

THE MORNING JOLT

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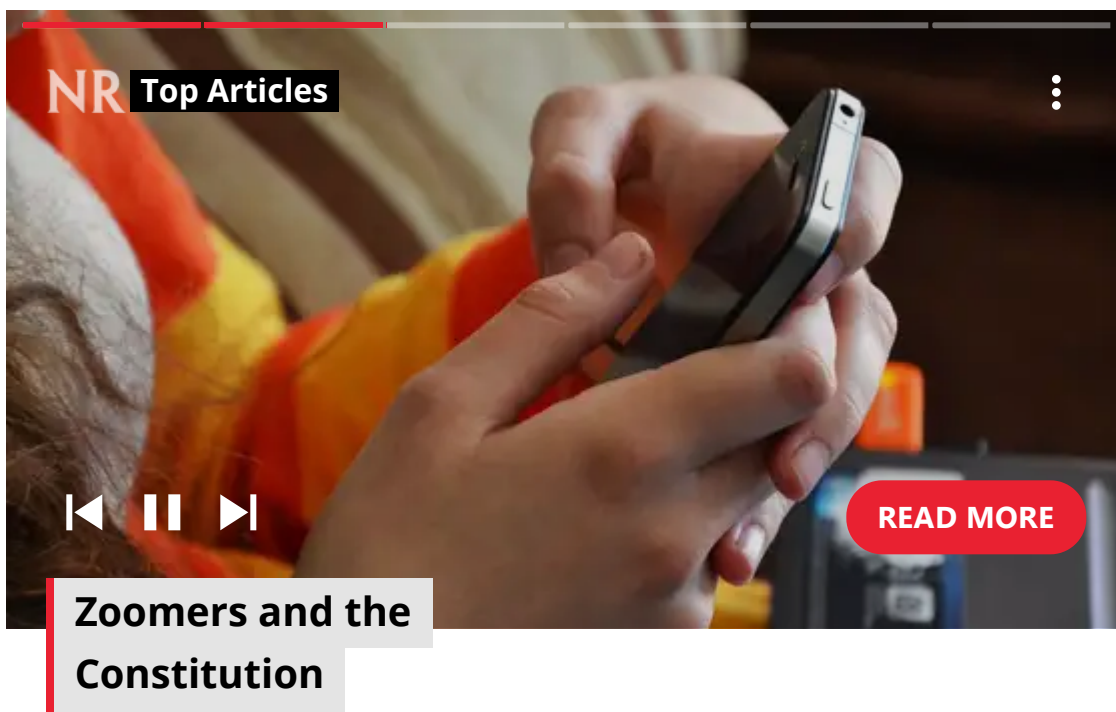
The Truth about George Soros Is Damning Enough

By JIM GERAGHTY | November 1, 2018 10:35 AM



Making the click-through worthwhile: a deep dive into separating fact from fiction when it comes to George Soros, and finding that the truth is bad enough without any of the exaggerations; the *Washington Post* offers another round of white-knuckle polls for control of the House; and a prominent force in past election cycles has been a little quieter in 2018.

The Bad-Enough Truth About George Soros



This morning, the *New York Times* **writes about George Soros** and declares . . .

On both sides of the Atlantic, a loose network of activists and political figures on the right have spent years seeking to cast Mr. Soros not just as a well-heeled political opponent but also as the personification of all they detest. Employing barely coded anti-Semitism, they have built a warped portrayal of him as the mastermind of a “globalist” movement, a left-wing radical who would undermine the established order and a proponent of diluting the white, Christian nature of their societies through immigration.

This is a good moment to sort out the nonsense claims and Internet rumors about Soros and the verified truth, which is bad enough.

Soros was born in 1930, making him nine when the war broke out and 15 when it ended. There’s no evidence that he played any role in the atrocities of the Nazi regime in World War II.

What is true is that to survive **in that time and place**, Tivadar Soros had his son George assume a non-Jewish identity — “Sandor Kiss” — and pose as the godson of a Hungarian agriculture ministry bureaucrat named Baumbach, whose job

was taking inventory of Jewish properties confiscated by the Nazi occupiers. Soros accompanied Baumbach on one job, traveling to the estate of a wealthy Jewish aristocrat named Moric Kornfeld. What's not disputed is that Soros hung around the estate while Baumbach did his work for the Nazi-occupying regime; what is disputed is what, if anything, Soros did while Baumbach took inventory.

That isn't embracing the Nazi cause, and it's difficult to argue that cooperating with taking inventory once in order to maintain a non-Jewish disguise constitutes an unforgivable sin while sitting in a country that ran Operation Paperclip to win the Space Race.

For what it's worth, Soros did make his role sound more active in a 1998 interview with Steve Kroft on *60 Minutes*.

Kroft: "My understanding is that you went . . . went out, in fact, and helped in the confiscation of property from the Jews."

Soros: "Yes, that's right. Yes."

Kroft: "I mean, that's — that sounds like an experience that would send lots of people to the psychiatric couch for many, many years. Was it difficult?"

Soros: "Not, not at all. Not at all. Maybe as a child you don't . . . you don't see the connection. But it was — it created no — no problem at all."

Kroft: "No feeling of guilt?"

Soros: "No."

Kroft: "For example, that, 'I'm Jewish, and here I am, watching these people go. I could just as easily be these, I should be there.' None of that?"

Soros: "Well, of course . . . I could be on the other side or I could be the one from whom the thing is being taken away. But there was no sense that I shouldn't be there, because that was — well, actually, in a funny way, it's just like in the markets — that if I weren't there — of course, I wasn't doing it, but somebody else would — would — would be taking it away anyhow. And it

was the — whether I was there or not, I was only a spectator, the property was being taken away. So the — I had no role in taking away that property. So I had no sense of guilt.”

There’s one other wrinkle: Tivadar Soros offered a similar account of the trip in his 1965 autobiography titled *Masquerade: Dancing Around Death in Nazi Occupied Hungary*, except he described Baumbach as “Bafluss” and made his son’s role sound more active:

The following week the kind-hearted Bafluss, in an effort to cheer the unhappy lad up, took him off with him to the provinces. At the time he was working in Transdanubia, west of Budapest, on the model estate of a Jewish aristocrat, Baron Moric Kornfeld. There they were wined and dined by what was left of the staff. George also met several other ministry officials, who immediately took a liking to the young man, the alleged godson of Mr Bafluss. He even helped with the inventory. Surrounded by good company, he quickly regained his spirits. On Saturday he returned to Budapest.

Did young George Soros help with taking inventory of property seized from Jews? His father’s autobiography says yes, Soros himself says no, aside from that initial answer in the *60 Minutes* interview. At the very least, he was hanging around while inventory was being taken; he has, in subsequent interviews and **writings**, said he “accompanied an official of the Ministry of Agriculture, posing as his godson, when he was taking the inventory of a Jewish estate.”

By the way, Kornfeld “was **taken to the infamous Mauthausen concentration camp**. In return for permitting the Nazis to assume administration of his family’s vast industrial enterprises, he and his family were allowed to leave for Portugal. Following the war his holdings were nationalized and he never returned to Hungary.”

Whatever Soros’s worldview and philosophies as a boy during World War II were, he’s a committed, outspoken, extraordinarily deep-pocketed liberal

progressive now. It is not an exaggeration to characterize Soros's views as radical, particularly compared to the American mainstream.

Because Soros grew to prominence on the U.S. political scene when he spent more than \$25 million trying to defeat President Bush in the 2004 election, most members of the media think of him as just another liberal billionaire — Tom Steyer or Michael Bloomberg with a different accent. But his views are genuinely shocking to middle America when they hear them.

Soros was flatly opposed to the War on Terror after 9/11 and declared the U.S. response to al Qaeda to be morally equivalent to the terrorist attacks: “We abhor terrorists, because they kill innocent people for political goals. But by waging war on terror we are doing the same thing.”

In 2006, Soros **said** that “the main obstacle to a stable and just world is the United States.” Not Iran, not Russia, not China, not Islamist terrorist groups, not transnational crime . . . the United States.

In 2010, he **declared that China** has “a better functioning government than the United States.”

He has **generously donated to groups** that call on governments the world over to sever or downgrade their diplomatic relations with Israel and calls for Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) against Israel. He's made several comments that some interpreted as blaming Jews for anti-Semitism, **such as**, “I don't think that you can ever overcome anti-Semitism if you behave as a tribe . . . the only way you can overcome it is if you give up the tribalness.”

He wrote in 2007, “I do believe that attitudes toward Israel are influenced by Israel's policies, and attitudes toward the Jewish community are influenced by the pro-Israel lobby's success in suppressing divergent views.”

Soros's comments either deliberately or inadvertently **feed into the notion** of Jewish control of American politics:

The pro-Israel lobby has been remarkably successful in suppressing criticism. Politicians challenge it at their peril because of the lobby's ability to influence political contributions. . . . Academics had their advancement blocked and think-tank experts their funding withdrawn when they stepped too far out of line. Anybody who dares to dissent may be subjected to a campaign of personal vilification. . . . Some leaders of the Democratic Party have promised to bring about a change of direction but they cannot deliver on that promise until they are able to resist the dictates of AIPAC.

Soros is not a fan of national borders or border enforcement. When criticizing Hungarian prime minister Viktor Orban in 2017, **Soros said**, “[Orban’s] plan treats the protection of national borders as the objective and the refugees as an obstacle. Our plan treats the protection of refugees as the objective and national borders as the obstacle.” In many interviews, Soros has decried nationalism and national identity as a menace.

He contended that **withdrawing from the Iran deal** is “effectively destroying the transatlantic alliance.”

None of the above quotes are from the rumor mill or secret recordings or secondhand claims. Soros openly lays out his beliefs in interviews, speeches, and articles. His viewpoints are not a secret. And it is completely understandable that those who believe in military responses to terror attacks, secure borders, who support Israel, who don't believe that anti-Semitism is driven in any part by the actions of Jews, who oppose the Iran deal, and who are wary of the notion that China's government “functions better,” would see Soros as a malevolent force in politics at home and abroad.

The irony is that the Right's beliefs about Soros aren't that different from the Left's beliefs about the Koch brothers, and before that, Richard Mellon Scaife.

The grassroots of each party always loathe the biggest donors of the other side and always sees them as shadowy and nefarious. (Of course, the demonization of the Koch brothers usually involves **some fudging of their actual philosophies** — they're civil-society building libertarians, not traditional conservatives.)

The false “Soros was a Nazi” accusation helps out Soros by giving him a glaringly implausible charge that makes his critics sound like paranoid loons. The truth about George Soros today, and the agenda he seeks to enact, is bad enough.

***Washington Post*: Hey, Those Competitive Districts Look Pretty . . . Competitive**

I've long wondered why news organizations think nationwide “generic ballot” surveys tell their audiences anything useful about which party will have a majority in the House of Representatives after Election Day. If you win all of your seats 90 percent to 10 percent, and the other guy wins all of his seats 52 percent to 48 percent, you can win the national popular vote by a lot and still have considerably fewer than 218 seats.

Credit the *Washington Post* for **narrowing its survey to competitive districts** and finding a result that should generate a lot of white knuckles:

Across 69 congressional districts identified by the Cook Political Report and The Post as competitive in late August, the Post-Schar School poll finds 50 percent of likely voters support the Democratic candidate, while 46 percent support the Republican. The Democrats' four-point edge represents a superficial advantage with Republicans, given the poll's 3.5-point margin of error.

Of those 69 districts, 63 are held by Republicans. The GOP is going to lose a bunch of seats, but the question is whether they lose 22 or less, or whether they lose 23 or more.

One other important detail: “Voters who did not turn out in the 2014 midterms favor Democrats by 55 percent to 42 percent, while those who did vote split 49 percent to 48 percent in Republicans’ favor.” If all of those who say they’re intending to vote keep their word, Democrats will do well. If, as usual, some people are telling the pollster that they’ll vote but don’t, the Republicans might do better than the conventional wisdom suggests.

That ‘Gun Lobby’ Isn’t Spending As Much As It Used to Spend

The Virginia Democratic party **really has to stretch** to make it sound as if extraordinarily secure incumbent Gerry Connolly is in danger of being unseated by “the gun lobby” that has spent a whole . . . \$32,500 against him. That’s less than the Connolly campaign spent on payroll and administrative costs, polling and consulting, or renting a space for a fundraiser.

The NRA’s Political Victory Fund has been quieter and focused on fewer races this cycle. If the election goes badly for Second Amendment advocates, some may wonder if the group was a little too focused.

ADDENDUM: October was a phenomenal month for **Jolt subscriptions**, click-throughs, web traffic, **Three Martini Lunch listeners**, and even some **book sales in there**. Once again, thank you for your support. If you find election season exhausting, we’re almost done . . .

. . . I mean, unless Georgia goes to a runoff, which would be held December 4, and the Louisiana elections would be held December 8.



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