

World News

Most of the overseas attention is focusing on the Turkish incursion into Syria [1]. However, we should not lose track of China. Case in point, Japan has asserted that China is a bigger threat than is the nuclear armed North Korea [2]. Moreover, China now has more warships than does the US [3]. What's more, China is using its Coast Guard fleet of over 200 ships to assert territorial claims [4]. In a effort to beef up the US presence, the US Coast Guard has joined the US Navy in the South China Sea [5].

Meanwhile, the economic impact of the Hong Kong protests is becoming evident. Case in point, indications are Hong Kong has entered a technical recession with two consecutive negative growth quarters [6]. This is the first recession in 10 years [7]. Perhaps this is a contributing factor behind China's warning to the protestors [8].

With the 2020 election rapidly in focus, concerns of foreign interference remain. For instance, there are still efforts to determine the role of Russia during the 2016 election [9]. However, China has its intelligence agency examining Western political texts and emails [10].

1. Fraser, Suzan, AP, *Invasion of northeast Syria carries gain and risk for Turkey*, October 9, 2019.
2. The Straits Times/Reuters, *Japan promotes China as bigger threat than nuclear-armed North Korea*, September 27, 2019.
3. Mizokami, Kyle, Popular Mechanics, *China Now Has More Warships Than the U.S.*, May 20, 2019.
4. Heijmans, Philip, and Carey, Glen, Bloomberg, *U.S. Bulks Up Coast Guard in Pacific to Counter China Fleet*, June 10, 2019
5. Heydarian, Richard Javad, Asia Times, *US Coast Guard churns South China Sea tensions*, October 30, 2019.

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Artificial Intelligence

There are many thoughts on defining artificial intelligence (AI). To be sure, it is a robust collection of interacting programs. Perhaps the ultimate will be when the machine designs, rebuilds, and codes itself without human intervention.

To see how one AI application might work; consider humans tend to have a bias when reporting news. In contrast, AI can compensate for the bias and help extract meaningful content.

As a very simplistic simple example, take the Turkish incursion into Syria. There are numerous and changing information inputs (space limits to a single instance). In 2016, there was a failed coup in Turkey where the military allegedly tried to take power [1]. As a consequence, Turkey's Erdogan solidified his power starting with a state of emergency [2]. However, reports indicate that the rebel F-16 fighters had Erdogan in their sites and failed to fire

[3]. At this point, the AI would increase the confidence factor suggesting the coup was staged while decreasing the confidence the coup was real. As additional information is uncovered, these are adjusted by the AI accordingly. We also learned that power was cut to Incirlik Air Base where US nuclear weapons are believed to be kept [4]. Fast forward and we have a report that by threatening the US, Turkey is effectively

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Special points of interest:

- ISIS leader killed
- S&P 500 and NASDAQ Record Highs

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holding 50 US nuclear devices hostage [5]. The AI will use the dynamic confidence factors that nukes are at the Air Base to slightly increase the confidence factor of the current story. The confidence factor can be a probabilistic value between 0 and 1, where 0 indicates false and 1 a fact. Another calculation involves the new article; where the New York Times title indicates a bias against the president (calamity came fast). The AI acknowledges the bias by using a lower confidence factor. It also adjusts the cumulative confidence of the author and the publisher. Another piece of information was the number of nukes, 50. That it would be in the rage of 40 to 60 would have a higher confidence than the number 50. While there is insufficient information to determine facts, the AI progressively moves toward a most likely conclusion.

Additionally, there are incidents where claims can be dismissed based on scientific fact. In these cases, the report is completely discounted and used to filter future stories that are based on this contradiction. For example, ABC aired an incorrect video purporting to show the Turkish slaughter of Kurds inside Syria [6]. Any future news report based on this video would have a lower confidence factor applied.

In summary, AI can be used to extract information from obfuscated current news sources. Perhaps this is the only way analyze the news.

1. Tuysuz, Gul, and McLaughlin, Elliott C., CNN, Failed coup in Turkey: What you need to know, July 18, 2016.
2. AP/NBC News, *Turkey's Erdogan Declares Three-Month State of Emergency After Failed Coup*, July 20, 2016.
3. NBC News, *Turkey Coup:*

Rebel F-16s Had Erdogan's Jet in Sights, Reuters Source Says, July 18, 2016.

4. Bruton, F. Brinley, et. al., NBC News, *Incirlik Air Base: Post-Coup Power Cut Remains at U.S. Site*, July 20, 2016.
5. Sanger, David E., New York Times, *Trump Followed His Gut on Syria. Calamity Came Fast*, October 14, 2019.
6. Tobin, Ben, Louisville Courier Journal/USA Today, *ABC News mistakenly airs video from Kentucky gun show as Syria bombing footage*, October 15, 2019.

*The members of the Muslim Brotherhood in Syria are also part of the Syrian people, and they have the right to exercise their democratic rights.—
Recep Tayyip Erdogan*

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6. Harrison, Virginia, BBC News, *How protests pushed Hong Kong to the recession brink*, October 31, 2019.
7. Sin, Noah, and Siu, Twinnie, Reuters, *Hong Kong falls into first recession in 10 years as protests, trade war weigh*, October 31, 2019.
8. BBC News, *Hong Kong protests: China's leaders send message to protesters*,

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November 1, 2019.

9. Lucas, Ryan, NPR, *DOJ Opens Criminal Inquiry Into Origins Of Russia Probe*, October 25, 2019.
10. Kharpal, Arjun, CNBC, *China-backed hackers stole text messages and phone records in push for intelligence, report says*, November 1, 2019.

Terrorism

The main story during this news cycle is the setback to the Islamic State (IS). Reports indicate IS leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi was killed by US forces in Syria [1]. It appears this was a targeted attack on the IS leader along with his hiding place [2]. Of course the terrorist group will continue to operate. One piece suggests that a former officer for Saddam Hussein, Abdullah Qardash, is the new ISIS leader [3]. Expectedly, the IS warned there will be retaliation attacks [4].

However, even with the death of the ISIS founding leader, the terrorist organization is active elsewhere. For example, in northern Mali, the IS claimed responsibility for an attack on a military post that left at least 54 people dead [5].

Then there are terrorist attacks where no claim of responsibility is currently made. Case in point, in a Syrian town recently occupied by Turkish forces, a car bombing at a market killed at least 13

people [6]. Later, the source may claim responsibility. For instance, In October, a car bombing in Syria's Qamishli killed at least three people [7]. Later the IS claimed responsibility and indicated the target was Kurds [8].

1. Rasheed, Ahmed, and Stewart, Phil, Reuters, *Islamic State leader Baghdadi reportedly killed in Syria by U.S. forces*, October 26, 2019.
2. Doubek, James, NPR, *U.S. Attacks ISIS Locations In Syria*, October 27, 2019.
3. Brown, Lee, New York Post, *ISIS already has a new leader in former Saddam Hussein officer*, October 28, 2019.
4. Abdulkhalek, Hesham, and Laessing, Ulf, Reuters, *Islamic State vows revenge against U.S. for Baghdadi killing*, October 31, 2019.
5. Amaq news agency/ France 24, *'Terrorist at-*

tack' on northern Mali military post kills more than 50 soldiers, November 2, 2019.

6. Hallam, Jonny, and Razeq, Raza, CNN, *Car bomb explosion kills at least 13 in northern Syria*, November 2, 2019.
7. Perry, Tom, Reuters, *Car bomb in Syria's Qamishli killed three: security forces*, October 11, 2019.
8. Perry, Tom, Reuters, *Islamic State claims car bomb in Syria's Qamishli*, October 11, 2019.

The Turkish government will never tolerate the creation of a Kurdish state.—Peter Bergen

Economy

For October, the unemployment rate rose from 3.5% to 3.6% [1]. However, the weekly unemployment claim numbers remains strong. For the week ending October 12, the number of first time unemployment claims was 214,000 [2]. Then for the week ending October 19, the number was 212,000 [3]. Finally, for the week ending October 26, the number was 218,000 [4].

Meanwhile, the trade negotiations with China continue. There is a report suggesting a first phase agreement is nearing completion [5]. This comes as the impacts are continuing to hurt China. For example, Chinese industrial profits fell 5.3% in September [6].

Overall, the economy, as measured by the stock market indices, remained strong. For

example, on October 28, the S&P 500 hit an all-time high [7]. Then on October 29, the S&P 500 reached a new intraday high before closing down [8]. Then on October 30, the S&P 500 closed at a new record high [9]. Finally, on November 1, both the S&P 500 and the NASDAQ set new record highs [10].

1. Bartash, Jeffry, Market Watch, *U.S. adds better-than-expected 128,000 jobs in October as economy holds strong*, November 1, 2019.
2. Department of Labor, *Unemployment Insurance Weekly Claims*, October 17, 2019.
3. Department of Labor, *Unemployment Insurance Weekly Claims*, October 24, 2019.
4. Department of Labor, *Unemployment Insurance Weekly Claims*, October 31, 2019.
5. Levine, Jon, New York Post, *US, China close to deal on 'phase one' of trade deal*, October 26, 2019.
6. Blanchard, Ben, and Su, Jenny, Reuters, *China's industrial profits fall 5.3% in Sept as trade war toll mounts*, October 26, 2019.
7. Tappe, Anneken, CNN, *S&P 500 hits all-time high*, October 29, 2019.
8. Imbert, Fred, CNBC, *S&P 500 touches record, then closes little changed ahead of Fed meeting*, October 29, 2019.
9. Fonda, Daren, Barron's, *Investors Are Bearish. That's a Recipe for More Gains*, October 30, 2019.
10. Tappe, Anneken, CNN Business, *S&P 500, Nasdaq hit new record high*, November 1, 2019.

What counts is not necessarily the size of the dog in the fight - it's the size of the fight in the dog.
—Dwight D. Eisenhower
