

The year saw hurricane Harvey slam Houston, wildfires burn the west coast, and Donald Trump sworn in. A da Vinci [painting](#) that a couple of art geeks bought in Louisiana 12 years ago for \$10,000 sold at auction for \$450 million and Bitcoin hit \$17,000; if you bought \$100 worth of Bitcoin in 2010, it's worth \$21 million today.



N. Korea tested a hydrogen bomb and now has intercontinental ballistic missiles that can reach anywhere in the United States. King Assad used chemical weapons in his civil war; the Trump administration responded by wiping out a Syrian airbase with 50 cruise missiles. There was no clear motive why Stephen Paddock killed 58 people at a Las Vegas concert from a snipers perch he setup in a luxury hotel. James Hodgkinson, an ardent Bernie Sanders supporter whose Facebook page read like liberal talking points from MSNBC & CNN, shot 5 republican congressmen at a baseball field because he disagreed with their politics.

Researchers detected gravity waves (which bend space and time) when two neutron stars collided. Physicists at the CERN electron accelerator in France are attempting to isolate a stable form of antimatter they created (anti-hydrogen) in a gravitational field to see if it falls down toward gravity or "falls" up away from gravity (which would lead to some truly futuristic devices). And, scientists found an Earth-like [planet](#) orbiting a nearby star that had an atmosphere. When I was a kid, we knew of 9 planets in the entire universe. Now we know of more than 3,700.

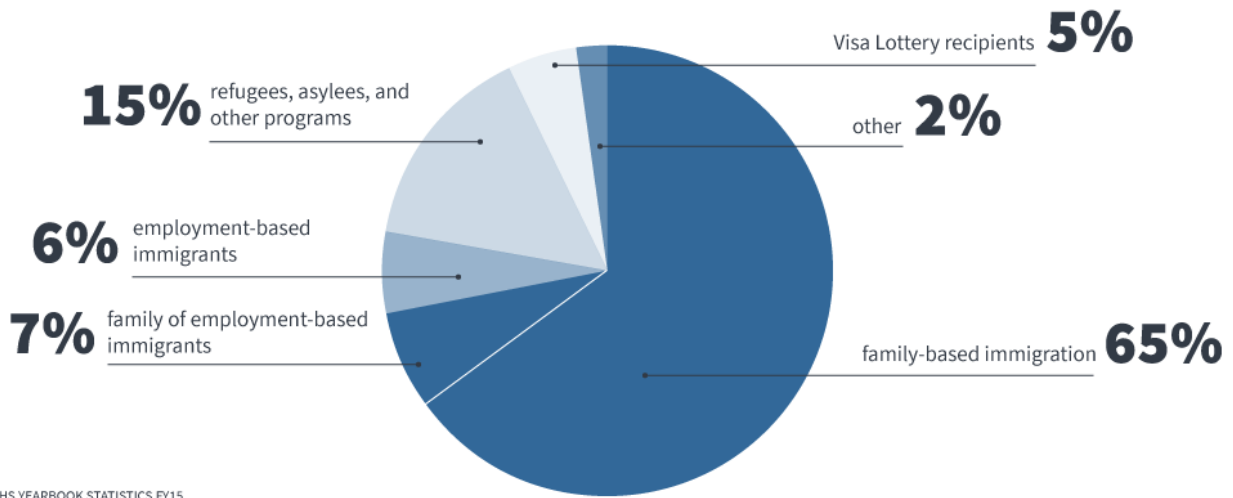
A small, secretive, wealthy [group of individuals](#) directed the anarchist organization Antifa to employ [black bloc tactics](#), dawn hoods & terrorist-like garb, and use weapons & violent tactics to physically attack numerous individuals for simply speaking at colleges across the country. Antifa's goal is to eliminate free speech, erase American history in an Orwellian fashion, and essentially destroy the United States.

A Muslim [terrorist](#) who emigrated from Uzbekistan through a [visa lottery program](#) killed 8 and injured 12 in Manhattan when he ran down pedestrians and bicyclists with a truck. ISIS targeted young children with a bomb at a [pop singers' concert](#) in Manchester killing 23 and injuring 100. Another Muslim [terrorist](#) who emigrated from Bangladesh via chain migration tried to slaughter train passengers in Times Square with an explosive device.

Over the past decade liberal policies based on appeasement and resignation have encouraged terrorist attacks domestically. John Kerry exposed the left's surrender to carnage and chaos when, during a 2004 interview, he responded to a question about terrorism saying, "We have to get back to the place we were, where terrorists are not the focus of our lives, but they're a nuisance." The result of such a policy was demonstrated with the Obama administration that allowed ISIS to grow unchallenged, hold land equal in size to West Virginia, rule over 8 million people, and control oilfields, refineries, smuggling routes, and vast arsenals. In contrast the decisive effort of Trump's generals decimated ISIS in just 8 months. It is not anti-Muslim or xenophobic, as the left would have people believe, when American's express legitimate anxiety over our national security.

Most Americans had never heard of chain migration before this year. Based on the Hart-Celler Immigration Act of 1965, [chain migration](#) gives priority to immigrants who have a relative residing in the United States. Of 33 million immigrants admitted to the U.S. over the past 35 years, about 20 million (60%) were from chain migration. Mexico has the highest rate of chain migration; based on a recent [five-year study](#) each Mexican immigrant sponsored 6 additional immigrants. The result of this law is that immigrant families determine who will become citizens. Only 1 out of 15 green cards is issued to an immigrant based on skills, education, or the ability to contribute to the nation. It stands to reason that our immigration policy should be based simply on what is best for the United States.

THE VAST MAJORITY OF U.S. GREEN CARDS ARE ISSUED ON THE BASIS OF FAMILY TIES



A tax reform bill squeaked by at year-end. [\\$2.6T is parked overseas](#) and it's obvious that lowering the corporate tax rate will bring \$billions home. Most nations encourage their domestic companies to repatriate profits earned abroad with low tax rates. Unfortunately, the bill does not cut individual taxes as much as it shifts them between classes. There was no discussion on reducing the size of federal bureaucracy and the government will still aggressively redistribute income. Out of 326 million people in the country, only 140m citizens pay taxes. Of those, 70m Americans pay [97%](#) of all federal income taxes collected while the other 70m pay the remaining 3%.

With Trump's election, democrats swung hard left, many becoming unhinged. Along with establishment republicans drunk on power, numerous congressmen called for the President's impeachment basically because they oppose his politics. Their rage reflects a sense of entitlement and shows how out of touch they are that they seek to nullify an election. Democrats were once the party of hard-hat-wearing, flag-waving, working-class American's. They now jet around in Gulfstream's to represent liberal elites and leftist mobs. They consistently take an extreme position that benefits some special interest group, sticks the average American with the bill, and subject our nation to collateral damage. They demand obedience, expect your vote, and want your money. Consequently, they've lost most of the country save a handful of large metropolitan areas.

Americans were led to believe that the Trump campaign worked with Russian agents to steal the election from Hillary Clinton. Based on a "dossier" which turned out to be a fake research paper (paid for by the [DNC and the Clinton campaign](#) and filtered through a shady law firm to hide relationships) an independent council was appointed to investigate. After the better part of a year, Robert Mueller's team is disintegrating with no evidence, tangible conflicts of interests, and clear partisanship: [one FBI agent](#) wrote of needing an "insurance policy" to take care of Trump if he won the election, [a lawyer](#) on the team (who attended Hillary's election night "victory" party) was caught praising outgoing deputy attorney general Sally Yates for blocking one of Trump's executive orders, and [another lawyer's wife](#) worked at the firm that paid for the "dossier".

Worse, the “dossier” was apparently used by the Obama Whitehouse to obtain secret “[FISA](#)” court warrants to spy on Trump’s campaign team (and essentially then candidate Trump). In an illegal and systematic abuse of power by the prior administration, former UN ambassador Samantha Powers (whose duties did not include making decisions on intelligence) [exposed the identity](#) of American’s who were secretly spied on by the security agencies Obama controlled. The ultimate tragedy is that a sitting president used American intelligence agencies to [spy on](#), and presumably neutralize, a political opponent. Only leftist bias and the racial pathology of mainstream media kept Obama’s administration from being destroyed by scandal as it surely would have been had he been a white Republican.

Throughout the year, President Trump squared off against his adversaries to promote and restore traditional citizenship, individualism, assimilation, territorial sovereignty, recognized borders, strong national defense, deterrence abroad, and free-market capitalism. He appealed to Middle Eastern leaders to reign in terrorism, asked Asian and European leader’s to recognize that his priorities revolve around American interests, rolled back smothering [federal regulations](#), and appointed a conservative justice to the Supreme Court. The result is that GDP grew at 3.9%, consumer confidence hit a [17-year high](#), the Dow Jones surged to 24,000, and individual retirement accounts realized substantial gains.

I believe that our country’s greatness doesn’t come from government, but instead its people. While there is obviously a need and a place for government in our society, more often than not, I’m convinced that government needs to have the smallest footprint so that we, as individuals, can reach our true potential and, as history has shown, enjoy prosperity and likely make the world a better place. No other nation or civilization in history has done more good for its people and the world. For example, consider just a few of our inventions: the smart phone, fracking, the personal computer, the Internet, the light bulb, the airplane, and the telegraph. 48 years after mankind went to the moon, the only human beings to have set foot on the surface are Americans. This was possible foremost because we created a system of government where a persons’ rights are not given to them (or taken away at a whim) by some ruler or entrenched bureaucrat but are inalienable and inherent.

As for us, Monica & I continue to live and work in the San Francisco Bay Area. Wildfires burned 100 houses to the ground within a mile of our place at Clearlake this year. Andrew’s still at Intel developing software for the next generation of microprocessors. Liam’s in high school and prefers math & science to the arts. Last summer we travelled to Oregon State University in Corvallis (where Monica & I first met) to witness the Great American Eclipse. Words cannot describe what we saw during the 2 minutes of totality. Many cheered, some cried.



We always appreciate hearing from our family and friends; please keep in touch.

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<http://www.cottrel.com/xmas/xmas17.pdf>

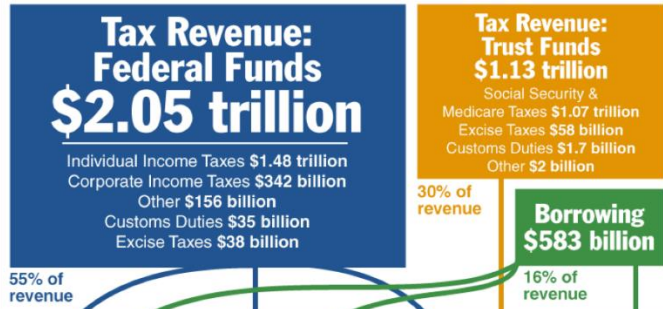
*Merry Christmas and Happy New Year,
from the Cottrell Family*

Excellence is the result of caring more than others think wise, risking more than others think safe, dreaming more than others think practical, and expecting more than others think possible.

United States 2015 Budget

Where The Money Comes From

(\$3.8 trillion in revenue and borrowing)



Where The Money Goes

(\$3.8 trillion in spending)

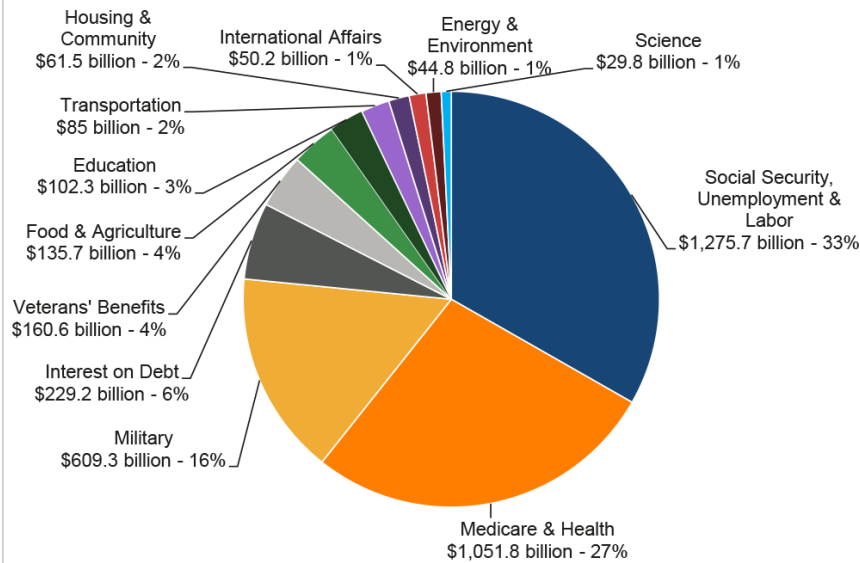


Source: OMB
 National Priorities Project

nationalpriorities.org



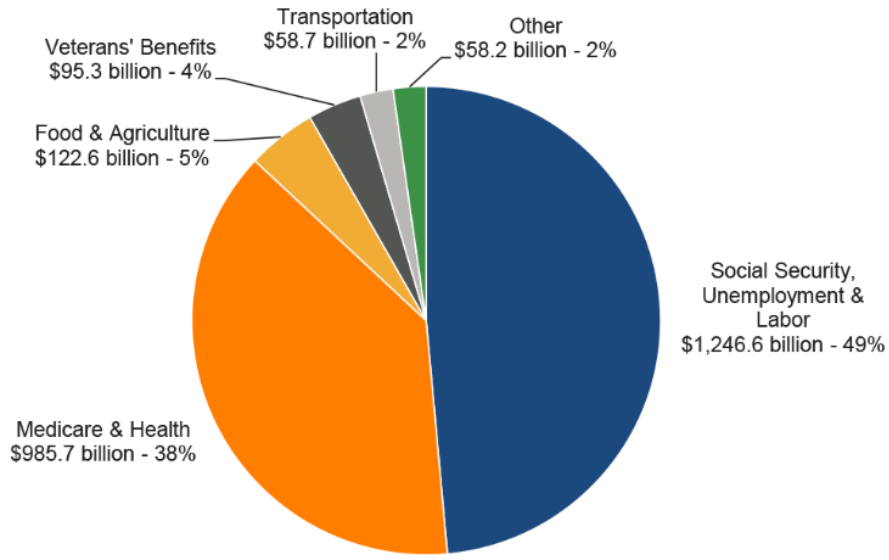
Total Federal Spending 2015: \$3.8 Trillion



nationalpriorities.org

Source: OMB, National Priorities Project

Total Mandatory Spending 2015: \$2.45 Trillion



Discretionary Spending 2015: \$1.11 Trillion

