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The American Senate's absolution verdict in the *impeachment* process against President Donald Trump is somehow the starting point of the campaign for the autumn presidential election. As Peter Baker points out in an article in the *New York Times*, the possibility of continuing to investigate in the Congress the president's attempts to coerce Ukraine will serve to grind the national debate over the next few months and also the Democratic primaries to choose who will be Trump's opponent. This victory of the American president coincides in time with the announcement of his plan of peace for the Middle East. A plan that as soon as released has raised a backlash of criticism since the so-called "Agreement of the century" has been made behind the back of one of the two protagonists of the conflict, the Palestinians. One of the most critical and authoritative voices is that of the Middle East policy expert in the British newspaper *The Independent* where Robert Fisk reports that the plan means to hush the Palestinian refugees issue up and their right to return, reject the city of Jerusalem as the Palestinian capital and to shelve the mission of the UNRWA, the UN agency supporting the relief and human development of Palestinian refugees. At the same time, this means legitimizing the permanent Israeli occupation of the West Bank and the annexation of almost all the Jewish colonies established against what has been dictated by international laws. Another relevant issue is discussed by Martin Chulov in *The Guardian* where he warns that the announcement of the plan has not provoked any anger in the Arab countries, only apathy, in a region which no longer seems to consider the fate of the Palestinians as the centerpiece of the policy or as a cause worth supporting. Relate to these two issues, a long article in *Foreign Affairs* is highly critical towards the U.S. foreign policy under the

presidency of Trump, emphasizing that the current White House is carrying on its foreign policy with irreconcilable goals, without internal coherence and without prior assessment of the scope and the consequences of the decisions taken. Ultimately, the current crisis in the Middle East demands a return to the most basic principles of a consistent foreign policy, where goals are clearly established as well as the appreciation of the available resources needed to achieve them.

Within this context of the disorientation of the American administration, several voices emphasize the new prominence Putin's Russia is acquiring. Almost completely absent from the region for a quarter of a century after the Soviet Union breakup, today Russia has turned as one of the leading actors in the entire Middle East, with a huge military influence and good relations with all the main protagonists, from Israel to Saudi Arabia, as reports Alec Luhn in the magazine *Politico*. This is a paradox as Russia has a weak economy (it only occupies the eleventh place in the world ranking) and therefore needs to compensate it in other areas through diplomacy, military force and its capacity to appear as a problem solving factor. This paradox is defined by Moisés Naim in *Le Monde Diplomatique* as that of a low cost superpower insofar as Russia is taking advantage of the shortcuts that now allow a government to intervene in another country and weaken or dominate its international adversaries, without being forced to devote important and expensive investments. In this sense, Vladimir Putin has proven himself to be a master in the art of projecting his power over other countries with a limited budget and has turned Russia into a key player in most major conflicts thanks to its mastery of ITC.

The disorientation we are referring to not only affects US foreign policy but is becoming a systemic problem that leads *Foreign Policy* to inquire if socialism, or at least social-democracy, will be able to stand up again as an alternative to neoliberalism. In recent years, the economic growth promised by neoliberal heralds has slowed down, profit and earnings are shared in an increasingly uneven way, and at the same time, this inequality has been accompanied by a growing sense of insecurity. This is what has to bring to remember and value the positive experience underlying the application of social democratic policies after World War II. And insofar as the warning signs are relevant enough (rising of populisms, increasing citizen unrest and protests, etc.) the whole political spectrum should recognize the advantages of a social democratic solution to the current crisis, which affects the core of democracy. We consider therefore *The Economist* warning touch as a highlight as its annual survey shows that democracy is retreating all over the planet and that the overall score of democratic health is the lowest registered since the index began to be released in 2006. According to the survey, only 22 countries can be regarded as complete democracies, while more than one third of the world population still lives under authoritarian regimes. This threat to democracy is also the subject of a report from the Center for the Future of Democracy of the University of Cambridge that reveals that worldwide democracy lies in a state of growing weakness. The authors of the report describe the situation in terms of global democratic recession, the turning point of which they place around 2005 and they warn we have reached the highest level of democratic discontent ever recorded. Even more important, not only citizens are increasingly dissatisfied with their political leaders, but they are also disappointed with the democratic system as a wholes. Finally, the report also points out that History suggests that

disillusioned citizens do not come easily to the streets to support a system that has not been previously able to defend them.

At the European level, the UK's official departure from the European Union on 31 January has been one of the most relevant news and the editorial of the British newspaper *The Guardian* claims once again its Europeanness and stresses the challenges the country will have to face from now to find a new place in the world. From a domestic point of view [Timothy Garton Ash](#) considers that the main issue that remains pending is that of to know whether Scotland will leave the British Union to return to the European one by holding a second referendum on independence. Finally, the British farewell is also reviewed by Jacopo Barigazzi in the pages of the magazine *Politico* where he underlines the influence the United Kingdom has had on the design of the current European Union and highlights some of its major contributions such as the impulse given to the creation of the single market and the free trade agreements, or the United Kingdom's resolute support to the EU enlargement to the countries of Central and Eastern Europe as a fundamental tool of European geopolitics.

Inequality is the concept that best helps to explain the crisis of the democratic system, the rise of populisms and the various manifestations of discontent, protest and unrest that are occurring with a growing intensity around the world. In an interview granted to [La Vanguardia](#), Josep Stieglitz states that we are living a triple crisis - that of capitalism, climate and values- and attributes it to the unlimited confidence in the markets carried by the neoliberalism since the Reagan era. In his opinion it would be necessary to solve this triple crisis to return to a form of capitalism that guarantees a shared prosperity, in which politics controls the economy and it's assumed that education and, by extension, the creativity and the productivity of the citizens are the basis of a country's wealth. This inequality has also been one of the central points of the agenda of the World Economic Forum held in Davos at the end of January. [Social Europe](#) highlights that this year's manifesto affirms that companies should pay their fair share of taxes, show zero tolerance towards corruption, support human rights in their global supply chains and defend a competitive and fair playground. In short, inequality does not have to be a fateful consequence of globalization and the rise of new technologies, and it can be fought through political action. In the magazine [CTXT](#) Manuel Garí proposes formulating realistic although difficult goals to attain: social and public ownership of the means of production, of finances, of credit and of money; democratic planning as a way to generate the will of the majority social and to satisfy its needs respecting the limits of the biosphere; and to bring life to the center of the economy and politics. In short, solving the inequality problems involves dismantle, and not merely improve, the current social regime.

Finally, and as showed by the cancellation of this year's edition of the Mobile World Congress in Barcelona, the battle for supremacy in the field of ITC and Artificial Intelligence is already a geopolitical reality. Indeed, in the race for the mastery of AI, the United States and China struggle for gold and silver medals, leaving the other countries the crumbs as noted by Tyson Barker in [Foreign Policy](#), although the European Union sees things differently and both in the field of AI and other strategic technological areas, the new President of the European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen, wants to fight

for the first place. Artificial Intelligence is also discussed from philosophy and we stress the contribution of Daniel Innerarity in *La Vanguardia*, where he points out that the disturbing issue is to know to what extent the benefits of automation allow us to consider that intelligent systems still have some kind of relationship with the logic of human decision. In short, it is about knowing how to make the best decisions and making sure that they are not our last decisions as human beings.

Diari de les IDEES

International politics and globalisation

Peter Baker The Vote Is Over. Let the Contest Begin

President Trump hailed his acquittal in the Senate impeachment trial as vindication, but the struggle now moves back to the House, the campaign trail and, ultimately, the voters. For Mr. Trump and his opponents, the bottom line is coming in the form of another up-or-down vote in 272 days. At that point, it will be clear whether it will provide the ending in the history book or just another page to turn (...)

Brett McGurk The Cost of an Incoherent Foreign Policy

The current White House runs a foreign policy with irreconcilable objectives, no internal coherence, and no pretense of gaming out critical decisions before they are taken. Maximalist objectives are set with little thought to what might be required to achieve them. When the real world intrudes, with adversaries, competitors, or allies pursuing their own objectives independent from the United States', Trump lurches from doubling down on risky bets to quitting the field altogether, as happened recently in Syria, leaving friends bewildered (...)

Martin Chulov The Where once there was fury, Palestinian issue now stirs up apathy

For much of the last 70 years the cause of Palestine stirred the Arab street. From Yemen to Morocco and all points in between, laments were sung in song and enshrined in poetry as the decades mounted without a Palestinian state. Regional statesmen built careers by standing by a people without a land. Wars were fought and lost in their name. After the

2003 US-led invasion of Iraq, that slowly began to change and by the time Iran became the preoccupation of the US and its allies in the region, the Palestinians were cast into the unfamiliar role of playing second fiddle. Then came Donald Trump, and ever since the once-overarching cause of the region has barely been given a seat in the orchestra pit. The unveiling of the US president's much-delayed Middle East "peace plan" has generated neither enthusiasm nor anger - only apathy - in a region that no longer views the fate of the Palestinians as a lynchpin, or - in some cases - even a cause worth championing loudly (...)

Robert Fisk Trump's 'deal of the century' is impossible to take it seriously

When the two old political fraudsters emerged at the White House this week with the most deranged, farcical tragi-comedy in Middle East history, it was difficult to know whether to laugh or cry. The 80-page "peace" plan from the White House contained 56 references to "Vision" in its first 60 pages - and yes, with a capital V on each occasion to suggest, I guess, that this "deal of the century" was a supernatural revelation. It was not, though it might have been written by a super-Israeli (...)

Limes Il piano di Trump uccide la Palestina ma dà una boccata d'ossigeno all'Iran

[This summary is not available in English]

Alec Luhn Putin's game in the Middle East

The Middle East has a new kingmaker. For a quarter-century after the breakup of the Soviet Union, Russia was almost entirely absent from the region. Today, it has become a top player, with a formidable military footprint and good relations with all the major opposing protagonists, from Israel to Saudi Arabia. Things certainly seem to be going Vladimir Putin's way. The Russian leader celebrated Orthodox Christmas on January 7 with his first visit to Damascus since his air force began bombing rebel targets in 2015, to take full stock of Russia's success in changing the course of the conflict (...)

Moisés Naim Russie, une superpuissance low cost

[This summary is not available in English]

Olivier Piot La course sans fin du soleil kurde

[This summary is not available in English]

Sheri Berman Can Social Democrats Save the World (Again)?

Socialism is experiencing a resurgence. Polls reveal its growing popularity in the United States, particularly among young people. Popular politicians like Bernie Sanders and Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez proudly refer to themselves as socialists. And the press and public intellectuals can't seem to stop talking about it. The main reason for socialism's resurgence is capitalism—or rather, its negative consequences. Economic growth has slowed over the past decades, and its gains have become more unevenly distributed: Income inequality in the United States today is at its highest point since the Census Bureau began tracking it, and the top 1 percent of Americans control almost as much of the nation's wealth as the entire middle class, according to the Federal Reserve. Rising inequality has been accompanied by rising insecurity (...)

Alexis Cortés El octubre chileno: el neoliberalismo ¿nació y morirá en Chile?

[This summary is not available in English]

Michael Klare Briser Téhéran ou contenir Pékin, le dilemme de la Maison Blanche

[This summary is not available in English]

The Economist Narendra Modi stokes divisions in the world's biggest democracy

Last month India changed the law to make it easier for adherents of all the subcontinent's religions, except Islam, to acquire citizenship. At the same time, the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (bjp) wants to compile a register of all India's 1.3bn citizens, as a means to hunt down illegal immigrants (see Briefing). Those sound like technicalities, but many of the country's 200m Muslims do not have the papers to prove they are Indian, so they risk being made stateless. Ominously, the government has ordered the building of camps to detain those caught in the net. You might think that the bjp's scheme was a miscalculation. It has sparked widespread and lasting protests. Students, secularists, even the largely fawning media have begun to speak out against Narendra Modi, the prime minister, for his apparent determination to transform India from a tolerant, multi-religious place into a chauvinist Hindu state (...)

Catalonia, Spain and Europe

Borja de Riquer Governar por encima del griterío

[This summary is not available in English]

Josep Maria Vallès Juicios de Estado

[This summary is not available in English]

Editorial CTXT L' hora del futur

[This summary is not available in English]

Paul Taylor Europe's odd-couple

A kaleidoscope of novel political coalitions are taking shape around Europe as old two-party systems crumble. These new “odd couple” partnerships — conservative/green; socialist/radical left — offer voters new faces and some promising changes in policy. But they are unlikely to resolve the democratic dilemma driving populism and protest in many countries. Bringing young parties with fresh ideas into the corridors of power is only part of the change that Europe needs to counter alienation, popular anger and the rise of often ugly identity politics. Continental politics will continue to fester until policymakers take measures to reverse widening inequality of income and wealth, reinvest in depressed regions and find ways to involve citizens more actively in the political process (...)

The Guardian On Holocaust Memorial Day: as necessary as ever

This Holocaust Memorial Day, and the ceremony that will take place in Poland, carry a special poignancy because of the diminishing number of survivors and the landmark nature of the date. Over the last 75 years, survivors have talked in schools and on university campuses; inside museums and at parliaments. These were talks that were often difficult to deliver but which were undertaken out of a sense to duty to both the dead and the living; they helped keep the fire of conscience burning in Europe's soul. A single human story, told face to face, conveys the tragedy of millions in a way that a recitation of figures never could. But the baton must be passed on and accepted. The Spanish philosopher George Santayana said: “Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.” That lesson must never cease to be taught (...)

Pancho Pardi Emilia Romagna, pericolo scampato. Ma il Pd non si faccia illusioni

[This summary is not available in English]

The Economist Boris Johnson is reinventing one-nation conservatism

Boris Johnson is well placed to become one of the most powerful prime ministers in modern times. Margaret Thatcher had to contend with a powerful internal opposition of moderate “wets”. Tony Blair had Gordon Brown to deal with. But Mr Johnson has purged the internal opposition and reduced his cabinet colleagues to a pack of poodles. If politics in 2019 was about calculating the strength of parliamentary factions, politics in 2020 and beyond will be about cataloguing the intrigues in the court of King Boris. But what does Mr Johnson want to do with all this power, other than “get Brexit done”? The best clue lies in the phrase “one-nation Conservatism”. During the election campaign Mr Johnson repeatedly promised to lead a one-nation Conservative administration. Though it may sound like one of those feel-good phrases that politicians use to fill the void, the phrase is pregnant with meaning: you cannot understand the Johnson project without decoding it. Yet it does not mean what most Tories think it means (...)

Guy Standing El Brexit y la crisis de transformación mundial

[This summary is not available in English]

Jacopo Barigazzi Britain leaves its mark on Europe

Brexiters see Brussels as an occupying power — but it is one crafted to a large extent in Britain’s own image. From the EU’s signature achievement, the single market, to its eastward expansion after the fall of the Berlin Wall, and in many other areas, U.K. thinking was highly influential in determining the direction of travel. As Britain finally departs the bloc on Friday after three and a half years of bitter Brexit arguments, it leaves behind an EU that would have been very different without it. “The U.K. had a strong influence on the EU throughout its membership and much of what the EU is today reflects a very strong British influence,” said Michael Leigh, who served as director general for enlargement at the European Commission and now teaches at Johns Hopkins University’s Bologna campus (...)

Timothy Garton Ash We remainers must now aim for Britain to do well - and the EU even better

Britain has not left Europe; it has just stepped into another room. Its European role has always been complex and ambivalent. “The desire for isolation, the knowledge that it is impossible - these are the two poles between which the needle of the British compass continues to waver.” The words of the historian RW Seton-Watson in a history of Britain in Europe published in 1937. True then, even more true now. We ex-remainers have consistently argued that Brexit will leave the UK weaker, poorer, more divided, less

influential, less attractive to the rest of the world. Some evidence is already in. According to Bloomberg Economics, by the end of this year Brexit will have cost Britain some £200bn in lost economic growth – nearly as much (adjusted for inflation) as the country has paid in to the EU budget over the entire period of its membership since 1973.

Maïa de la Baume Conference on the Future of Europe: Don't mention the T word

With a few notable exceptions, people in Brussels don't want to talk about treaty change. On Wednesday, the European Commission will set out its vision of the Conference on the Future of Europe, which is aimed at remodeling the EU. The radical set of proposals includes changing the way the president of the Commission is elected and allowing transnational candidate lists in European elections. Most of these proposals would need changes to the EU treaties, which requires a unanimous vote among EU countries. But according to the latest draft of the Commission's vision for the conference, an initial mention of "proposals for treaty change" has been taken out, prompting some in the European Parliament to ask if the Commission is trying to please EU countries, which have shown reluctance to treaty change (...)

The Guardian On Britain leaving the EU: still part of Europe

We have lost. We're out. Stark words and a bleak reality. Britain has now left the European Union. Our departure is a tragic national error, against which this newspaper has consistently argued. It is still opposed by around half of the population, by majorities in Scotland, Northern Ireland and London, and by most young people, all of whom are just as patriotic as those whose cause has won the day. It is a defeat to be mourned and learned from. Some are celebrating today. Others are in despair. For many, it is simply a relief. All sides, though, should have enough humility to recognise that Britain leaves with an open national wound. It will take action as well as words to close the wound, and there has not been enough action. Commemorative tea towels and cheap triumphalism won't cut it. But the truth must be faced. The referendum vote and the general election have made Britain's departure from the EU inevitable. We have lost. We're out (...)

The Irish Times On Irish election 2020: A coalition of the willing?

The people have spoken, but figuring out how to produce a stable government that reflects their wishes is likely to take a lot longer than the three-week campaign that produced this remarkable result. In this era of political fragmentation, when no party can be said to *win* an election, identifying what voters don't want is easier than seeing what they do. Certainly, the result is a rejection of Fine Gael, which has suffered the third-worst result in its history (after 1944 and 1948). It is also a rejection of the status quo in health and housing, which drove support for Opposition parties. The largest of those in the new Dáil is

Fianna Fáil, but Micheál Martin's party has also had a terrible election - only 2011 was worse - and it owes its numerical superiority chiefly to Sinn Féin having run too few candidates. Even allowing for the surge in backing for Sinn Féin, three-quarters of voters gave their first preference to other parties (...)

Democracy, diversity and culture

George Steiner L'Europa è un sogno che resta vivo

[This summary is not available in English]

The Economist Global democracy has another bad year

Democracy is in retreat, according to the latest edition of the Democracy Index from our sister company, The Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU). This annual survey, which rates the state of democracy across 167 countries based on five measures—electoral process and pluralism, the functioning of government, political participation, democratic political culture and civil liberties—finds that democracy has been eroded around the world in the past year. The global score of 5.44 out of ten is the lowest recorded since the index began in 2006. Just 22 countries, home to 430m people, were deemed “full democracies” by the EIU. More than a third of the world's population, meanwhile, still live under authoritarian rule (...)

Daniel Innerarity Todos apelan a la democracia, incluso los que se la quieren cargar

[This summary is not available in English]

Nesrine Malik The left can't sit out the 'culture wars'. It must learn to fight them better

In an essay entitled *Historically Correct*, the American academic Prof Ruth Perry explained how the concept of political correctness was weaponised against progressive causes almost from the moment it was conceived. The result, she wrote, was that in an “Orwellian inversion, only those who uphold the conservative status quo are exempt from ridicule”. This perfect encapsulation of how the right has attempted to put itself beyond criticism would be a startling contemporary insight if it were not for the minor detail of when the essay was published - 1992. I spoke to Perry in the summer of 2018. When I asked her why nothing had changed in the quarter-century since she wrote those prescient words - in fact, why the right's strategy seems to have become ever more effective - she replied with the frustration of someone who had seen history repeat itself too often (...)

Nuria Alabao Seis retos del feminismo (de base)

[This summary is not available in English]

Melissa Gira Grant The New Majority Behind Sex Work Decriminalization

When people have a real chance to say what kind of world they want, they tend to tell similar stories: safety for themselves and their families, dignified work, health care. Viewed this way, there is something almost intuitive about many left ideas. Which means the real trouble with building support for them isn't so much the policies themselves—it's getting away from what we've been told is realistic or possible. When it comes to connecting what people say they want with the laws and policies that can actually do what they want, the gap is enormous. For so long, the overwhelming narrative around sex work and human trafficking has had very little to do with the lives of actual sex workers or victims of trafficking. It was a story told again and again about heroic cops and depraved men, girls for sale in plain sight, pimps in grocery store parking lots, a monotonous evening news moral panic. It stacked the terms of the debate: to be against violence meant to be for the systems and institutions—law enforcement, penal welfare, capitalism-for-good—that were themselves sources of violence and exploitation. The challenge for organizers for sex workers' rights, then, has been to go beyond correcting other people's misinformation to build a community of concern (...)

María Eugenia Rodríguez Palop Un suelo cada vez más sólido

[This summary is not available in English]

Tomaso Montanari Il naufragio leadiristico della democrazia

[This summary is not available in English]

Jill Lepore The Last Time Democracy Almost Died

The last time democracy nearly died all over the world and almost all at once, Americans argued about it, and then they tried to fix it. "The future of democracy is topic number one in the animated discussion going on all over America," a contributor to the *New York Times* wrote in 1937. "In the Legislatures, over the radio, at the luncheon table, in the drawing rooms, at meetings of forums and in all kinds of groups of citizens everywhere, people are talking about the democratic way of life." People bickered and people hollered, and they also made rules. "You are a liar!" one guy shouted from the audience during a political debate heard on the radio by ten million Americans, from Missoula to Tallahassee. "Now, now, we don't allow that," the moderator said, calmly, and asked him to leave (...)

Kazu Haga Why we need to move closer to Martin Luther King's understanding of nonviolence

In Kingian Nonviolence, a philosophy developed out of the teachings of Martin Luther King Jr., there is a distinction made between nonviolence spelled *with* a hyphen, and nonviolence spelled *without* a hyphen. "Non-violence" is essentially two words: "without" "violence." When spelled this way, it only describes the absence of violence. As long as I am "not being violent," I am practicing non-violence. And that is the biggest misunderstanding of nonviolence that exists. I live in one of the most diverse neighborhoods in Oakland, with an equal mix of black, Latino and Asian residents. One day, I was taking a nap in my apartment when I was woken up by a couple yelling at each other below my second-story window. I decided to get out of bed and look, and I saw a woman on the ground being beaten, crying and screaming for help. I jumped up, put on my shoes and ran downstairs. By the time I arrived, about 15 of my neighbors had also come outside, but they were just watching this woman get beat, doing nothing to help. I managed to break up the fight and get the two to walk away from each other, one fuming with anger and the other in tears (...)

David Olusoga As the world loses faith in democracy, leaders of vision are desperately needed

"Across the globe, democracy is in a state of malaise." That is the bleak assessment of a report from the Centre for the Future of Democracy at Cambridge University. Here in the UK, three out of five of us - 60.3% of the voting population - are unhappy with the functioning of our democracy. The last time we saw comparable levels of dissatisfaction with the way we are governed was during the "winter of discontent" in 1978-79. And there is plenty more bad news where that came from - bad news for democracy across the globe (...)

Economy, welfare and equality

Jonathan Rothwell The Left and Right Are Wrong About Inequality

Over the last decade, right-wing and left-wing populism have gained traction in the United States—and, arguably, in many other rich democracies as well. The right's version of populism has taken a variety of forms: the pro-tariff and anti-immigration agendas of U.S. President Donald Trump, anti-corporatism as expressed by the former Trump advisor and *Breitbart* co-founder Steve Bannon, and greater skepticism toward markets more generally among many conservative intellectuals. Meanwhile, on the left, an anti-corporate agenda has gone mainstream. Two of the leading Democratic candidates for 2020's presidential election—Sens. Bernie Sanders and Elizabeth Warren—routinely discuss their plans to reduce the power of U.S. corporations. For example, Sanders would compel publicly traded companies to redistribute ownership, while Warren would force them to appoint board

members based on worker preferences. For several years, Democrats have expressed more favorable views toward socialism than capitalism (...)

Joseph Stiglitz Trump es el reaganismo con esteroides

[This summary is not available in English]

Andrew Hill Pressure rises for action on responsible capitalism

If 2019 was a big year for talking about responsible corporate capitalism, then 2020 needs to be one of action, according to those who wish companies to move beyond a narrow focus on shareholder value. Last year's highest profile declaration came from the US Business Roundtable. The organisation declared in August that shareholders were only one group among multiple stakeholders to which companies should pay attention. Others included workers, customers, suppliers and communities. But, with the World Economic Forum meeting this week in Davos for its 50th annual gathering, the statement has also invited suspicion – and cynicism. Marga Hoek, author of the book *The Trillion Dollar Shift*, which explores how businesses are implementing the UN's sustainable development goals, warns that while the roundtable statement helped to fuel the debate, it “won't have any effect because it's such a low bar and is so vague” (...)

Gerhard Bosch World Economic Forum: towards sustainability with neoliberal recipes?

The World Economic Forum (WEF), which met last week in Davos, has raised its moral bar ever higher in recent years. The new Davos Manifesto ‘states that companies should pay their fair share of taxes, show zero tolerance for corruption, uphold human rights throughout their global supply chains, and advocate for a competitive level playing field’. And in the WEF's Global Competitiveness Report 2019 growing social inequality is heavily criticised. At the same time, it is stressed that inequality is not a fateful consequence of globalisation and new technologies but can be combatted politically. The Scandinavian countries are named as models, as they ‘have not only become among the world's most technologically advanced, innovative and dynamic economies in the world, but are also providing better living conditions and better social protection, are more cohesive and more sustainable than their peers’ (...)

Manuel Garí Sombras en Davos y Davos en sombras

[This summary is not available in English]

Climate change and sustainability

Adam Tooze How Climate Change Has Supercharged the Left

The climate emergency is stirring radical politics across the world as a new spirit of environmental radicalism energizes left-wing politics. Most notably, the left wings of both the Democratic Party in the United States and the Labour Party in the United Kingdom have committed themselves to programs known as the Green New Deal. Across Europe, the Greens now rival right-wing populists in their political energy. For the established environmental movement, this surge in attention has come as something of a shock. The original green movement of the 1960s and 1970s had strong radical elements in its social and economic vision. But for much of the 1990s and 2000s, “Big Green” went mainstream. When it came to climate change, government regulation and investment were unfashionable. Market-based solutions focused on emissions trading and carbon pricing were the flavor du jour. Global climate negotiations became a giant diplomatic roadshow. The sudden mobilization from the left—with its calls for large-scale public investment in the green economy, bans on high-carbon industry, and nationalization of private energy interests—is a radical response to what is undeniably a dramatic situation. But the revived left faces both the old dilemmas of radical politics and the new challenges of a changed world (...)

Josep Ramoneda Lliçons del 'Glòria'

[This summary is not available in English]

Chuck Thompson Why Tourism Should Die—and Why It Won't

These aren't easy days for travel touts. The class of journalists who enjoy comped experiences at Hawaiian resorts and Michelin-starred restaurants don't normally generate a lot of public compassion. But I couldn't help feeling a few pangs of sympathy for the writers and editors who put together *The New York Times'* recent Travel package “52 Places to Go in 2020.” This is the annual feature meant to draw visitors to heretofore-neglected world gems. Far more apparent in this year's roundup, however, was the running theme of “responsible tourism.” Words like “sustainability,” “green,” and “conservation” were shoved into every other euphoric blurb like the last pair of shoes jammed into a suitcase already bursting at its zippers. In Sicily, grassroots groups have pledged to use less plastic. In Uganda, proceeds from gorilla trekking permits go toward conservation efforts. Read the piece front to back and you might conclude the entire planet has morphed into one giant, eco-friendly playground, with new nonstop service to Ulaanbaatar and Lima making access easier than ever (...)

Alicia González Von der Leyen defiende su Plan Verde como modelo de crecimiento para Europa

[This summary is not available in English]

George Monbiot Our endangered climate has a new foe: target culture

The crisis is not imminent. The crisis is here. The recent infernos in Australia; the storms and floods in Brazil, Madagascar, Spain and the US; and the economic collapse in Somalia, caused in part by a devastating cycle of droughts and floods, are not, or not only, a vision of the future. They are signs of a current and escalating catastrophe. This is why several governments and parliaments, the UK's among them, have declared a climate emergency. But no one in government acts as if it is real. They operate within the old world of incremental planning for a disaster that has yet to arrive. Nowhere is this clearer than in the reports of the Committee on Climate Change (CCC), the official body that began with such hope and promise of holding the government to account, but that now seems to have abandoned scientific realities in favour of political priorities (...)

Innovation, science and technology

Daniel Innerarity El factor humano en la IA

[This summary is not available in English]

Tyson Barker Europe Can't Win the Tech War It Just Started

There are no bronze medals in the artificial intelligence race: That was Kai-Fu Lee's tart rejoinder when talking about Europe's future in the geostrategic AI game. Lee is a Chinese tech entrepreneur and sort of geotechnical Alexis de Tocqueville. His point was that in the geopolitical race for AI dominance, it is the United States and China hustling for gold and silver—and leaving everyone else in the dust. But the European Union sees things differently. In AI—and other areas of strategic technology—new European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen wants to go for gold (...)

The Economist The world is better prepared than ever to stop the Wuhan coronavirus

How and when it infected the first human being, by making the jump from an animal, is anybody's guess. But one thing is certain about the new coronavirus which was discovered in December in China and is now causing a global scare: it is a known unknown. And this,

along with the health authorities' response so far, is mostly good news. People's fear is understandable. As *The Economist* went to press, over 600 cases had been confirmed in six countries, of which 17 were fatal. The new virus is a close relative of sars (severe acute respiratory syndrome), which emerged in China in 2002 and terrorised the world for over half a year before burning out. sars afflicted more than 8,000 people and killed about 800, leaving in its wake \$30bn-100bn of damage from disrupted trade and travel (...)

Kevin Lozano A Witness to the Rise of Big Data

I used to work at a large multinational media corporation that desperately wanted to be a tech start-up. "Data," "metrics," and "product" were the terms du jour: They drove, however ambiguously or cynically, many of the decisions made by the magazine makers and website producers who paid me to line-edit what throughout the industry is now simply called "content." The company's coders were poached from prestigious firms to build publishing-focused software, and their offices, located a few floors below ours, offered a cornucopia of amenities that exceeded those of the "content producers": They had higher salaries, nicer workstations, the presumption of job security, and free snacks. They seemed to be trusted with the future of the company, responsible for creating tools to help us publish our stories and decode the data that came back to us about our readers. In meeting after meeting, low-ranking executives, accompanied by these code jockeys, would instruct editors on how to game SEO and social media algorithms, reminding us about the need to remain vigilant in the face of an ever-changing media landscape. No one really seemed to know how to fix the ailing media company, but that didn't prevent anyone from religiously paying tithes to the very technologies undermining our shared industry (...)