in absolute contempt, seeing them as easy money.

Firms deliberately underbid and over-promise, knowing that the project will cost far more and may not work. Of course, everyone knows their competitors will do the same, so the bid goes lower and lower, and becomes more and more unrealistic. Of course, once the contract is obtained, the corporate negotiators run rings round the government's hapless procurement lawyers, again ensuring there is no penalty for failure.

The truth is, the software will be done when it's done and it will cost what it will cost and if that deadline or final bill doesn't look like what the government thought it negotiated, then tough. Even if all the money disappears into what might as well be a burning bin, with nothing to show for years of "work" ([as happened in the BBC DMI farrago](#)), the outside firms aren't held to account.

You see, it's easy enough to pin even the most abject failure on something like the “flawed procurement process” or the “lack of leadership” from the customer – which goes back to the state problems.

Plenty of these problems are systemic in all public sector procurement – defence procurement is riddled with examples of huge wastes for little return. The most frustrating thing about the whole business is that there are [established software project management disciplines](#) which would have a good chance of solving many of these problems, which have actually been successfully used in the private sector.

These are deep-seated problems – failures in the way we do business as a nation state. My instant solution is that before we buy into any more worthless IT projects, we should guarantee that the ministers, senior civil servants and corporate CEOs involved will all be publicly sacked if the project fails.

Maybe then we might see some improvement – or at least a comparatively cheap public spectacle, compared to letting them do it over and over again.

## **Refreshing News**

### **[The Impressive Anti-Cancer Power of Berries](#)**

For disease prevention and health maintenance, berries of all colors have “emerged as champions.” Research has focused mainly on cancer prevention and treatment. Studies show that the anticancer effects of berries are partially mediated through their abilities to counteract, reduce, and also repair damage resulting from oxidative stress and inflammation. Berries may also have many other positive effects, such as boosting detoxifying enzymes.

One of the more remarkable effects is that of blueberries on natural killer cell counts. Natural killer cells are part of our immune system’s rapid response team against cancer cells, [eliminating](#) cancer cells through the activation of cancer cell suicide via death receptors. They’re called natural killers because they don’t require activation by prior exposure. We don’t want to wait until our second tumor before our immune system starts fighting.

We have about two billion of these soldiers circulating in our blood stream at any one time, but we may be able to get a troop surge with blueberries. Researchers had athletes [eat](#) about a cup and a half of blueberries a day for six weeks to see if that would reduce the oxidative stress of long-distance running. They indeed saw a [blunting of the spike](#) in oxidant stress. But that’s not what sets that study apart.

The number of natural killer cells in the blood typically decreases after prolonged endurance exercise, dropping by half to only about one billion—that is, unless we’ve been eating lots of blueberries. If you click on the video on the next page, you can see a graph comparing natural killer cell numbers with and without blueberries. Those who ate blueberries retained close to the standard two billion cells. This is because six weeks of blueberries had doubled the resting number of natural killer cells up to over four billion. This has never before been demonstrated in humans. There was a [study](#) on goji berries, but despite a cup a day for a month, there was no significant change in the number of natural killers.

Another [study](#), though, showed a significant increase in natural killer cell *activity* thanks to the spice cardamom. (Cardamom and blueberries—I never thought we’d be fighting cancer with [blueberry muffins!](#)) When researchers took some lymphoma cells in a petri dish and added

cardamom, nothing happened. However, if we add some natural killer cells, about 5% of the cancer cells are wiped out. Add a little more cardamom, and our troops do better still. And then if we add more and more spice, then all of a sudden the natural killer cells are killing cancer like crazy—the same number of natural killer cells, but they're now able to kill off ten times more cancer cells. While cardamom alone had no effect on cancer cells even at the highest dose, it seemed to enhance our natural killer cells' killer instincts.

The same thing was found for black pepper: Black pepper alone, nothing, but when combined with natural killer cells, there seemed to be a boosting effect up to around 30 or 40% cancer cell clearance. If cardamom and black pepper are combined, they synergize and their individual effects are doubled. The researchers conclude that "Taken together, these data strongly suggest that black pepper and cardamom have the potential to markedly enhance the anti-cancer activity of natural killer cells."

Exercise itself can improve [immune function in general](#), but the blueberry finding is so far unique. It is true that the blueberry study was funded by the North American Blueberry Council and the North Carolina High-bush Blueberry Council. However, just because the study was funded by blueberry councils doesn't *necessarily* mean the science is suspect, but we would want to see the study independently verified, especially one so dramatic.

## NY Post

### [Solar Flare Nearly Destroyed Earth Two Years Ago: NASA](#)



Two years ago, we were all going about our daily business, blissfully unaware that our planet almost plunged into global catastrophe.

A recent revelation by NASA explains how on July 23, 2012, Earth had a near miss with a solar flare, or coronal mass ejection (CME), from the most powerful storm on the sun in over 150 years, but nobody decided to mention it.

Err, what? Well, that's a sobering bit of news.

"If it had hit, we would still be picking up the pieces," says Daniel Baker of the University of Colorado.

We managed to just avoid the event through lucky timing as the sun's aim narrowly turned away from Earth. Had it occurred a week earlier, when it was pointing at us, the result could have been frighteningly different.

"I have come away from our recent studies more convinced than ever that Earth and its inhabitants were incredibly fortunate that the 2012 eruption happened when it did," says Baker. "If the eruption had occurred only one week earlier, Earth would have been in the line of fire."

The power of this ejection would have raced across space to knock us back to the Dark Ages. It's believed a direct CME hit would have the potential to wipe out communication networks, GPS and electrical grids to cause widespread blackout. The article goes on to say it would disable "everything that plugs into a wall socket. Most people wouldn't even be able to flush their toilet because urban water supplies largely rely on electric pumps."

Just 10 minutes without electricity, Internet or communication across the globe is a scary thought, and the effects of this event could last years. It would be chaos and disaster on an epic scale.

"According to a study by the National Academy of Sciences, the total economic impact could exceed \$2 trillion or 20 times greater than the costs of a Hurricane Katrina. Multi-ton transformers damaged by such a storm might take years to repair."

So can we breathe a worldwide sigh of relief? Well, not quite. Physicist Pete Riley, who published a paper titled "On the probability of occurrence of extreme space weather events," has calculated the odds of a solar storm strong enough to disrupt our lives in the next 10 years is 12 percent.

"Initially, I was quite surprised that the odds were so high, but the statistics appear to be correct," says Riley. "It is a sobering figure."

However, the CME that almost battered us was a bit of a freak occurrence as it was actually two ejections within 10 minutes of each other, plus a previous CME had happened four days earlier to effectively clear the path.

Sleep well, everyone.

## **New Scientist**

### **[Give forests to local people to preserve them](#)**

by Fred Pearce

The best way to protect rainforests is to keep people out, right? Absolutely not. The best way to keep the trees, and prevent the carbon in them from entering the atmosphere, is by letting people into the forests: local people with the legal right to control what happens there.

Given the chance, most communities protect rather than plunder their forests, says a new study by the [World Resources Institute](#) and [Rights and Resources Initiative](#), both in Washington DC. The forests provide food, water, shelter, medicines and much else.

The report, [Securing Rights, Combating Climate Change](#) collates many existing studies. It concludes that forest communities only have legal control over one-eighth of the world's forests. The rest is mostly controlled by governments or leased for logging or mining, often in defiance of community claims.

But community-owned forests are often the best-protected. In the Amazon rainforest, deforestation rates in community-owned areas are far lower than outside.

## Hand it over

Since 2000, annual deforestation rates in Brazil have been 7 per cent outside indigenous territories, but only 0.6 per cent inside. The report estimates that indigenous territories in the Brazilian Amazon could prevent the emission of 12 billion tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> between now and 2050.

Brazil's indigenous territories are an important reason why [deforestation rates there have fallen by two-thirds in the past decade](#). The country is a leader in handing over forests to local people, having recognised some 300 indigenous territories since 1980. Almost a third of all community forests are in Brazil.

Likewise, in Guatemala's Peten region, which includes the [Maya Biosphere Reserve](#), deforestation is 20 times lower in community areas than those under government protection. In Mexico's Yucatán state, deforestation is 350 times lower in community forests.

"We can increase carbon sequestration simply by transferring ownership of forests from governments to communities," says [Ashwini Chhatre](#) of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, who was not involved in the report. He led a 2009 study that reached similar conclusions ([PNAS, DOI: 10.1073/pnas.0905308106](#)).

## Not happening yet

However, global progress on recognising community claims has slowed since 2008. Governments, especially in Asia and Africa, are reluctant to give up control. In Indonesia, [which recently overtook Brazil as the country that is deforesting fastest](#), the report found that only 1 million of its 42 million hectares of forests are formally under the control of their inhabitants.

"No one has a stronger interest in the health of forests than the communities that depend on them for their livelihoods and culture," says Andy White of the Rights and Resources Initiative. "It is tragic that this has not yet been fully adopted as a climate change mitigation strategy."

That could change. This year's [round of international climate negotiations](#) will be in Lima, Peru, near the Amazon. Agreeing how to protect forests and the carbon they contain will be a central focus. "Strengthening community forest rights is critical to mitigating climate change," says [Jennifer Morgan](#) of the World Resources Institute.

## National Review

### George Patton's Summer of 1944

*Nearly 70 years ago, the lieutenant general began his advance toward the German border.*

by Victor Davis Hanson

Nearly 70 years ago, on Aug. 1, 1944, Lieutenant General George S. Patton took command of the American Third Army in France. For the next 30 days they rolled straight toward the German border.

Patton almost did not get a chance at his summer of glory. After brilliant service in North Africa and Sicily, fellow officers — and his German enemies — considered him the most gifted American field general of his generation. But near the conclusion of his illustrious Sicilian campaign, the volatile Patton slapped two sick GIs in field hospitals, raving that they were shirkers. In truth, both were ill and at least one was suffering from malaria.

Public outrage eventually followed the shameful incidents. As a result, General Dwight D. Eisenhower was forced to put Patton on ice for eleven key months.

Tragically, Patton's irreplaceable talents would be lost to the Allies in the soon-to-be-stagnant Italian campaign. He also played no real role in the planning of the Normandy campaign. Instead, his former subordinate, the more stable but far less gifted Omar Bradley, assumed direct command under Eisenhower of American armies in France.

In early 1944, a mythical Patton army was used as a deception to fool the Germans into thinking that "Army Group Patton" might still make another major landing at Calais. The Germans apparently found it incomprehensible that the Americans would bench their most audacious general at the very moment when his audacity was most needed.

When Patton's Third Army finally became operational seven weeks after D-Day, it was supposed to play only a secondary role — guarding the southern flank of the armies of General Bradley and British Field Marshal Bernard Montgomery while securing the Atlantic ports.

Despite having the longest route to the German border, Patton headed east. The Third Army took off in a type of American blitzkrieg not seen since Union General William Tecumseh Sherman's rapid marches through Georgia and the Carolinas during the Civil War.

Throughout August 1944, Patton won back over the press. He was foul-mouthed, loud, and uncouth, and he led from the front in flamboyant style with a polished helmet and ivory-handled pistols.

In fact, his theatrics masked a deeply learned and analytical military mind. Patton sought to avoid casualties by encircling German armies. In innovative fashion, he partnered with American tactical air forces to cover his flanks as his armored columns raced around static German formations.

Naturally rambunctious American GIs fought best, Patton insisted, when "rolling" forward, especially in summertime. Only then, for a brief moment, might the clear skies facilitate overwhelming American air support. In August his soldiers could camp outside, while his speeding tanks still had dry roads.

In just 30 days, Patton finished his sweep across France and neared Germany. The Third Army had exhausted its fuel supplies and ground to a halt near the border in early September.

Allied supplies had been redirected northward for the normally cautious General Montgomery's reckless Market Garden gambit. That proved a harebrained scheme to leapfrog over the bridges of the Rhine River; it devoured Allied blood and treasure, and accomplished almost nothing in return.

Meanwhile, the cutoff of Patton's supplies would prove disastrous. Scattered and fleeing German forces regrouped. Their resistance stiffened as the weather grew worse and as shortened supply lines began to favor the defense.

Historians still argue over Patton's August miracle. Could a racing Third Army really have burst into Germany so far ahead of Allied lines? Could the Allies ever have adequately supplied Patton's charging columns given the growing distance from the Normandy ports? How could a supreme commander like Eisenhower handle Patton, who at any given moment could — and would — let loose with politically incorrect bombast?

We do not know the answers to all those questions. Nor will we ever quite know the full price that America paid for having a profane Patton stewing in exile for nearly a year rather than exercising his leadership in Italy or Normandy.

We only know that 70 years ago, an authentic American genius thought he could win the war in Europe — and almost did. When his Third Army stalled, so did the Allied effort.

What lay ahead in winter were the Battle of the Bulge and the nightmare fighting of the Hürtgen Forest — followed by a half-year slog into Germany.

Patton would die tragically from injuries sustained in a freak car accident not long after the German surrender. He soon became the stuff of legend but was too often remembered for his theatrics rather than his authentic genius that saved thousands of American lives.

Seventy years ago this August, George S. Patton showed America how a democracy's conscripted soldiers could arise out of nowhere to beat the deadly professionals of an authoritarian regime at their own game.

**IBD**

**Late Night**

by Andrew Malcolm

Meyers: Secretary of State John Kerry traveled to Egypt this week and had to pass through a metal detector before he could meet with officials. Which is ridiculous. Everyone knows Kerry's made of wood.

Conan: Amazon has introduced its own smartphone. You can tell it's from Amazon because after you hang up with someone, the Amazon phone suggests other people you may want to call.

Conan: Boxing Champ Floyd Mayweather posted on his Instagram that a half-dressed woman is "asking to be disrespected." This from a guy who only wears shorts to work.

Meyers: In the Wall Street Journal, Tyra Banks predicts that future people will have a robot. The article raises a lot of questions like, why is the Wall Street Journal interviewing Tyra Banks?

Meyers: Police in a Washington town killed a loose cow after it tossed an officer in the air. I guess when cows get bored, they go cop-tipping.

Conan: Starbucks has introduced its new decaf soda, called Fizzio. "Fizzio" is an Italian word that means, "Tastes OK, costs too much."

Fallon: A British firm is developing a new veggie -- Brussel-Kale. It's a combination of Brussels sprouts and kale. They got the idea from a child's nightmare.

Meyers: Today is National Hammock Day. And just like a hammock, I can't get into it.

Conan: Floating in another galaxy, scientists have found a diamond the size of Earth. In a related story, Beyonce is building a space ship.

Conan: At a Croatian animal sanctuary, two bears were always engaging in oral sex. Zookeepers got them to stop by making the bears get married.

Meyers: At California's Orange County Fair, they're selling bacon-wrapped churros, fried in bacon fat and filled with a half shot of Jack Daniels. And I hear they are simply to die of.

Meyers: Iran has asked the U.S. for an extension of time to disable its nuclear program. Asked how much extra time it needed, Iran said, "10...9...8.."

Meyers: Lay's lists 'cappuccino' as a finalist for its new chip flavor contest. If you think that's bad, wait until you try Starbucks' new 'Sour Cream & Onion Latte.'

Conan: There's currently a petition out to split California into several states. Among them would be Botoxia, Pornsylvania and the Commonwealth of Kardashia.

Conan: The California drought is so bad that all water-wasting activity will be banned by early August. Yup, the drought is SO BAD they're taking extreme measures *in two weeks*.

Conan: Some people are critical of Hillary Clinton's speaking fees. The University of Buffalo paid Hillary \$275,000 to speak. And apparently, Joe Biden got \$300,000 not to speak.

Conan: In a new interview, Dick Cheney said he thinks Barack Obama may be the worst president of his lifetime. Then today, Cheney got a thank-you note from Jimmy Carter.

Conan: The U.S. Census Bureau has found that only 1.6% of adults identify themselves as gay. In other words, there are a lot of straight guys out there doing a lot of really gay stuff.

Conan: Starbucks is opening its first stores in the nation of Colombia. Finally, someone is bringing coffee to Colombia.

Conan: The other day in Seattle, a man set his home on fire trying to kill a spider with a can of spray paint and a lighter. On the bright side, the spider is definitely dead.

Conan: Lady Gaga has agreed to make a \$250,000 donation to assist California drought relief. Gaga also agreed to stop watering her hats.

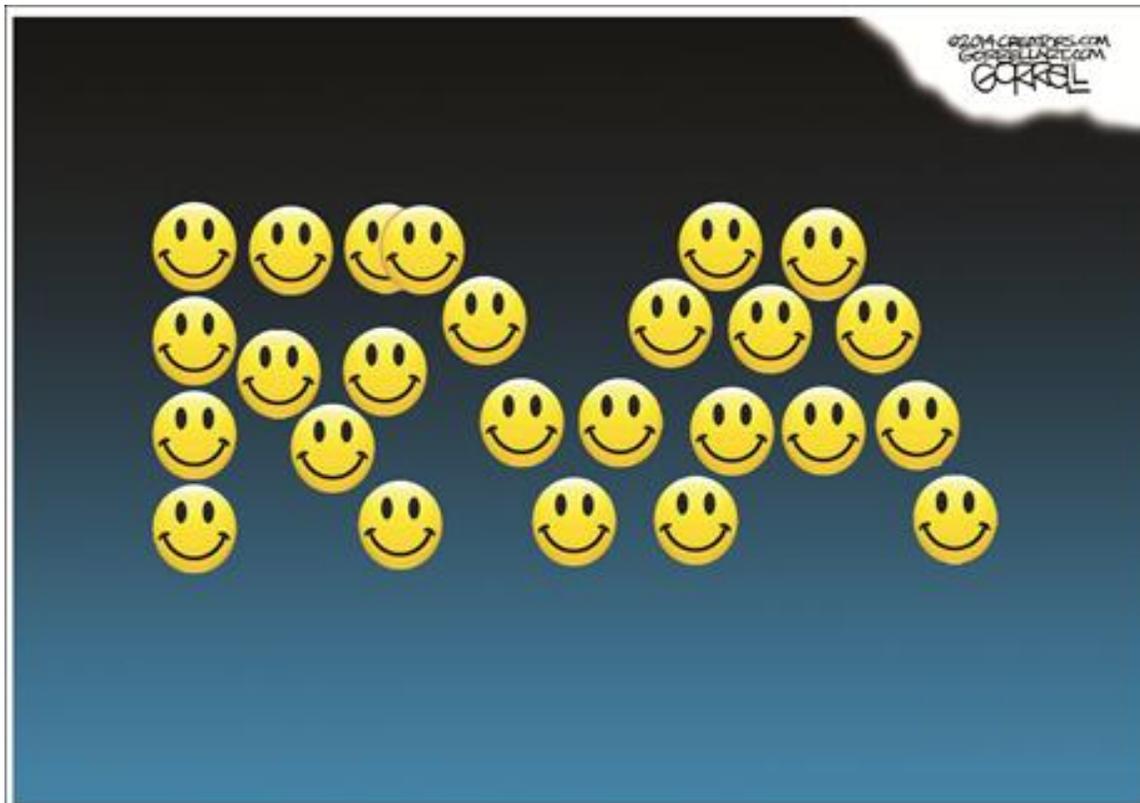
Fallon: A San Francisco man was arrested last week after he got drunk at the airport, then tried to pose as a TSA agent so he could give pat-downs to female travelers. People could tell something was up, because TSA agents generally don't shout, "Ah-ooooga!!"

Conan: The storyline of the upcoming Star Wars movie has leaked. The movie starts with R2D2, Chewbacca and Han Solo waking up in Vegas.

Conan: Scientists have invented a cheese that even vegans can eat. Now scientists are working on inventing a vegan who doesn't ask the waiter a million questions.







NEWS ITEM: STUDY FINDS RICHMOND, VIRGINIA IS HAPPIEST CITY