

Do We Need Daylight Savings?

BY ETHAN LANGEMO

WHEN WE WERE CHILDREN, we all learned about Daylight Savings Time (DST) and how it sets the clock forward an hour in the spring and then back an hour in the fall. Growing up in rural central Minnesota, I was taught the myth that the reason it was invented was to help farmers use as much daylight as possible, since the time the sun rises and sets changes with the seasons for those of us living well up into the northern hemisphere of the world. Of course, the actual reasons for DST include outdoor safety and energy efficiency. But as society has evolved in the 100+ years since a little city in Canada first embraced it, is it really a necessity?

Here in the United States, DST starts on the second Sunday of March. This is when clocks get set ahead an hour at 2:00 AM, making it 3:00 AM. This helps to adjust to the longer hours of natural light in the evening as the angle of Earth's northern hemisphere is positioned closer to the sun, due to Earth's axial tilt. Then, it turns back on the first Sunday of November at 2:00 AM, making it 1:00 AM, when the northern hemisphere is tilted back away from the sun. The problem with this is that daylight hours don't simply shift forwards and backwards as you move further away from the equator, they get longer and shorter. We see that here when the sun rises later in the morning and then it seems like it's dark by the time 5:00 PM rolls around during the winter months, and conversely the sun rises earlier and sets much later in the summer.

Nobody likes losing an hour of sleep when March comes around. Causing that much of a negative disturbance in a person's sleep schedule can cause health problems. As college students, we are aware that lack of sleep leads to various mental issues, including depression and inattentiveness. Additionally, the earlier sunsets in the winter are major causes of seasonal depression, and this is only exacerbated by pushing the clocks ahead an hour. Of course, getting an extra hour of sleep is always nice, but it's hard to say if it's worth the struggle faced in the spring.

A study by Professors Douglas Coate and Sara Markowitz of the Department of Economics at Rutgers University in Newark, New Jersey, found that DST might make a difference in the number of automobile and pedestrian deaths in the United States. They found that during morning and evening hours, pedestrian deaths go down 13% and vehicle occupant deaths go down 3%. However, there are a couple problems with this study. The data used was gathered between 1998 and 1999. That was over 20 years ago, and that data would likely not be accurate today. The professors also acknowledge that there are variables which might alter these results, such as whether the roads are rural or urban, unemployment and income rates, and education levels. Not only is this study potentially inapplicable to today's world, but there are other factors which may affect motor safety regardless of DST.

Another arguably outdated defense for DST which has negligible relevance today is that DST helps save on electricity by reducing the need for artificial light. Back in the early 1900's when the world didn't run on electricity, that made a lot of sense. These days, we use so much electricity that the amount of energy saved due to DST really wouldn't make much of a difference.

Over 70 countries including the United States follow DST, but more and more of the population are doubting its overall effectiveness and necessity. It worked well for the society of the time that it was developed for, but now its purpose has dulled and may do more harm than good. It is true that adjusting time for the changing daylight hours can be helpful, as it is when we are most alert and productive, but perhaps a biannual shift is a little much. It may be possible that shifting the clock by a smaller increment, such as a half hour or fifteen minutes, might be a solution. But even that may be proved to be unnecessary compared to simply keeping a standard year-round time.

The Consequences of Gatekeeping Sovereignty: How Somaliland has Suffered From a Lack of International Recognition

BY RAJEERA GELETA

IN 1991, THE REPUBLIC OF SOMALILAND (a country located north of Somalia) declared independence from Somalia during a brutal civil war and a state-sponsored genocide on its people. To this day, the new republic meets all the requirements to become a country by the United Nation standards, and it is ranked one of the highest countries in terms of peace, GDP per capita, and the freedom index in the Horn of Africa. However, it is not recognized as an independent country by the international community, but instead as a de facto region of Somalia. This predicament Somaliland faces challenges them economically and politically and exposes the world's hypocrisy.

Somaliland's lack of international recognition could be due to the fact that if individual countries started recognizing Somaliland as a country, they may start having to acknowledge secession movements in their own countries like Spain's Cat-

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alonia, the UK's Scotland, or Ethiopia's Oromia. This case is especially true for the Africa Union (AU), as many African countries have nationalistic separatist groups created because of unnatural borders that were inherited by the scramble of Africa. The

case Somaliland often makes for its independence against these types of arguments is that it was an independent country before it combined with Somalia (their sovereignty only lasted for five days) and then they once again separated. In fact, the borders Somaliland uses are inherited from the State of Somaliland, or British Somaliland. No matter the case, Somaliland has a defined territory, a permanent population, a functional government, and can engage in international relations, which is the requirement the UN uses for countries. Given that self-determination is a human right, Somaliland does not only deserve independence. It is entitled to it.

Somaliland faces these challenges because its lack of international recognition can be seen in the form of funding. Because it is not recognized as a country, Somaliland struggles to receive loans from international organizations and aid from other countries for development projects. In turn, they heavily depend on the Somalilander diaspora to send money back to Somaliland for projects. Not only has a lack of international recognition isolated this country from the international economy, but it also slowed down their development as they have access to fewer funds than their counterparts. If more countries were willing to engage with Somaliland, their unemployment rate among the youth, which is estimated to be greater than 70%, may decline. For example, more foreign businesses would potentially make deals with the government to open more factories throughout the country, which would potentially provide more jobs to not just the youth, but the entire country.

A lack of international recognition is not an issue unique to Somaliland; it is a worldwide issue. Several established countries like Kosovo or Taiwan lack international recognition to a degree and have their unique challenges, but the precedent that is being set is dangerous. If a club of 15 countries (the UN Security Council) can deny countries like Somaliland their undeniable existence, then those 15 countries have supremacy over the whole world. It is not any different than when seven European countries decided how Africa will be split up to be governed. As mentioned before, self-determination is a human right. In other words, no matter what, no one can take that right away from you. It is in the right of a group of people to decide how they want to be governed, and Somalilanders have already made their choice whether the world has accepted it or not.