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IN YOUR WORDS

Letter to Iran angers White House

It is to their credit that not all Republican senators signed this ridiculous letter. Perhaps those who didn't sign are aware that whoever the Democratic nominee for the presidency will be in 2016 has just been guaranteed victory if the current administration gets a deal with Iran. I can just see the Democratic candidate informing voters that electing the Republican candidate will make a full-scale war with Iran almost inevitable. A country with two foreign policies?

PAUL DELESPINASSE, CORVALLIS, OREGON

Remember that this follows the president saying he would not submit this to Congress for advice and consent. He can't have it both ways; it is not binding on the U.S. if it is not a treaty. That is clearly in the Constitution. From the Iranians' response quoted in the article, "I wish to enlighten the authors that if the next administration revokes any agreement with 'the stroke of a pen,' as they boast, it will have simply committed a blatant violation of international law," the Iranians apparently do need a lesson in the U.S. Constitution.

TOM EVSLIN, STOWE, VERMONT

Watch's success will hinge on apps

What I find absolutely remarkable is that Apple is almost single-handedly responsible for an entire generation of people who have never worn a watch in their lives! Now they want to convince those people that they need both the phone that replaced the watch and the watch itself?? Seems like a heavy lift.

MH12987, NEW JERSEY

Being able to see email notifications and text messages, see how far away my Uber is, pay with Apple Pay, see my flight status, and get reminders without pulling out my phone is an enormous benefit to me. I'll be preordering.

BRYAN, CHICAGO

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IN OUR PAGES

International Herald Tribune

1940 Turmoil After Wagner Played

The attempt of the well-known Colonne-Lamoureux Orchestra to play Wagner for the first time since the outbreak of the war led to a tumultuous demonstration at the Châtelet Theater between partisans and foes of the Master of Bayreuth yesterday afternoon. Three Wagnerian numbers were originally listed on the program for yesterday, namely, the "Lohengrin" overture, the prelude from "Tristan and Isolde," together with Isolde's love-death and the overture to "Tannhauser." Yesterday morning, however, without any reason being given, the first two items were suppressed in favor of Debussy's "Petite Suite" and Ravel's "Ma Mère l'Oye." More than half the audience went to the concert with a sense of grievance, and when the conductor mounted the rostrum the storm burst loose.

1965 French Wives Gain Freedoms

PARIS The government announced today that it will emancipate the French wife from tyrannical marriage customs of the Napoleonic Code of 1804. Under a new law that soon will be submitted to parliament and is certain to pass, a wife will be able to open a bank account or go into business for herself — without her husband's consent. The new measure goes so far as to strip from the husband his traditional title of "lord and master" of the family.

Find a retrospective of news from 1887 to 2013 at iht-retrospective.blogs.nytimes.com

The urge to find company



PHOTOGRAPHS BY ALEC SOTH



HUMAN INTERACTION In his latest collection, "Songbook," published by MACK, Alec Soth turns his lens to American community life, lyrically highlighting the tension between individualism and the desire for companionship. Mr. Soth, a native of Minneapolis, traveled around the United States from 2012 to 2014 as a community reporter for his

own newspaper, The LBM Dispatch (self-published on Tumblr), and for other media, including The New York Times. Top, "Bill Sandusky, Ohio"; above, "Crazy Legs Saloon, Watertown, New York." Mr. Soth's work is on exhibition at the Weinstein Gallery in Minneapolis until April 30, and will be shown at the Loock Galerie in Berlin in June.

Sam Simon, a guiding force for 'The Simpsons,' dies at 59

BY WILLIAM YARDLEY

Sam Simon, who was one of the major creative forces behind "The Simpsons" and who left the show after its fourth season in a lucrative arrangement that allowed him to spend much of the rest of his life giving his money away, died on

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Sunday at his home in the Pacific Palisades area of Los Angeles. He was 59.

His death was confirmed by his agent, Andy Patman. Mr. Simon learned a few years ago that he had colon cancer.

The cartoonist Matt Groening, recruited by the producer James L. Brooks, invented the Simpson family for a series of short animated segments first seen on "The Tracey Ullman Show" in 1987. Mr. Groening named some of the characters after members of his own family, including Homer and Marge, the parents.

Although Mr. Groening is the person most closely associated with "The Simpsons," Mr. Simon — who had published cartoons while he was a student

at Stanford, worked on the cartoon show "Fat Albert and the Cosby Kids" and been a writer and producer for the sitcoms "Cheers" and "Taxi" — played a crucial role as "The Simpsons" evolved into a half-hour series. It became the longest-running sitcom in television history.

Mr. Simon helped populate Springfield, the fictional town where the Simpsons live, with a range of characters. He insisted that the show be created using some conventional sitcom techniques like having the writers work collectively.

He had the voice actors read their parts as an ensemble, with the goal of giving the show more lifelike rhythm and timing. And he hired many of the show's first writers, a number of whom gave him credit for informing its multi-layered sensibility, one that skewers pieties with anarchic humor and sometimes vulgarity while celebrating family and community.

"If you leave out Sam Simon, you're telling the managed version," Jon Vitti, one of the show's first writers, told The

New York Times in 2001. "He was the guy we wrote for."

Mr. Simon's work on the show is also remembered for the way it ended. He and Mr. Groening clashed frequently — Mr. Groening was among several people, including Mr. Simon himself, who said that Mr. Simon could be difficult to work with — and Mr. Simon left in 1993, after four seasons.

It was not an amicable split, but it was extraordinarily profitable for Mr. Simon. He retained the title of executive producer and was given royalties from future home video sales. As "The Simpsons" moved into syndication and lucrative VHS and then DVD sales, it made Mr. Simon wealthy long after he was no longer directly involved in the show. He said in interviews that it provided him with "tens of millions" of dollars each year.

Mr. Simon angered Mr. Groening early on by expressing skepticism about the show's prospects, suggesting that it would last only one season. But he later emphasized how fortunate he was to have been part of it. Not that he



MIKE BLAKE/REUTERS

Mr. Simon left "The Simpsons" in 1993, in a lucrative deal that fueled his philanthropy.

caught every episode after he left.

"If I had to watch it to cash my checks," he said, "I would."

Mr. Simon put his money toward his passions. He started a foundation that trained dogs to help disabled people, including veterans of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, and he gave generously to the Sea Shepherd Conservation Society and People for the Ethical Treatment of

Animals, among other groups. PETA's headquarters in Norfolk, Va., was renamed the Sam Simon Center in 2013.

After Mr. Simon learned he had cancer, he announced his intention to give nearly all his "Simpsons" royalties to charity. "I've given most of it away," he said in 2013 when asked about his wealth on the comedian Marc Maron's podcast. "I won't be rich again until we get our quarterly installment from 'The Simpsons.'"

Mr. Simon was born on June 6, 1955, in the Los Angeles area, to Arthur and Joan Simon. His father owned a company that made discount clothing, his mother owned an art gallery, and Mr. Simon grew up comfortably in Beverly Hills, across the street from Groucho Marx.

After he left "The Simpsons," Mr. Simon helped develop other series, including the short-lived program "The George Carlin Show" and the "The Drew Carey Show," which enjoyed a long run.

Daniel E. Slotnik contributed reporting.

After jobs dry up, what then?



Katrin Bennhold

LETTER FROM EUROPE

LONDON In March 1968, Robert F. Kennedy spoke about a governing elite who had lost touch with ordinary people and judged the state of the nation by gross national product.

"Gross national product counts air pollution and cigarette advertising, and ambulances to clear our highways of carnage," he said. "It counts special locks for our doors and the jails for the people who break them."

"Yet the gross national product does not allow for the health of our children, the quality of their education or the joy of their play," he continued. "It does not include the beauty of our poetry or the strength of our marriages, the intelligence of our public debate or the integrity of our public officials. It measures neither our wit nor our courage, neither our wisdom nor our learning, neither our compassion nor our devotion to our country. It measures everything, in short, except that which makes life worthwhile."

Nearly half a century later, that disconnect is coming to a head. Economic growth, even where it looks impressive, seems to be creating fewer jobs than in the past, and for the most part, poorly paid ones. The main metrics for economic success now appear to be decoupling from labor markets, the main source of income and meaning for citizens.

Nouriel Roubini, a professor of economics at the Stern School of Business at New York University, underlined the point last week at a London conference on the future of work. "The share of labor in the economy is collapsing, and that will continue," he said.

Some speak of a third industrial revolution; others call it the second machine age. With the processing speed of computers doubling roughly every 18 months and machines becoming ever smarter, paid work for human beings could become a lot scarcer — and soon.

Forty-seven percent of all employment in the United States is susceptible to automation over the next two decades, according to a study by Carl Benedikt Frey, an economist, and Michael A. Osborne, an associate professor of machine learning, at the University of Oxford.

It is not just truck drivers and tax preparers who risk losing their jobs, economists say. Robots can pick strawberries, distinguishing the ripe ones by taking hundreds of digital photographs a second, and algorithms apparently make more objective court decisions than human judges, who according to a study in Israel are more lenient after a food break.

This hyperdigital age is also creating some new jobs for humans. Among the 10 fastest-growing job descriptions identified by Dr. Frey were big data architect and iOS developer. But over all, he said, "It seems that job creation is not going to keep pace with automation."

If so, the disruption will run deep. "If there isn't a job for every citizen, then what does it mean to be a citizen?" asked Ngaire Woods, professor of global economic governance at Oxford.

Dr. Woods was among those who mull an idea developed by the American economist Milton Friedman of a negative income tax or basic income, an unconditional sum of public money that would help those displaced from the labor market.

Jeremy Rifkin, author of "The Third Industrial Revolution," said a basic income would enable people to volunteer their time in areas like elder care, child care, culture and the environment.

"This is not a utopia, it's a practical business plan for the next step of the human journey," Mr. Rifkin said.

Laura Tyson, a professor at the Haas School of Business at the University of California, said the Nordic countries, with their flexible labor markets and generous social safety nets, could be a model. But in many countries, that would require a fundamental rethink of what and whom governments tax and of where the tax revenue is invested.

"This is about politics and policy," she said.

For now, though, politicians have mostly kept quiet about the prospect of a structural shortage of decently paid jobs.

In Britain, where a general election looms in May, the policy review chief of the opposition Labour Party, Jon Cruddas, recently quoted from the Kennedy speech and argued that Britain in 2015 was at a similar crossroads.

"The challenges we face are big, but our politics are small," Mr. Cruddas said. "We have stopped asking ourselves the important question Bobby Kennedy asked. What makes life worthwhile?"