

This is not the end of Trump

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David Halberstam, in "The Best and the Brightest," listed the "virtues Americans have always respected" as "hard work, self-sacrifice, decency, loyalty." I don't believe that's changed since 1972. President Donald Trump, in his sublime indecency, fails the test on all these qualities except perhaps hard work, yet tens of millions of Americans still admire him.

It's tempting to dismiss this reality. It's tempting to focus instead on the pressure building on Trump from multiple sources: the Mueller investigation, Paul Manafort's cooperating with Robert Mueller, Michael Cohen's guilty plea, the wins of progressive Democratic candidates, falling poll numbers. It's tempting to think Trump's finished, even if he's already been pronounced politically dead countless times.

This would be a mistake. That the Democratic Party will take the House in the midterm November elections and start impeachment proceedings against Trump is plausible, even likely. It's unlikely, however, that the Democrats will have the numbers in the Senate to convict him. This may be a positive scenario for Trump. As the victim president, or acquitted president, he'd fire up support going into 2020.

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stay in purple-state Colorado more persuaded of this than ever. The strong economy became strong under President Barack Obama but to deny Trump credit for it is not going to wash with most Americans. They feel a new confidence. They see it in more clients at the hardware store, more people eating out, more business startups.

Jamie Dimon, the chief executive of JPMorgan Chase, is right

to tell Democrats to stop "pounding away at business." The Democratic Party is long on anger but short still of a winning message. It's a big mistake for Democrats to have allowed founding American myths of can-do optimism and self-reliance to become the exclusive preserve of Republicans. A unifying Democratic candidate from the heartland could claw them back.

In small-town America, now

synonymous with Republican-majority America, any Democratic voter gets asked why Democrats are intent on taking away American guns, jobs, and individualism, and replacing them with handouts to every peeved interest group. Regular mass shootings answer the question easily enough (ever if not persuasively to most gun owners). The other questions are more problematic.

An offensive plan for the Balkans that the U

A Kosovo-Serbia land swap would be peaceful ethnic cleansing. But at least



CHARLES A KUPCHANN

The Balkans remains in strategic limbo. Kosovo declared independence from Serbia 10 years ago, but Serbia has yet to come to terms with its loss — refusing to recognize Kosovo and stirring trouble between the country's ethnic Serbs and the ethnic Albanian majority. Almost two decades after the NATO bombing campaign to drive Yugoslav forces from Kosovo, some 4,000 NATO troops remain there to keep the peace.

A breakthrough may now be in the making. It is a morally offensive one, but nonetheless the United States and the European Union should get behind it.

President Aleksandar Vucic of Serbia and President Hashim Thaci of Kosovo are apparently working on a proposal to engage in a land swap that could bring the simmering conflict to an end. Northern Kosovo, which is populated mainly by ethnic Serbs and borders Serbia, would

be transferred to Serbia. In return, a to-be-determined chunk of Serbia's Presevo Valley, which is heavily populated by ethnic Albanians and borders Kosovo, would become part of Kosovo.

This swap is effectively a peaceful form of ethnic cleansing. Still, it is the right thing to do. Pragmatism needs to trump principle in this case to secure a deal that promises to bring a close to the years of bloodshed and border changes that have resulted from the collapse of Yugoslavia.

The proposed land swap has been lurking in the background since the early days of Kosovo's independence. But it has gone nowhere in part because the United States and the European Union have adamantly opposed it. True to form, Chancellor Angela Merkel of Germany recently said that "the territorial integrity of the states of the Western Balkans has been established and is inviolable." Backing up Merkel, dozens of prominent scholars and policymakers on both sides of the Atlantic have signed an open letter condemning the proposal and imploring the United States and the European Union to oppose "a return to ethnification of politics and frontiers."

But there are signs that some Western officials are warming up to the idea. John Bolton, Trump's national security adviser, hinted as much last month: "Our policy, the U.S. policy, is that if the two parties can work it out between themselves and reach agreement, we don't exclude territorial adjustments," he said. Bolton is thinking clearly, at least on this front. As long as both the Serbian and Kosovar governments agree to the deal — and can secure sufficient political backing among their publics and legislatures — the United States and the European Union should support it.

Of Kosovo's population of almost two million, roughly 90% are ethnic Albanian and some 6% are estimated to be ethnic Serb. Reliable numbers are hard to come by, but around half of Kosovo's Serbs — high estimates reach 70,000 — live in northern Kosovo, where they make up some 90% of the population. Because of its Serb majority, northern Kosovo (about 10% of the country's territory) has been part of the country in name only since independence. Serbia has continued to hold political and economic sway there, leaving Kosovars with a sizable chunk of



A giant Serbian national flag was hung prior to the visit of Serbian president, Aleksandar Vucic, to Gazivode Lake in Kosovo.

their country that has no interest in belonging to an independent Kosovo.

Serbia's Presevo Valley is reportedly home to some 60,000 ethnic Albanians and is comparable in size to northern Kosovo.

How much of this area Serbia might transfer to Kosovo is unclear. Nonetheless, trading northern Kosovo for at least some portion of the Presevo Valley would broadly preserve Serbia's and Kosovo's current

territorial size and population. The Serbian government will have a hard time granting formal recognition to an independent Kosovo no matter what; the land is of historical and cultural importance to Serbs, and Serbia