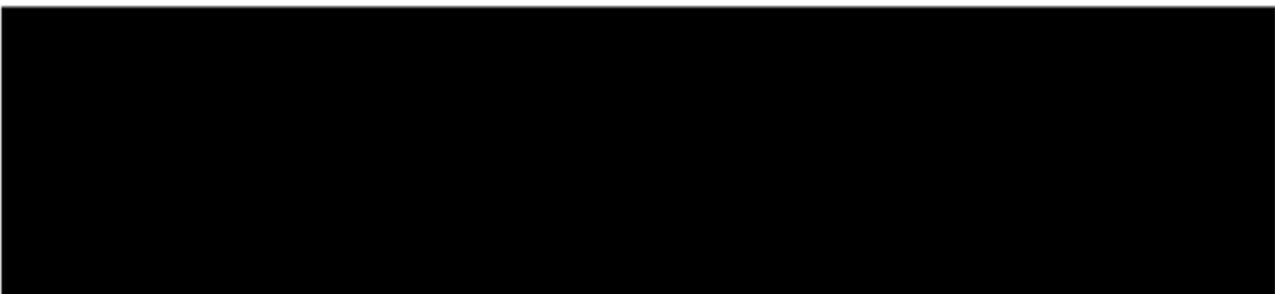


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 FBI News Briefing

TO: THE DIRECTOR AND SENIOR STAFF

DATE: TUESDAY, OCTOBER 20, 2020 6:30 AM EDT

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LEADING THE NEWS

US Charges Six Russian Intelligence Officers With Launching Cyberattacks.

[NBC Nightly News](#)^{vi} (10/19, story 8, 0:50, Holt, 5.28M) reported the US "is accusing six members of the Russian military of cyberattacks that caused blackouts and financial losses of nearly \$1 billion." NBC (Williams) added "federal prosecutors say these Russians used some of the most destructive computer malware ever unleashed. The FBI says all six are intelligence officers in the Russian military. It says they knocked out electrical power in Ukraine during the winter, victimized the 2018 Olympics opening ceremony, and caused losses totaling nearly \$1 billion." In addition, they were "accused of trying to interfere in the French elections in 2017, and hampering the UK's investigations into the poisoning of a Russian dissident and his daughter, but there are no new allegations tonight of Russian meddling in this year's election." The [AP](#) (10/19, Tucker) reports prosecutors say the attacks "were aimed at furthering the Kremlin's geopolitical interests and as retribution against its perceived enemies."

The [Washington Post](#) (10/19, Nakashima, Barrett, 14.2M) reports FBI Deputy Director David Bowdich said the charges show that "time and again, Russia has made it clear they will not abide by accepted norms and instead they intend to continue their destructive and destabilizing cyber behavior."

[Reuters](#) (10/19, Stubbs, Bing) reports, "U.S. officials would not say whether the timing of the announcement just ahead of the 2020 U.S. Presidential election was intended to serve as a warning to foreign, government-linked hacking groups." However, Jeff Pegues said on the [CBS Evening News](#)^{Vi} (10/19, story 4, 1:50, O'Donnell, 4.4M) the Justice Department's action "is widely seen as a warning to Russia. The message, stay out of the US election."

The [New York Times](#) (10/19, Schmidt, Perloth, 18.61M) reports, "It was unclear whether the Russian officers would stand trial for the charges." While Moscow "is highly unlikely to hand them over to be prosecuted," the charges "could potentially restrict their travels, and they could be arrested if they enter a country willing to turn them over to the United States."

[CNN](#) (10/19, Carrega, 83.16M) reports, "The alleged hackers are officers of the Russian Main Intelligence Directorate (GRU), a military intelligence agency of the General Staff of the Armed Forces. Monday's charges allege some of the most consequential political attacks levied by the Kremlin since its efforts to interfere in the 2016 US presidential election, including the hacking of Democratic Party email accounts." CNN adds, "The United States District Court for the Western District of Pennsylvania issued a federal arrest warrant for each of these defendants upon the grand jury's return of the indictment. They are all charged in seven counts: conspiracy to conduct computer fraud and abuse, conspiracy to commit wire fraud, wire fraud, damaging protected computers, and aggravated identity theft."

The [Washington Times](#) (10/19, Mordock, 492K) reports, "Several of the countries targeted had blamed the Russian government for the hacks. However, this is the first time officials have targeted Russia for the attacks through criminal indictments. 'As this case shows, no country has weaponized its cyber capabilities as maliciously and irresponsibly as Russia, wantonly causing unprecedented damage to pursue small tactical advantages to satisfy fits of spite,' Assistant Attorney General for National Security John C. Demers told reporters at a press conference announcing the charges."

The [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#) (10/19, Ove, 616K) reports, "Among the victims in 2017 were Heritage Valley Health System in Western Pennsylvania, which spent \$2 million to repair damage by the malware, U.S. Attorney Scott Brady said at a Monday news conference in Washington, D.C." Brady "and other officials said the Russian officers are part of the same unit that the Justice Department said attempted to disrupt the 2016 election and the 2018 Olympics after Russian athletes had been banned for doping. The Justice Department said defendants, all former or current members of Unit 74455 based in Moscow, unleashed the NotPetya malware. The attacks caused nearly \$1 billion in losses to three victims alone that are mentioned in the indictment. In addition to Heritage Valley, they are TNT Express B.V. (a FedEx subsidiary) and an unnamed U.S. pharmaceutical maker that paid \$500 million to fix the damage."

[Politico](#) (10/19, Geller, 4.29M) reports, "As officers of Russia's GRU military intelligence agency, the six defendants launched a June 2017 malware campaign known as NotPetya, hacked the Ukrainian power grid in 2015 and 2016, and conducted the hack-and-lead operations that targeted the 2017 French elections, according to a newly unsealed indictment. NotPetya, which began in Ukraine, quickly escaped, causing devastating losses for companies around the world. The shipping giant Maersk saw its entire operation temporarily collapse as the malware locked up its computer systems. A White House report estimated the malware's total damages at \$10 billion, according to Wired. It was the most destructive and widespread malware outbreak in history."

[Reuters](#) (10/19, Stubbs, Bing) quotes Bowdich saying, "The FBI has repeatedly warned that Russia is a highly capable cyber adversary, and the information revealed in this indictment illustrates how pervasive and destructive Russia's cyber activities truly are."

[The Hill](#) (10/19, 2.98M) reports, "Among the alleged attacks were hack-and-leak operations against the political party of now-French President Emanuel Macron in 2017, along with other French politicians. They are also alleged to have targeted the 2018 Winter Olympics in Pyeongchang, South Korea, as retaliation for Russians being banned from participating in the games due to doping allegations. Further, the six Russian nationals were indicted in connection to attacks on the Ukrainian power grid and government agencies, which caused widespread power outages; for targeting two organizations involved in investigating the United Kingdom-based nerve agent attack on former Russian spy Sergei Skripal and his daughter; and for most recently targeting Georgian government agencies and companies."

[Axios](#) (10/19, Rummier, 521K) reports, "FBI Deputy Director David Bowdich thanked Google, Cisco, Facebook and Twitter 'for all stepping up and helping us with this investigation,' adding: 'This is more common that we work together with our private sector partners than ever before.'"

[KDKA-TV Pittsburgh](#) (10/19, 144K) reports, "Along with the damage to the Heritage Valley Health System, they also caused damage and disruption in France, Georgia, the Netherlands, Korea, Ukraine, and the United Kingdom. 'The exceptional talent and dedication of our teams in Pittsburgh, Atlanta, and Oklahoma City who spent years tracking these members of the GRU is unmatched,' said FBI Pittsburgh Special Agent in Charge Michael A. Christman. 'These criminals underestimated the power of shared intelligence, resources, and expertise through law enforcement, private sector, and international partnerships.'" [USA Today](#) (10/19, 10.31M) and the [Wall Street Journal](#) (10/19, Volz, Subscription Publication, 7.57M) provide similar coverage. Among news outlets also reporting are [ZDNet](#) (10/19, Cimpanu, 299K), [Business Insider](#) (10/19, Holmes, 3.67M), [NextGov](#) (10/19, Baksh), [UPI](#) (10/19), [Fox News](#) (10/19, Blitzer, 27.59M), [Vice](#) (10/19, Franceschi, 2.11M), [NPR](#) (10/19, Lucas, Ewing, 3.12M), the [Telegraph \(UK\)](#) (10/19, Mendick, Cook, Murphy, 956K), [MeriTalk](#) (10/19, Polit), [Courthouse News](#) (10/19, Rodgers, 2K), the [Daily Beast](#) (10/19, Melendez, 1.39M), [CBS News](#) (10/19, Quinn, 3.68M), and the [Daily Caller](#) (10/19, 716K).

COUNTER-TERRORISM

Maryland Man Linked To "Boogaloo" Movement Faces Gun Charge.

The [AP](#) (10/19) reports from Greenbelt, Maryland, "A Maryland man described by the FBI as a member of the anti-government "boogaloo" movement pleaded not guilty to a gun charge on Monday, court records show." Frank William Robertson Perry, 39, "remained jailed after his arraignment on a charge that he illegally possessed a rifle. He is prohibited from possessing a firearm or ammunition due to a 2002 burglary conviction, the FBI said. A grand jury indicted Perry on the charge after his Oct. 7 arrest." The FBI "identified Perry as a member of the boogaloo movement in September, an agent wrote in seeking a warrant to search the Dundalk home he shares with his girlfriend. Court records don't specify why the FBI's Joint Terrorism Task Force opened its investigation of Perry, who posted images associated with the boogaloo on a Facebook account that the FBI says belongs to him."

[WJZ-TV Baltimore](#) (10/19, 74K) reports, "Agents found and seized a number of items from the basement bedroom, including a black tactical vest containing two ballistic plates located on the interior of the vest, two loaded rifle magazines located in pouches affixed to the exterior of the vest, a third loaded rifle magazine located on top of the vest and an Anderson Manufacturing rifle model AM-15 bearing serial number 20034967 which was partially concealed. They also found ammunition located inside a black box in the nightstand and other firearm-related accessories. The Anderson rifle was bought in parts by Perry and his girlfriend, who lived with Perry, a federal agent claimed in the affidavit. Perry allegedly put the rifle together."

Encrypted Apps May Conceal Full Evidence Of Whitmer Kidnapping Plot.

The [Detroit Free Press](#) (10/19, Nerbovig, 1.52M) reports, "Encrypted apps may keep the FBI from ever knowing if there is more documentation of the plot to kidnap Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer." The Free Press adds, "On the second day of a preliminary examination in which sufficient evidence was found to bind five of the six accused men over for proceedings before a grand jury, FBI Special Agent Richard Trask on Friday mentioned the FBI was hindered in its investigation into the group because some data was stored on an overseas server. The communication the FBI was able to enter in as evidence came from a confidential informant." According to the Free Press, "Technology overall played a crucial role in the planning and formulation of the alleged plot, including the use of Facebook to connect the men, according to an affidavit filed by Brian Russell, a detective sergeant with the Michigan State Police."

Administration Imposes Sanctions On Businessman Moving Al Qaeda Money Internationally.

The [New York Times](#) (10/19, Verma, 18.61M) reports, "The Trump administration on Monday imposed sanctions on an Australian-based businessman and his gemstone company for helping Al Qaeda move money," according to the Treasury Department. Officials "said Ahmed Luqman Talib traded in precious stones, allowing him to 'move funds internationally' for Al Qaeda." Talib "works around the world, including in Brazil, Colombia, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Turkey and the Persian Gulf region, the Treasury Department said in a statement." The Middle East Institute's Countering Terrorism and Extremism Program director, Charles Lister, said, "It goes to show that Al Qaeda still retains these kind of networks," adding they are now "kind of a miniature version of 10 or 15 years ago." The Washington Institute's director of counterterrorism and intelligence, Matthew Levitt, commented, "Governments and private sector have made it harder to move funds via formal and informal financial systems. ... It is interesting to see terrorists relying on gemstones, which are easy to move and hold value."

Trump Says US Will Remove Sudan From Terrorism List If It Compensates Victims.

President Trump on Monday [tweeted](#), "GREAT news! New government of Sudan, which is making great progress, agreed to pay \$335 MILLION to U.S. terror victims and families. Once deposited, I will lift Sudan from the State Sponsors of Terrorism list. At long last, JUSTICE for the American people and BIG step for Sudan!" The [Wall Street Journal](#) (10/19, Restuccia, McBride, Subscription Publication, 7.57M) reports Sudanese Prime Minister Abdalla Hamdok thanked Trump after the tweet.

The [New York Times](#) (10/19, Jakes, Walsh, Schmitt, 18.61M) reports the State Department move "clear[s] the way for the East African nation's fragile government to seek international assistance and, potentially, normalized relations with Israel – a diplomatic goal for President Trump before the election next month." The [Washington Post](#) (10/19, Hudson, Bearak, 14.2M) reports US officials "expect" the "pre-election gambit...will lead to the country's recognition of Israel and payment of millions of dollars to the families of terrorism victims."

According to [Reuters](#) (10/19, Spetalnick, Eltahir, Abdelaziz), "Sudan's designation as a state sponsor of terrorism dates to its toppled ruler Omar al-Bashir and makes it difficult for its transitional government to access urgently needed debt relief and foreign financing." Reuters adds, "Many in Sudan say the designation, imposed in 1993 because Washington believed Bashir was supporting militant groups, has become outdated since he was removed last year and Sudan has long cooperated on counterterrorism." Meanwhile, the [AP](#) (10/19, Magdy) reports the announcement came after Treasury Secretary Mnuchin "traveled to Bahrain to cement the Gulf state's recognition of the Jewish state."

[Axios](#) (10/19, Ravid, 521K) reports Sudan "is also expecting the U.S. to announce an aid package in coming days. It will include financial aid and wheat, medicine and oil shipments. Also in the mix are commitments by the Trump administration to mobilize private sector investments in Sudan and to organize a Sudan donors conference, according to Israeli and Sudanese sources."

French Authorities Crack Down On Islamists In Wake Of Teacher's Decapitation.

The [New York Times](#) (10/19, Nossiter, 18.61M) reports that "as a wave of anger continued to sweep over France following the decapitation of a high school teacher, the French police conducted dozens of raids on Monday targeting individuals associated with radical Islamists, and the government vowed to shut down Muslim aid organizations and expel dozens of foreign nationals for showing signs of radicalism." According to the Times, "Thousands of people took to the streets in cities around France over the weekend to demonstrate their horror at the killing on Friday, and politicians, especially on the right, jostled to sound the alarm against 'the enemy within,' as Interior Minister Gérald Darmanin put it in a radio interview, referring to the country's radicalized Muslims." The [Wall Street Journal](#) (10/19, Dalton, Subscription Publication, 7.57M) reports Darmanin said, "We must stop being naïve." Darmanin added, "There is no reconciliation possible with radical Islam."

COUNTER-INTELLIGENCE

While Ratcliffe Says There Is No Evidence Hunter Biden Emails Are Part Of "Disinformation Campaign," FBI Still Investigating.

[Fox News](#) (10/19, Singman, 27.59M) reports DNI Ratcliffe, in an appearance on Fox Business on Monday, "said that Hunter Biden's laptop 'is not part of some Russian disinformation campaign,' amid claims from House Intelligence Committee Chairman Adam Schiff suggesting otherwise." Ratcliffe is quoted as saying, "It's funny that some of the people who complain the most about intelligence being politicized are the ones politicizing the intelligence." Ratcliffe continued, "Unfortunately, it is Adam Schiff who said the intelligence community believes the Hunter Biden laptop and emails on it are part of a Russian disinformation campaign." Ratcliffe added, "Let me be clear: the intelligence community doesn't believe that because there is no intelligence that supports that. And we have shared no intelligence with Adam Schiff, or any member of Congress."

[Breitbart](#) (10/19, Poor, 673K) reports Ratcliffe said, "Apparently, Chairman Schiff wants anything against his preferred political candidate to be deemed as 'not real' and as using the intelligence community or attempting to use the intelligence community to say there's nothing to see here." Ratcliffe added, "Don't drag the intelligence community into this. Hunter Biden's laptop is not part of some Russian disinformation campaign, and I think it's clear that the American people know that." In addition, the [New York Post](#) (10/19, Moore, 4.57M) reports that Ratcliffe "said the computer is 'in the jurisdiction of the FBI.'" Ratcliffe added, "The FBI has had possession of this." Ratcliffe said, "Without commenting on any investigation that they may or may not have, their investigation is not centered around Russian disinformation and the intelligence community is not playing any role with respect to that."

However, [USA Today](#) (10/19, Johnson, 10.31M) reports Ratcliffe's comments that the emails "are not connected to a Russian disinformation effort" came "even as federal authorities continued to review whether the material was part of such a campaign." USA Today adds Ratcliffe "did not elaborate on the basis of his conclusion, though he acknowledged knowing 'little' about the material published by the New York Post." Similarly, [NBC News](#) (10/19, Dilanian, 6.14M) reports that Ratcliffe "insisted Monday that there is no evidence the Russians or other foreign actors were behind the emails allegedly found on a laptop linked to Hunter Biden, even as officials familiar with the matter tell NBC News the FBI continues to probe that question."

In addition, the [Daily Beast](#) (10/19, Ackerman, Sommer, 1.39M) says Ratcliffe's assessment "gets out in front of the FBI, which took custody of the laptop and an external hard drive as early as in December, according to the New York Post." The FBI, according to a "congressional source," is "looking into the provenance of the material. And among the questions they're seeking to answer is whether the laptop dump is part of what the intelligence

community's counterintelligence chief has already described as a Russian disinformation effort targeting the 2020 election."

[The Hill](#) (10/19, Beavers, Concha, 2.98M) reports that in response to Ratcliffe, Patrick Boland, "a spokesman for Schiff, argued that the DNI is 'purposefully misrepresenting' the chairman's words to help Trump. Boland said Schiff stands behind his remarks to CNN." Schiff had previously told CNN, "Clearly, the origins of this whole smear are from the Kremlin, and the president is only too happy to have Kremlin help and try to amplify it." The [Washington Examiner](#) (10/19, Soellner, 448K) reports Boland added, "The new wave of attacks we are seeing on Vice President Biden are consistent with the false and unsubstantiated narratives that the President, his personal lawyer, and a sanctioned Russian agent have been pushing for well over a year."

[Breitbart](#) (10/19, 673K) reports a "senior intelligence official" told them "on Monday there is no intelligence to support" Schiff's "assertion that recent reports about Hunter Biden's foreign business dealings are part of a Russian disinformation campaign."

The [Dallas Morning News](#) (10/19, Cooper, 946K) says the story "centers around an email of questionable authenticity that the Post says it retrieved from a hard drive from a laptop provided by Trump's lawyer [Rudy] Giuliani, who has repeatedly pushed unfounded claims about the Bidens." In an exclusive, [Mediaite](#) (10/19, Hall, 327K) reports Giuliani "first approached" Fox News about the laptop, but its news division "chose not to run the story unless or until the sourcing and veracity of the emails could be properly vetted." The [Daily Caller](#) (10/19, Talcott, 716K) also reports it "has not independently confirmed the contents of the laptop."

Also reporting on Ratcliffe's comments are [Newsweek](#) (10/19, Fearnow, 1.53M), [National Review](#) (10/19, Bernstein, 731K), [Real Clear Politics](#) (10/19, Hains, 825K), and the [Washington Times](#) (10/19, Scarborough, Boyer, Mordock, 492K), among others.

Meanwhile, Morgan Bradford said on [NBC Nightly News](#)^{vi} (10/19, story 10, 2:40, Holt, 5.28M) that "from the wrong election date on Twitter to fake robocalls," experts are "sounding the alarm about digital disinformation, aimed squarely at Black and Latino voters." Bradford added, "Since January, almost a quarter of the 13 million mentions of vote by mail on social media included misinformation, which is why digital disinformation experts...created virtual war rooms across the country, aimed at flagging and fighting false messages before they spread."

Ratcliffe Expects More Indictments From Durham's Probe. Separately, [Fox News](#) (10/19, Singman, 27.59M) reports that Ratcliffe said "he believes there 'will be' and 'should be' more indictments coming from U.S. Attorney John Durham's investigation into the origins of the Trump-Russia probe, based on the 'intelligence' he has access to."

Meadows: Democrats, Not Russians, Spreading "Disinformation." The [Washington Times](#) (10/19, Scarborough, 492K) reports White House Chief of Staff Mark Meadows "also made a Monday morning appearance, this one on Fox News." The Times adds that Meadows "suggested there is more damaging information to come tying the former vice president to wrongdoing," and "said that it is Democrats who are spreading laptop disinformation." Meadows said, "I'm not aware of any Russian disinformation campaign that would involve these emails or this laptop." Meadows added, "No defensive briefing, to my knowledge, has been given. And so, all of this narrative that is out there that would suggest that it's not real, that's the disinformation." Meadows continued, "You know, Adam Schiff came on and said oh, this is Russia, Russia, Russia. And again, I can tell you, this is Adam Schiff, once again, trying to spin a story that's not accurate. I think in the days to come you will see that Joe Biden will have a lot to answer for."

Cruz Predicts Facebook, Twitter Facing "Potentially Serious Campaign Finance Violations" For Reaction To Hunter Biden Email Story. The [Daily Caller](#) (10/19, Kerr, 716K) reports Sen. Ted Cruz (R-TX), a member of the Senate Judiciary Committee, "told reporters Monday that Facebook and Twitter could face 'potentially serious campaign finance violations' for censoring stories unfavorable of Democrats while letting critical coverage of

Republicans run rampant on their platforms." The [Washington Free Beacon](#) (10/19, Piro, 78K) reports Twitter and Facebook "suppressed the circulation of the New York Post's reporting about a trove of emails and documents from a laptop allegedly belonging to Hunter Biden." According to Cruz, "This poses the single greatest threat to free speech in America today. It poses the single greatest threat to democracy in America today."

Former Senior US Intelligence Officials Claim Emails Have "Classic Earmarks Of A Russian Information Operation." [Politico](#) (10/19, Bertrand, 4.29M) reports that more than 50 former US senior intelligence officials "signed on to a letter outlining their belief that the recent disclosure of emails allegedly belonging to Joe Biden's son 'has all the classic earmarks of a Russian information operation.'" Politico adds that while the signatories "presented no new evidence, they said their national security experience had made them 'deeply suspicious that the Russian government played a significant role in this case' and cited several elements of the story that suggested the Kremlin's hand at work." Politico adds former Trump Administration officials "who signed the letter include Russ Travers, who served as National Counterterrorism Center acting director; Glenn Gerstell, the former NSA general counsel; Rick Ledgett, the former deputy NSA director; Marc Polymeropoulos, a retired CIA senior operations officer; and Cynthia Strand, who served as the CIA's deputy assistant director for global issues." In a piece for [Defense One](#) (10/19, 2K), Patrick Tucker cites a number of former IC officials criticizes Ratcliffe's claim.

Trump Blasts "Corrupt Press" For Failing To Cover Allegations Against The Bidens. The [Washington Post](#) (10/19, A1, Scherer, Dawsey, 14.2M) reports that on Monday in a call with his campaign staff, President Trump maintained that Joe Biden ought to be "in jail," and is "a criminal." According to the Post, Trump "also made repeated references to alleged communications between Biden's son Hunter and foreign officials that have been reported in the New York Post in recent days." Trump is quoted as saying, "I think Joe Biden has a scandal coming up that will make him almost an impotent candidate. This scandal is so big. And the only thing he has going is he has a corrupt press who will not write about it." [Breitbart](#) (10/19, Spiering, 673K) reports the President "spoke as he prepared for a campaign rally in Prescott, Arizona."

[Fox News](#) (10/19, Singman, 27.59M) says Joe Biden has "remained mum on questions about his knowledge of his son Hunter's overseas business dealings, which were discussed in a series of emails purportedly found on a laptop belonging to his son." According to Fox News, "The former vice president is not expected to host or attend any public events until Thursday - the date of the final presidential debate, where President Trump is expected to bring up allegations stemming from the emails."

More Commentary. Michelle Goldberg writes for the [New York Times](#) (10/19, 18.61M) that so far, "the Hunter Biden laptop affair is a farcical retread of the Russian hack-and-leak operation that helped torpedo Hillary Clinton's presidential aspirations in 2016." She adds that if "there's an important story here, it's almost certainly about Giuliani's dirty tricks, not any wrongdoing by Joe Biden."

In an op-ed for [The Hill](#) (10/19, 2.98M), former federal prosecutor Andrew McCarthy argues that the key here in this dispute is whether the laptop is what it is purported to be.

States, Voting Districts Work With Law Enforcement To Secure Elections.

Several states and localities are reportedly working with the FBI and US Attorneys to prepare for securing elections in the event of fraud or attempts to derail the vote.

The [Bangor \(ME\) Daily News](#) (10/19, 198K) reports that in Maine, the "FBI will have agents in Portland on Election Day ready to investigate voter fraud." According to U.S. Attorney Halsey Frank, "Assistant U.S. Attorney John Osborn and Andrew McCormack will be in Portland and Bangor will handle complaints and oversee the federal response to them as part of the longstanding program."

The [Arkansas Democrat Gazette](#) (10/19, 307K) reports that in Arkansas, "The Little Rock office of the FBI is preparing for election season with unique challenges between mail-in voting, increased foreign government intervention and more worry of political violence." The FBI faces "the increased number of countries attempting to influence the United States elections," according to FBI spokesman Connor Hagan. The spokesman explained, "We have DHS, FBI, both U.S. attorneys' offices in the eastern and western district [of Arkansas]. We've got the secretary of state for Arkansas and the Postal Inspection Service." Also reporting is the [Northwest Arkansas Democrat-Gazette](#) (10/19, 77K).

The [Roanoke \(VA\) Star-Sentinel](#) (10/19, 9K) reports that in Virginia, Acting United States Attorney Daniel P. Bubar "has been appointed to serve as the District Election Officer (DEO) for the Western District of Virginia." As a result, Bubar "is responsible for overseeing the District's handling of complaints of election fraud and voting rights concerns in consultation with Justice Department Headquarters in Washington." Additionally, the FBI "the FBI will have special agents available in each field office and resident agency throughout the country to receive allegations of election fraud and other election abuses on election day."

[KPBS-TV San Diego](#) (10/19, 2K) reports that in California, "The local U.S. Attorney's Office announced Monday that one of its prosecutors will oversee efforts to handle complaints of voting rights abuses and election fraud in the Southern District of California." Assistant U. S. Attorney Christopher P. Tenorio, who "has been appointed to serve as the District Election Officer for the region," will "oversee local reports of potential election fraud and voting rights violations through Election Day, in consultation with Justice Department headquarters in Washington, D.C." In addition, "the FBI will have special agents and an Election Crimes Coordinator available in field offices throughout the country to hear reports of potential fraud and other crimes related to the election."

The [Missouri Times](#) (10/19) reports that in Missouri, "Secretary of State Jay Ashcroft is working with national, state and local leaders to bolster the state's defenses in the lead up to the Nov. 3 general election." Ashcroft said, "Our office is working hand-in-hand with federal, state and local officials to safeguard the integrity of Missouri's elections." His office "will join officials" from DOD, ODNI, NSC, FBI, DHS, and CISA, "along with state partners from the Department of Public Safety and the Office of Administration's Information Technology Services Division." The groups "acts as a firewall, monitoring and assessing potential threats and sharing accurate information with federal, state and local leaders."

State Department Officials Self-Isolating After Meeting With COVID-Positive Lebanese Spymaster.

[Politico](#) (10/19, Toosi, 4.29M) reports, "Several US officials, including a senior figure at the State Department, are now self-isolating after meeting with a Lebanese spymaster who has tested positive for the coronavirus." CIA Director Haspel, Undersecretary of State for Political Affairs Hale, and National Security Adviser O'Brien "were among the Americans who met with Lebanon's Major Gen. Abbas Ibrahim during his recent visit to Washington, people familiar with the situation told POLITICO." Hale, "as well as several other employees from the State Department and other executive branch divisions, are now self-isolating for 14 days, a US official said." It is not clear whether Haspel is among those people, Politico says, and O'Brien "has already had the virus."

NNSA: Helicopter Flew Over DC Mapping Natural Nuclear Radiation.

The [Washington Post](#) (10/19, Hermann, 14.2M) reports, "A helicopter flying low over the Washington area on Monday was measuring naturally occurring background radiation as part of security efforts for the Jan. 20 presidential inauguration," according to the NNSA. The DOE agency "said flights in and around the District will continue, possibly until Nov. 6. Two flights are scheduled each day, and a total 20 to 25 hours are required to complete the survey." The twin-engine Bell 412 helicopter flights "will allow officials to update their maps showing

radiation caused by natural decay, the agency said." An NNSA statement is quoted saying the flights are "part of standard preparations to protect public health and safety," and are "purely scientific in nature, and no surveillance or other form of monitoring will occur."

Congressman: US Must Sanction Russian Sovereign Debt To Protect Elections.

Rep. Brad Sherman (D-CA) writes in an opinion piece for [The Hill](#) (10/19, 2.98M) that the Trump Administration has done "very little" to "hold Russia accountable for...attacks on our democracy." Since 2016, the intelligence community has warned "that the government of Russia is actively interfering in U.S. elections." More recently, ODNI, the director of the FBI, and the Treasury Department "have each publicly confirmed that Russia is working to influence the 2020 U.S. election." Sherman argues that of the "limited actions the administration has taken to respond to Russian's malign activity, few of them have imposed any meaningful new penalties directly on the Russian government or Russian President Vladimir Putin." The California Congressman concludes the US needs to "deliver a clear message to Vladimir Putin that there will be meaningful consequences for his government violating our sovereignty through election interference," and that cutting off Russian access to "U.S. capital markets is the first and most critical step the United States can take towards doing that."

EU Struggles To Defend Against Russian Disinformation Campaigns.

[Bloomberg](#) (10/19, Halpin, 4.73M) reports, "More than five years after it began trying in earnest to combat Russian disinformation, the European Union is yet to substantially curtail its reach, Alberto Nardelli writes." The bloc "still has few defenses against sophisticated Kremlin campaigns designed to weaken cohesion in the west." After "Russian opposition leader Alexey Navalny was poisoned," the EU found "that some of the most popular coverage in Germany came from Kremlin-funded news organizations casting doubt on Berlin's conclusion that Moscow was to blame," for instance. However, the "limitations of the Kremlin's strategies also have been exposed in its attempts to promote far-right political parties and sow division in the EU." Bloomberg concludes that "while the virus of Kremlin information warfare can raise the temperature of already bitter social discourses in Europe and the U.S., competent, clear-eyed leadership remains the best antidote."

Syrian Paper: US Officials Have Made Four Secret Trips To Damascus.

Following up on reporting from the Wall Street Journal, the [Washington Post](#) (10/19, Dadouch, 14.2M) reports that in August, U.S. Ambassador Roger Carstens, "an envoy for hostage affairs," and Kash Patel, "a top White House counterterrorism adviser," traveled to Syria "for secret talks about the fate of missing American journalist Austin Tice, sanctions and the U.S. military presence in Syria, in rare high-level negotiations." The Post cites Al Watan, "a newspaper aligned with the Syrian government," which reported that Carstens and Patel "met with Ali Mamlouk, the head of Syria's intelligence agency, in his office in Damascus." The Post adds that Al Watan "said the trip was not the first visit by high-level U.S. diplomats and that three similar visits to Damascus have taken place in past years." In addition, "The newspaper stressed that, during the August visit, the Syrian government refused to discuss 'kidnapped' Americans and sanctions until effective talks on U.S. withdrawal from Syria were underway."

The [New York Times](#) (10/19, Pérez-Peña, 18.61M) reports that in 2017, former CIA Director Pompeo "called Mr. Mamlouk to open back-channel communications on Mr. Tice. Washington then sent an intermediary to see Mr. Mamlouk, the officials said." A year later, the CIA "sent a top agency official with expertise in the Middle East to meet Mr. Mamlouk in Damascus, where the official raised the case of Mr. Tice." Last year, after President Trump "ordered the withdrawal of most of the American troops in Syria," critics "questioned why the administration had not demanded anything from Syria in return, like the release of prisoners."

CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIONS

Two US Park Police Officers Surrender To Face Manslaughter Charges.

On [ABC World News Tonight](#)^{Vi} (10/19, story 5, 1:25, Muir, 7.01M), Adrienne Bankert reported two US Park Police officers "are turning themselves in, nearly three years after officials say they shot an unarmed motorist." Bankert added dash cam video "shows officers Lucas Vinyard and Alejandro Amaya chasing 25-year-old Bijan Ghaisar after he left the scene of a crash where he was rear-ended. The officers attempt to approach his vehicle twice with guns pointed at the car. Both times Ghaisar pulls away. The third time, officers block the 25-year-old, approaching the SUV, again guns drawn. The Jeep moves slightly. The officers then open fire into the car. In all, ten shots were fired." Bankert said that while the Justice Department in 2019 "found that Vinyard and Amaya had not committed any federal civil rights violations," a state investigation "followed, and the officers are now charged with manslaughter and reckless discharge of a firearm."

The [Washington Post](#) (10/19, Jackman, 14.2M) says the officers "were booked into the jail, and appeared in green jail jumpsuits by video conference for their arraignment later Monday morning before Fairfax Circuit Court Judge Richard C. Gardiner. Gardiner allowed both Amaya and Vinyard to be released on a \$10,000 personal recognizance bond, meaning they did not have to pay any money to be released but will owe \$10,000 if they fail to appear for court."

FBI Investigating Murder In Missouri.

The [St. Louis Post-Dispatch](#) (10/19, Rice, 685K) reports that the FBI will "join St. Louis police and other law enforcement agencies this week in searching a lake at Forest Park for evidence in an ongoing homicide investigation."

West Virginia Man Sentenced Over Child Pornography.

The [Huntington \(WV\) Herald-Dispatch](#) (10/19, 87K) reports Jeremiah Alexander Taylor, who "pleaded guilty to distribution of child pornography," was "sentenced in U.S. District Court in Huntington to serve a seven-and-a-half year prison sentence." The investigation began after an undercover FBI agent "posted several online bulletin messages on social media forums" frequented by individuals who have a sexual interest in children and incest. Taylor messaged agent, who later "determined Taylor appeared to be a member and participant of a child pornography group where group members posted thousands of images and videos of child porn."

Texas Man Charged With Bribery.

[KRGV-TV](#) Harlingen, TX (10/19) reports Brownsville school board trustee Sylvia P. Atkinson will face trial on October 26 on charges of bribery. He "was arrested in December 2019 after a FBI sting operation," which saw Atkinson accept money in order to place an item on the school board's agenda.

FBI Investigating Disappearance Of Michigan Minor.

The [Lansing \(MI\) State Journal](#) (10/19, 206K) reports that the FBI supported the investigation into the disappearance of two-year-old Phoenix Washington Jr, who was kidnapped by his father. Prosecutors are expected to "charge [Phoenix] Washington with home invasion, vehicle theft and parental kidnapping."

Kansas Man Arrested Following Death Threats.

The [Washington Post](#) (10/19, Bella, 14.2M) reports Meredith Dowty "was arrested Friday night on a charge of criminal threat for sending the frightening texts directed at" Wichita Mayor Brandon Whipple.

Smuggling Ring Arrested In New York.

[Newsday \(NY\)](#) (10/19, 932K) reports that federal agents have disrupted a smuggling ring operating out of New York, which "used employees of Aeroflot Airlines based in the United States to smuggle into Russia \$50 million worth of electronic goods." Eight people "were charged with failure to file export information, illegal exportation of electronic devices and conspiracy."

Georgia Pair Sentenced For Drug Distribution.

[All On Georgia Chattooga County](#) (10/19) reports former Georgia Department of Corrections officer Lekesia Lashea Harden and Tremayne O. Linder "were sentenced to federal prison for possession of drugs packaged for smuggling into prison." Harden "was sentenced in U.S. District Court to 10 years in prison," and Linder "was also sentenced to 10 years in prison." The FBI investigated the case.

Louisiana Men Indicted On Gun, Drug Trafficking Charges.

The [Baton Rouge \(LA\) Advocate](#) (10/19, 399K) reports Tyjiri Anderson, Benjamin Fields, Albert Stewart III, Trayneil T. Gaines, Charles Anthony Brown, Marvin D. White, and Lorenzo D. Cain "have been indicted and arrested on federal gun and drug trafficking charges." They "were charged in separate indictments and arrested Oct. 13 as part of a coordinated federal interagency initiative to address narcotics trafficking and violent crime."

FBI Concludes Gang Probe In Louisiana.

The [New Orleans Times-Picayune](#) (10/19, 480K) reports that the FBI has concluded its gang probe into New Orleans' West 30s neighborhood, and it "culminated in the arrest of 18 people on 47 charges that include attempted murder, rape and other violent crimes." 22nd Judicial District Attorney Warren Montgomery "described the case as the largest and most comprehensive racketeering case on the north shore, involving a full-time FBI agent, Covington Police and the St. Tammany Parish Sheriff's Office."

Massachusetts Man Arrested Following FBI Task Force Search.

In online coverage, [WLNE-TV](#) Providence, RI (10/19) reports Massachusetts resident Kevin Nunes "was arrested after an investigation and search was conducted by the Fall River Police Department and Southeastern Massachusetts FBI Gang Task Force." Nunes "was charged with possession to distribute marijuana, unlawful possession of a stun-gun, possession of a non-large capacity firearm in home and possession of ammunition without a Firearms Identification Card."

Operation In Massachusetts Leads To Four Arrests, Seizure Of Drugs, Firearms.

The [Springfield \(MA\) Republican](#) (10/16, Canton, 395K) reported that Massachusetts residents Ricky Almonte, Richard Almonte, Gilberto Rodriguez and Yadiell Dejesus "were arrested after a task force of local, state and federal law enforcement" workers executed search warrants in that state on Friday morning. The raid operation, which "the FBI Western Mass. Gang Task Force" participated in, led to the seizure of "numerous firearms and over 12,000 bags of heroin." The [WWLP-TV](#) Springfield, MA (10/16, 81K) Springfield, MA (10/16) website published a similar article.

Tennessee Meth Case Defendant Sentenced To 151 Months In Prison.

In online coverage, [WBBJ-TV](#) Jackson, TN (10/16) reported that Tennessee resident Anne Taylor Davis has been sentenced to 151 months in prison "for distribution and possession with intent to distribute methamphetamine." Davis was arrested after "FBI agents, along with Dyersburg

police, began investigating large-scale methamphetamine trafficking” in parts of Tennessee and Arkansas.

FBI Investigating Oklahoma Shooting.

[KOTV-TV](#) Tulsa, OK (10/19, Griffin, 108K) reports that the FBI “is now investigating a deadly shooting” in Muskogee, where police officers “said they responded to a shots fired call around 2:25 a.m. Monday.” The police “found Bradley Dillon,” who “was taken to the hospital where he later died” from a gunshot wound.

Virginia Man Sues Airbus Over Claims Of Lying To The FBI.

[Law360](#) (10/19, Subscription Publication, 8K) reports, behind a paywall, that former Airbus U.S. Space & Defense Inc Contracts Manager Maros Kmec “has sued an Airbus unit, alleging that it falsely reported him to the FBI after he expressed concerns about its accounting practices and it discovered that he preserved evidence of it submitting false claims to the federal government.” He “told a Virginia federal court on Saturday that Airbus U.S. Space & Defense Inc., a subsidiary of Airbus Group Inc., wrongly reported him to the Federal Bureau of Investigation in 2018 for allegedly stealing trade secrets and using the proprietary information for his business.”

FINANCIAL CRIME & CORPORATE SCANDALS

COVID-19 Scammers Driving Unemployment Fraud Across US.

[Bloomberg Law](#) (10/19, Clukey, Subscription Publication, 4K) reports, “Unemployed Americans aren’t the only ones waiting for the next pandemic relief check. A slew of fraudsters, including an organized Nigerian cybercrime ring, are also looking to get paid,” and “they have plenty of tricks to pull it off – like using the names of dead people and personal information collected in previous data breaches to create false beneficiaries to gain access to benefits meant to help workers.” Bloomberg Law adds, “At least 11 states are seeing an increase in fraudulent unemployment insurance activity fueled by the millions of claims coming in each month and additional federal dollars being offered to the unemployed due to the coronavirus pandemic. Places including Arizona, Colorado, Maryland, New York, Ohio, Texas, and Washington combined are reporting billions of dollars in fraud, according to a Bloomberg Government review of unemployment actions across the nation. States and the U.S. Department of Labor and FBI have issued alerts.”

CYBER DIVISION

Cyberspace Solarium Commission Releases Follow-Up To March Report.

[C4ISR & Networks](#) (10/19, Pomerleau) reports that the Cyberspace Solarium Commission “has released a detailed follow-up with recommendations for how to secure the information and communications technologies supply chain.” The newly released details come after “a report in March, advocating for multiple cyber deterrence efforts.” The whitepaper “is one of several additions to the original report that go into greater depth on a particular topic or recommendation from the March report.” Released on Monday, it “solely focuses on the recommendation that Congress should direct the U.S. government to develop and implement a strategy for the information and communications technology industrial base to ensure more trusted supply chains and the availability of critical information and communications technologies.” The report says the US is not “competing with China on that front creates that security issue. ... The economic issue here is leading to a national security and a cybersecurity issue, and the two issues really can’t be disentangled.”

Lawsuit Alleges Indian Hackers Leaked Businessman's Emails.

[Reuters](#) (10/19) reports, "Iranian-American businessman Farhad Azima has accused a pair of Indian companies of stealing his emails and publishing them to the web, according to a lawsuit filed in federal court in North Carolina." According to Reuters, "Azima's suit alleges that Indian security company CyberRoot Risk Advisory and New Delhi-based BellTroX InfoTech Services carried out the hack-and-leak at the behest of American private intelligence company Vital Management Services, which in turn had been hired by the international law firm Dechert on behalf of the Ras Al Khaimah Investment Authority (RAKIA), an investment fund based in the United Arab Emirates. Reuters reported in June that BellTroX was at the center of a years-long hacking campaign that targeted more than 10,000 accounts across the globe, citing three former employees, outside researchers and a trail of online evidence."

[Bloomberg](#) (10/19, Turton, 4.73M) reports, "A years-long legal dispute between" Azima "and the Investment Authority of Ras Al Khaimah, one of the seven emirates that make up the United Arab Emirates, has now entangled a private investigator in North Carolina and two hacking-for-hire firms in India." Bloomberg adds that in the lawsuit, Azima, "an Iranian aviation executive who lives and works in America, accused law firm Dechert LLP of hiring a private investigator, Nicholas Del Rosso, who then allegedly hired hackers in India to steal documents from Azima. Nicholas Del Rosso and his company Vital Management Services Inc. are named as defendants in the suit. Dechert LLP isn't a named party in the suit. Azima is seeking monetary damages and an injunction against further hacking." The lawsuit "comes after reporting by Bloomberg and Reuters earlier this year that showed an Indian company, Belltrox Infotech Services, had for years worked as a 'hacking-for-hire' service, targeting more than 10,000 people and companies."

Schools Learn To Deal With Increasing Risk Of Hacker Attacks As Online School Year Amid Pandemic Begins.

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (10/19, Uberti, Subscription Publication, 7.57M) reports that as many K-12 schools return to virtual instruction and hand out devices to students and teachers, schools are trying to prevent computer networks from crashing under a surge in use. Now, as the school year amid the COVID-19 pandemic unfolds, hackers are becoming a larger problem.

Pro-Iran Trolls Spreading Fake Scandals Posted On Legitimate News Sites By Hackers.

The [Daily Beast](#) (10/19, 1.39M) reports, "Over the past year, hackers have broken into a number of news organizations' Twitter accounts and at least one website to plant fake stories." One such series of "fake scandals" was when "an Israeli news outlet's hacked Twitter account tried to fool readers into believing for a few brief moments earlier this month." The account promoted fake scandals such as that "President Trump [was] dying of coronavirus and handing over power to Mike Pence." Another was of "Black Lives Matter protesters surrounding the Clintons' house in New York and firing gunshots." Though it is "still unclear who was responsible for the account break-ins amplified by Iranian linked trolls," cybersecurity researchers such as Mandiant Threat Intelligence's Lee Foster are concerned about hackers "compromising legitimate news sites to post fabricated news articles."

LAW ENFORCEMENT SERVICES

US To Execute First Woman In Nearly 70 Years.

The [Washington Post](#) (10/19, Iati, 14.2M) reports that the Department of Justice on Friday announced Lisa Montgomery, "a woman convicted of strangling a pregnant woman and kidnapping her unborn child," is scheduled to be executed via lethal injection on December 8, "the first federal execution of a woman in nearly 70 years." The Post adds a federal jury

"convicted her in 2007 of kidnapping resulting in death and unanimously recommended a death sentence."

DOJ IG Discusses Growing Threat Of Drones For Prison Smuggling Operations.

[Federal News Network](#) (10/19, 220) reports Department of Justice Inspector General Michael Horowitz spoke Monday about the challenges facing the Bureau of Prisons' efforts to combat contraband smuggling. He discusses the threat of drones, saying, "The first reported run incident for the BOP was in 2015. But that wasn't the beginning of the concern. It had been something that we'd seen, we'd expressed concerns about – before that they have concerns and frankly, state facilities have similar concerns."

OTHER FBI NEWS

Wray Under Fire In Run-Up To Election.

[Politico](#) (10/19, Cheney, 4.29M) reports that Director Wray "was confirmed to his post on a promise to steer clear of the go-it-alone gambits that earned his predecessor, James Comey, the wrath of Democrats and Republicans alike. Where Comey took politically explosive steps without consulting superiors and offered personal opinions about Hillary Clinton that proved damaging to her campaign, Wray would hug his bosses close and keep silent about anyone not facing criminal charges," and yet "just days from the 2020 election, Wray finds himself in an eerily familiar position: under withering pressure from Donald Trump and his allies to publicly disclose information that could damage Trump's political rival – this time, Joe Biden." According to Politico, "Trump's inner circle was already furious at Wray for echoing the intelligence community's finding that Russia is acting to damage Biden's candidacy, as well as his description of antifa as 'an ideology' rather than an organized entity," and "now, they're ratcheting up calls for Trump to fire his handpicked director."

California Ballot Drop-Off Box Damaged By Suspected Arson.

The [Orange County \(CA\) Register](#) (10/19, 546K) reports, "A fire that damaged ballots at a drop-off box outside the Baldwin Park library Sunday night, Oct. 18, is being investigated as arson, county officials said." The OCR adds, "Authorities did not say how many ballots were damaged and investigators haven't arrested a suspect. 'This is the only occurrence of damage like this so far. This is the very first,' said Mike Sanchez, spokesman for the Los Angeles County Registrar-Recorder's office. There are over 400 drop-off boxes in the county, he added." According to the OCR, "The Registrar-Recorder's office asked for an investigation through local law enforcement and reported the incident to the FBI and the Attorney General for investigation."

OTHER WASHINGTON NEWS

Senate To Work Over Weekend To Complete Barrett's Confirmation.

The [AP](#) (10/19, Mascaro) reports the Senate "is on track to confirm Judge Amy Coney Barrett to the Supreme Court by next Monday, charging toward a rare weekend session as Republicans push past procedural steps to install [her] before Election Day." Senate Majority Leader McConnell "said he will begin the process as soon as the Senate Judiciary Committee wraps up its work Thursday," and he "said Monday that Barrett demonstrated over several days of public hearings the 'sheer intellectual horsepower that the American people deserve to have on the Supreme Court.'" According to the AP, "Trump's nominee is on a glide path to confirmation that will seal a conservative hold on the court for years to come." [Roll Call](#) (10/19, Lesniewski, 154K) reports McConnell "already told reporters...that Barrett has the votes needed to be confirmed."

USA Today Analysis: Barrett Ceremony Was Snapshot Of Trump's "Crumbling Support Among Swing Christian Voters." In a 2,300-word analysis, [USA Today](#) (10/19, Fraser, 10.31M) says that while President Trump's Rose Garden ceremony announcing his nomination of Judge Amy Coney Barrett "was supposed to be a triumphant moment for a longstanding alliance between Republican presidents and conservative Christians," the event instead "was a snapshot of his crumbling support among swing Christian voters." According to USA Today, "Numerous polls, including figures released Monday, show that as people's confidence in Trump's pandemic response declined so did the percentage who said they would vote for his re-election."

Senate Republicans Propose Constitutional Amendment To Stop Court Expansion. The [Washington Times](#) (10/19, Dinan, 492K) reports Sen. Ted Cruz (R-TX) is leading "a group of Senate Republicans" who announced on Monday they are introducing a constitution amendment "to fix the Supreme Court at a maximum of nine members, playing defense as Democrats ramp up talk of expanding the court to try to swamp President Trump's picks." The lawmakers "also proposed changing Senate rules to require a supermajority to vote in favor of increasing the number of justices."

Trump Calls Fauci "A Disaster" And Health Experts "Idiots."

All three broadcast networks opened their Monday evening newscasts with coverage of President Trump's reference to NIAID Director Fauci as "a disaster" and Trump's coronavirus advisers as "these idiots" in a conference call with campaign staff. Later, the President [tweeted](#), "Dr. Tony Fauci says we don't allow him to do television, and yet I saw him last night on @60Minutes, and he seems to get more airtime than anybody since the late, great, Bob Hope. All I ask of Tony is that he make better decisions. He said 'no masks & let China in'. Also, Bad arm! P.S. Tony should stop wearing the Washington Nationals' Mask for two reasons. Number one, it is not up to the high standards that he should be exposing. Number two, it keeps reminding me that Tony threw out perhaps the worst first pitch in the history of Baseball!" The President also retweeted videos of [Fauci throwing out a first pitch](#) and [Trump himself doing so](#).

On [ABC World News Tonight](#)^{Vi} (10/19, lead story, 4:00, Muir, 7.31M), Jonathan Karl said, "President Trump unleashed a bizarre new line of attack against Joe Biden today, slamming him for saying he would listen to Dr. Anthony Fauci, the nation's leading expert on coronavirus." Trump: "He wants to listen to Dr. Fauci. He wants to listen to Dr. Fauci." Karl: "Polls have consistently shown Dr. Fauci is far more trusted than the President, or anybody else for that matter, when it comes to handling COVID-19, which is why Trump put him in a campaign ad, over Fauci's objections. But today, the President unloaded in a conference call with his campaign staff." Trump: "People are tired of hearing Fauci and all these idiots, these, these people. These people that have gotten it wrong. He's a nice guy. He's been here for 500 years. He called every one of them wrong. Yet, we keep him. Every time he goes on television, there's always a bomb. But there's a bigger bomb if you fire him. But Fauci's a disaster."

On the [CBS Evening News](#)^{Vi} (10/19, lead story, 3:40, 4.4M), Norah O'Donnell said Trump is "on the attack, not against his opponent but the top infectious disease expert. In a series of insults made to reporters on Twitter and in front of voters, the President said that Dr. Anthony Fauci is, quote, 'a disaster,' and called Fauci and other experts 'idiots.' ... [Trump] appears intent on minimizing the coronavirus pandemic, telling campaign staffers that Americans are tired of hearing about the virus and just want it to be left alone." CBS' Ben Tracy: "President Trump is behind in the polls and two weeks from the election, his campaign is being criticized for not having any sort of consistent message. Now the President is launching these new attacks on Dr. Fauci and all but dismissing coronavirus. ... Asked today why he doesn't just fire Fauci, President Trump took another swipe at the 79-year-old who has served six presidents." Trump: "I don't want to hurt him. He's been there for about 350 years."

Lester Holt said on [NBC Nightly News](#)^{Vi} (10/19, lead story, 1:20, 5.9M) that with "15 days to go, you might expect candidates to be hammering their closing arguments. President Trump

is instead hammering Dr. Fauci in some of his most explicit terms yet, calling the nation's top infectious disease doctor 'a disaster.'" The [AP](#) (10/19, Miller, Colvin) reports, "Seeking to shore up the morale of his staff amid growing private concerns that he is running out of time to make up lost ground, Trump blasted his government's own scientific experts as too negative, even as his handling of the pandemic that has killed nearly 220,000 Americans remains a central issue to voters." [Reuters](#) (10/19, Mason) says Trump and Fauci "have been at odds over how best to handle a pandemic that has killed more than 219,000 people" in the US.

[Bloomberg](#) (10/19, Parker, Fabian, Wingrove, 4.73M) reports, "After disparaging Fauci, Trump remarked that he didn't care whether reporters were on the call." But the [New York Times](#) (10/19, Stolberg, Haberman, Weiland, 18.61M) says "the broadside...was hardly the closing message Trump advisers were looking for. It threatened to focus the electorate squarely on the president's coronavirus response and pitted him against Dr. Fauci, who as the nation's top infectious disease expert is a career government scientist the public likes and trusts far more than Mr. Trump."

[USA Today](#) (10/19, Cummings, 10.31M) reports Trump "defended his comments about Fauci while speaking to reporters before a rally in Prescott, Arizona. He called Fauci a 'very nice man' who 'loves being on television.'" The [Washington Post](#) (10/19, A1, Scherer, Dawsey, 14.2M) reports Trump also mocked Fauci in Arizona "for his botched ceremonial first pitch at Nationals Park on Opening Day and misrepresenting some of the doctor's positions on the coronavirus in tweets."

The [New York Daily News](#) (10/19, Goldiner, 2.52M) says that "with the U.S. still in the grip of a deadly pandemic, President Trump is turning the nation's top infectious disease expert into his political punching bag." The [New York Post](#) (10/19, Bowden, Nelson, 4.57M) reports, "Trump, who has shunned wearing a mask, also accused the ardent Washington Nationals fan of wearing an ineffective facial covering." Mark Shanahan of the [Boston Globe](#) (10/19, 972K) writes, "It would seem unwise, picking this fight with Fauci – so close to Election Day – instead of using the waning days of his teetering reelection campaign to, say, reassure worried voters, especially seniors terrified of being infected."

[The Hill](#) (10/19, Greenwood, 2.98M) reports Biden said in a statement, "Coronavirus infections are spiking across the country, but President Trump decided to attack Dr. Fauci again today as a 'disaster' and call public health experts 'idiots' instead of laying out a plan to beat this virus or heeding their advice about how we can save lives and get our economy moving again. ... The American people have never backed down from a challenge, but they need a leader to show the way and all President Trump has done is cower and wallow in self-pity."

[Politico](#) (10/19, Niedzwiadek, 4.29M) says "the Biden campaign seemed gleeful to be linked with Fauci, who has continually rated as one of the most trusted voices in the country on Covid-19, according to numerous public opinion polls." The [Washington Post](#) (10/19, Rao, 14.2M), meanwhile, writes, "Nearly a week after mocking [Biden] as elderly and disabled, President Trump tweeted a reference to Bob Hope, the mid-century comedian who died in 2003 at 100 years old."

[The Tennessean](#) (10/19, Wegner, 458K) reports Sen. Lamar Alexander (R-TN) "voiced his support" for Fauci on Monday, saying in a statement, "Dr. Fauci is one of our country's most distinguished public servants. He has served six presidents, starting with Ronald Reagan. If more Americans paid attention to his advice, we'd have fewer cases of COVID-19, and it would be safer to go back to school and back to work and out to eat."

The [Washington Post](#) (10/19, 14.2M) editorializes, "Of course we are tired of covid. More than 8 million Americans have been infected by the novel coronavirus and at least 219,000 have died, more than in any other country. Some number of those deaths can be attributed to Mr. Trump's adoption of wishful thinking as policy. He has resisted a national testing plan and a national public health strategy, and he continually encourages reckless behavior and mocks prudence. The result is more unemployment, more illness, more misery." The [Wall Street Journal](#) (10/19, Bender, Lucey, Subscription Publication, 7.57M), the [CNN](#) (10/19, Collins,

Liptak, 83.16M) and [Fox News](#) (10/19, Singman, 27.59M) websites, and [Axios](#) (10/19, Fernandez, 521K) also have reports.

WPost Report: Atlas "Succeeded In Largely Sidelining" Other Task Force Members.

Under the headline "Trump's Den Of Dissent: Inside The White House Task Force As Coronavirus Surges," the [Washington Post](#) (10/19, Abutaleb, Rucker, Dawsey, Costa, 14.2M) reports, "As summer faded into autumn and the novel coronavirus continued to ravage the nation unabated, Scott Atlas, a neuroradiologist whose commentary on Fox News led President Trump to recruit him to the White House, consolidated his power over the government's pandemic response." According to the Post, Atlas "shot down attempts to expand testing" and "openly feuded with other doctors on the coronavirus task force." The Post says Atlas "succeeded in largely sidelining them," and then "advanced fringe theories, such as that social distancing and mask-wearing were meaningless and would not have changed the course of the virus in several hard-hit areas."

The [New York Times](#) (10/19, Wu, 18.61M) reports that a tweet by Atlas on Saturday questioning the efficacy of masks in containing coronavirus "was rapidly debunked by experts, who pointed to a wealth of evidence showing that face coverings reduce the risk that the coronavirus will hop from person to person." According to the Times, "Not long after, Dr. Atlas reshared his first tweet with a message that seemed to walk back his original statement: 'Use masks for their intended purpose – when close to others especially hi risk,' he said. 'Otherwise, social distance. No widespread mandates.'" On Sunday, "Twitter removed Dr. Atlas's first tweet, saying it violated the company's policy against false or misleading information about the coronavirus that could lead to harm." However, "the damage had already been done: The post had been retweeted at least 1,800 times, and generated over 7,300 likes and replies. The removal then set off a flurry of anti-mask posts, and accusations of tech censorship, across social media."

Atlas Praises "Herd Immunity" Declaration, Though Other Experts Alarmed By Idea. The [New York Times](#) (10/19, Eddy, Pianigiani, Schaverien, Zraick, Gillet, 18.61M) reports Atlas and other Administration officials have praised ideas in a declaration by fellow Stanford University professor Jay Bhattacharya that "calls for allowing the coronavirus to spread in order to achieve 'herd immunity' – the point at which enough people have been infected to stall transmission of the pathogen." The "central proposition is that to contain the coronavirus, people 'who are not vulnerable should immediately be allowed to resume life as normal' while those at high risk are protected from infection." According to the Times, the idea "has alarmed and angered other public health researchers," and "on Wednesday, about 80 published a manifesto of their own...saying that this approach would endanger one-third of the US population who have conditions that put them at high risk from severe Covid-19, and result in perhaps a half-million deaths."

In an op-ed for the [New York Times](#) (10/19, 18.61M), Tulane University School of Public Health professor John Barry argues, "Even if herd immunity can be achieved with only 40 percent of the population infected or vaccinated," the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation at the University of Washington "estimates that a total of 800,000 Americans would die," and "the real death toll needed to reach herd immunity could far exceed one million." Moreover, "as horrific a price as that is, it could prove much worse if damage to the heart, lungs or other organs of those who recover from the immediate effects of the virus does not heal and instead leads to early deaths or incapacitation. But we won't know that for years."

GAO To Investigate Administration's Influence Over CDC, FDA.

[USA Today](#) (10/19, Behrmann, 10.31M) reports the Government Accountability Office (GAO) "has agreed to investigate alleged political influence from the Trump administration over the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Food and Drug Administration." The independent legislative agency "accepted a Senate request on Monday to examine potential

political interference and 'determine whether this interference has violated the agencies' scientific integrity and communication policies.'" GAO spokesman Charles Young said, "We expect the work will start in January, as staff who cover those issues become available."

[Politico](#) (10/19, Diamond, 4.29M) reports that in their request, Sens. Patty Murray (D-WA), Gary Peters (D-MI), and Elizabeth Warren (D-MA) "cited [a] report that administration officials sought to interfere with the CDC's flagship Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Reports in order to align with Trump's more optimistic message about the pandemic." Other incidents cited "include pressure on CDC to loosen its guidelines on re-opening schools" and HHS Secretary Azar overruling FDA officials on coronavirus testing rules. In a joint statement on Monday, the senators said, "The GAO's decision to conduct an independent audit is a good first step towards making sure that guidance coming from federal agencies is based on science and facts, not on the Trump Administration's political agenda or the President's whims."

CDC Issues Recommendation For Masks On Planes, Other Public Transportation.

The [Washington Post](#) (10/19, Sun, 14.2M) reports the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention on Monday "strongly recommended in newly issued guidelines that all passengers and workers on planes, trains, buses and other public transportation wear masks to control the spread of the novel coronavirus." The interim guidance "was issued following pressure from the airline industry and amid surging cases of the coronavirus and strong evidence on the effectiveness of masks in curbing transmission, according to CDC officials." However, "the recommendations fall short of what transportation industry leaders and unions had sought, and come long after evidence in favor of mask-wearing was well established." [Bloomberg](#) (10/19, Court, 4.73M), citing the Post's coverage, says the change "followed airline industry pressure and a request from Vice President Mike Pence," and "a note at the bottom of the web page states it was last reviewed on Monday."

[Reuters](#) (10/19, Shepardson) reports the guidance "also calls for facial coverings at transportation hubs like airports and train stations." In its guidance, the CDC said, "Broad and routine utilization of masks on our transportation systems will protect Americans and provide confidence that we can once again travel more safely even during this pandemic." Reuters says many airlines, as well as "Amtrak and most public transit systems and US airports already require all passengers and workers to wear facial coverings, as do most airports, and ride-sharing firms Uber and Lyft." However, "the White House in July opposed language in a bill before Congress that would have mandated all airline, train and public transit passengers and workers to wear masks."

[USA Today](#) (10/19, Woodyard, 10.31M) reports the CDC also said that if passengers refuse to wear masks, transportation providers should, "at the earliest opportunity, disembark any person who refuses to comply."

One Million Air Passengers Screened For COVID Sunday. The [AP](#) (10/19, Ott) reports that the "number of passengers screened in a single day for flights in the US topped one million for the first time since COVID-19 infections began to spike last March." The "notable milestone, reached Sunday, signifies both the progress made since the darkest days of pandemic for the devastated US airline industry, when fewer than 100,000 people were screened per day in April, and how far it still has to go." The "million plus passengers screened Sunday compares with 2.6 million on the same day last year, or roughly 60% fewer, according to the Transportation Security Administration."

Top Military Leaders Permitted To Return To Pentagon For Work.

The [AP](#) (10/19) reports, "The nation's top military leaders have been cleared to return to work at the Pentagon after having self-quarantined as a precaution following the positive COVID-19 test of a senior Coast Guard official in early October." The approval "to resume work from the Pentagon was given last week, in accordance with Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

guidelines and after members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff had multiple negative tests for the virus, officials said Monday."

FEMA Threw Out Faulty Russian Ventilators.

[BuzzFeed News](#) (10/19) reports, "As the US was bracing for a major wave of seriously ill coronavirus patients in March, President Donald Trump asked President Vladimir Putin in a phone call for help. In response, Moscow sent 45 ventilators and other medical supplies in crates stamped 'From Russia, With Love.'" They "were part of a lopsided aid deal between the countries that would ultimately see Russia delivering a little more than \$1 million worth of supplies to the US in April, followed by the US sending about \$5.6 million to Russia over the following two months." These Russian ventilators "were received by Federal Emergency Management Agency officials in New York on April 1 and divided up between hospitals there and in New Jersey," but "there were problems with the Aventa-M ventilators from the moment they landed and they were never used," and "now, according to FEMA, they have essentially been tossed in the trash."

COVID Cases Surging By 50% In Nearly One-Third Of States.

[NBC Nightly News](#)^{Vi} (10/19, story 5, 2:00, Holt, 5.28M) reported, "COVID cases aren't just climbing in 38 states; in nearly a third, new infections are surging by at least 50%. Some big cities, small towns, and entire states are overwhelmed by the crushing wave of new patients. ... For the first time since July, our nation recording nearly 70,000 daily infections, a grim benchmark experts say certain to be shattered." The "surge in new cases doesn't appear to be coming from businesses and schools that have reopened, but instead smaller gatherings with people you don't live with, often inside a private home where not everyone is wearing a mask."

On [ABC World News Tonight](#)^{Vi} (10/19, story 3, 3:00, 7.31M), David Muir reported there are new warnings "about the dangerous spread of the coronavirus," with "mayors and governors urging people to take the virus seriously." El Paso Director of Public Health Angela Mora said that the 500% increase in cases this month alone in the city is "out of control" and encouraged residents to wear masks. Meanwhile, University of Minnesota CIDRAP Director Michael Osterholm said, "The next six to 12 weeks are going to be the darkest of the entire pandemic."

The [CBS Evening News](#)^{Vi} (10/19, story 3, 2:35, O'Donnell, 4.4M) reported, "Health experts are warning tonight the months ahead will be some of the hardest of the pandemic, and it comes as the US climbs towards a third peak, and nowhere is it more true than Wisconsin, the country's hot spot. The state is setting records for new cases, hospital admissions, and deaths." On [NBC Nightly News](#)^{Vi} (10/19, story 4, 2:10, Holt, 5.28M), Gabe Gutierrez reported, "Hospitalizations in Wisconsin have tripled over the last month, about 85% of the state's beds are full. ... COVID hospitalizations are at their peaks in at least 16 states, including North Dakota and New Mexico, where they have spiked more than 100% in two weeks. Healthcare workers have noticed a dramatic difference." He added, "There's also growing evidence that damage from COVID can be long-term."

State Public Health Officials Finalizing Vaccine Distribution Plans.

[USA Today](#) (10/19, Weise, 10.31M) reports, "State public health departments say they're ready to leap into action as soon as a COVID-19 vaccine is approved but caution so many things are still unknown that exactly what that leap looks like is hard to say right now." On Friday, state officials "submitted vaccination distribution plans" to the CDC; the plans "were as detailed as they could be given the many things that are still unknown," including when a vaccine will be available and what storage requirements it will have. In "a call with reporters Monday, public health officials talked about how they're preparing and what they still need." USA Today paraphrases Maine CDC Director Nirav Shah as saying that preparation is "like planning an

outdoor picnic for 1.3 million...without knowing how much food he has, who's coming, how he's going to invite them and what they can and can't eat."

Newsom: California Will "Independently Review" FDA-Approved COVID Vaccines Before Releasing. The [Los Angeles Times](#) (10/19, Luna, 4.64M) reports California Gov. Gavin Newsom (D) said Monday that the state "will review the safety of all COVID-19 vaccines that receive federal approval before distributing them to the public, adding an extra safeguard amid concerns that the White House could rush the process." Newsom, at a news conference, "announced the creation of a new work group of physicians and scientists working with the California Department of Public Health that will 'independently review' all federal Food and Drug Administration-approved vaccines, he said." The Times says Newsom is "insisting on a state review at a time when polls show declining confidence in future COVID-19 vaccines," and his announcement "also raised new uncertainty about COVID-19 vaccines just days after Dr. Anthony Fauci said he felt 'strong confidence' in the safety of those approved by the Food and Drug Administration."

The [San Francisco Chronicle](#) (10/19, Koseff, Ho, 2.67M) reports Newsom "announced the creation of an 11-member scientific review committee to check the process for any vaccine approved" by the FDA; members "include San Francisco's health officer, Tomás Aragón, as well epidemiology experts from UC Berkeley, Stanford University and Kaiser Permanente."

Cuomo May Lift Restrictions On Some COVID Red Zones.

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (10/19, Yang, Subscription Publication, 7.57M) reports that in a conference call on Monday, New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo (D) said that on Wednesday he will announce changes to New York City's red zones, which he said could mean adjusting the rules around reopening so that they are contingent on local community response and infection rates.

The [New York Daily News](#) (10/19, Sommerfeldt, 2.52M) reports Cuomo "said the changes will be unveiled...roughly two weeks after the color-coded shutdowns of schools and non-essential businesses were first implemented in parts of southern Brooklyn, central Queens, Rockland County, Orange County and some areas of upstate." Cuomo "did not divulge the exact nature of the tweaks, but said they could be made on a 'block by block' basis within the zones. For example, Cuomo said a bar tied to a specific outbreak could remain shuttered while schools and other businesses return to normal."

Catholic Leaders Voice Disapproval Of Cuomo's COVID Measures. The [New York Times](#) (10/19, McKinley, 18.61M) reports that in the last two weeks, "Catholic leaders in New York have voiced their deep disapproval" with Gov. Cuomo "over his decision to sharply limit attendance at houses of worship in areas that are seeing a surge of new coronavirus cases." The governor's decision "was largely aimed at trying to rein in congregants in Orthodox Jewish synagogues in New York City and in Orange and Rockland Counties, where some members have flouted social distancing and mask regulations." However, "it also affected other houses of worship, including about two dozen parishes in the diocese covering Queens and Brooklyn, where Catholic officials have sued Mr. Cuomo in federal court, insisting that they have been abiding by the rules and should not be punished."

New Jersey COVID Cases Spike.

The [New York Times](#) (10/19, Tully, Gold, 18.61M) reports, "Coronavirus cases in New Jersey, an early epicenter of the pandemic, are on the rise again, doubling over the last month to an average of more than 900 new positive tests a day, a worrisome reversal of fortune for a state that had driven transmission rates to some of the nation's lowest levels." Gov. Phil Murphy (D) "said Monday that residents should refrain from all but necessary out-of-state travel." Murphy, "who has been conservative in allowing the state to reopen, said he would consider targeted shutdowns to curb the spread, as Connecticut and New York have done, but he suggested that would not cure the problem." The "new cases, he said, do not appear linked to reopened

schools or businesses, and are instead believed to be connected with private indoor gatherings that are harder to regulate.”

[Politico](#) (10/19, Sutton, 4.29M) reports that during his regular briefing on Monday, Murphy said the “numbers are sobering.” He added, “While these numbers are a far cry from where we were during our springtime peaks, they are also significantly higher than where we were throughout the summer and until just a few weeks ago. ... Especially as the cooler weather pulls more of us back inside, we have to remain extra vigilant.”

Wisconsin Judge Reimposes Governor’s Capacity Limit Order.

The [AP](#) (10/19, Bauer) reports Barron County, Wisconsin, Circuit Court Judge James Babler on Monday reimposed an order from Gov. Tony Evers (D) “limiting the number of people who can gather in bars, restaurants and other indoor venues to 25% of capacity.” The limits order “was issued Oct. 6 by Andrea Palm, secretary of the state Department of Health Services, in the face of surging coronavirus cases in Wisconsin.” On October 14, a different judge blocked the order “after it was challenged by the Tavern League of Wisconsin, which argued it amounted to a ‘de facto closure’ order for the bars and restaurants it represents.” Babler “declined a request from the Tavern League to keep the capacity limit order on hold while the lawsuit is pending and declined to stay his ruling while the Tavern League and others appeal his decision.” The [Wall Street Journal](#) (10/19, Subscription Publication, 7.57M) reports Babler said there was nothing in the case filings indicating bars and restaurants were complying with the limits, so it is unclear whether they were negatively affected by the rule.

The [Milwaukee Journal Sentinel](#) (10/19, 632K) reports Babler “also said the May state Supreme Court ruling that knocked down Evers’ stay-at-home order did not make clear what authority the administration has in placing such limits, despite the plaintiffs arguing the decision prevents Evers from issuing the latest order.” Babler said, “I beg the Supreme Court for clarity because should this issue be decided by them, trial judges need to know how they need to rule.”

[Reuters](#) (10/19, McKay, Shumaker) reports Wisconsin, “one of several battleground states in the Nov. 3 US presidential election, is scrambling to contain a resurgence that officials fear could overwhelm the state’s hospitals.”

Racism Blamed For High Rates Of Asian American COVID Deaths In San Francisco.

In a 3,800-word analysis, [USA Today](#) (10/19, della Cava, 10.31M) details how “many Asian American immigrants” in San Francisco County “lead a fragile existence rendered even more precarious with the arrival of COVID-19.” Of the county’s 123 COVID deaths, 38% “are Asian American residents, the most of any ethnicity.” Experts “also are concerned that positivity rates among Asian Americans in San Francisco could be far higher than the 12% reported, a by-product of the decades-in-the-making model minority myth, which characterizes this ethnic group as financially successful, physically healthy and upwardly mobile.” According to USA Today, “This belief has caused segments of the Asian American community to long be overlooked when it comes to social services for housing, employment and health.” In many cases, Asian Americans in San Francisco “have received imprecise or no information in their native language about testing, safety tips, housing and other critical care services during the pandemic.”

Large School Districts Are Reopening Campuses.

The [Washington Post](#) (10/19, A1, Meckler, Strauss, 14.2M) reports, “Large school districts across the country are reopening campuses to students, a slow-moving reversal driven by fear that students are falling behind and early evidence that schools have not become the coronavirus superspreaders as feared.” Of “the 50 largest school districts, 24 have resumed in-person classes for large groups of students, and nine others plan to in the coming weeks, according to a Washington Post survey.” Another four “have opened, or plan to open, for small

groups of students who need extra attention.” Many of these schools “are in Florida and Texas, where Republican governors are requiring in-person classes, but schools are also open in New York City, Greenville, S.C., and Alpine, Utah, the state’s largest district. Returns are planned in Charlotte, Baltimore and Denver.”

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (10/19, Subscription Publication, 7.57M) reports that determining how and when to bring students back into classrooms has been a difficult process as district officials and families weigh the risk of infection with parents’ need to work, student loneliness, and fear that children will lose important academic skills.

David Zweig, in [The Intelligencer](#) (10/19, 1.1M), describes the schools in Chappaqua and Bronxville, New York, that have reopened to students, asking, “It’s become a platitude that ‘we all want children to be in school.’ Yet considering the case rate for hybrid and remote learning is two-hundredths of a percent higher than it is for [full time in-person] learning (which a number of experts months ago had warned could happen), in Westchester, and the regional positivity rate has been hovering around 1% for months, why have so many districts been unable to achieve this aim?”

Doctors With Long-Haul COVID Symptoms Pushing For Better Care.

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (10/19, Reddy, Subscription Publication, 7.57M) reports that doctors and other healthcare professionals are overly represented among COVID patients who are experiencing persistent symptoms, and some are turning to one another to advocate for better treatments and greater awareness.

DOJ Says Trump Denied Rape Accusation In Official Presidential Capacity.

The [New York Times](#) (10/19, Weiser, Feuer, 18.61M) reports the Justice Department “said on Monday that President Trump should not be sued personally for having denied a rape allegation because he made the statement while acting in his official capacity as president.” The government’s lawyers made the argument as they defended Attorney General Barr’s “decision to intervene in a defamation lawsuit filed in a New York court against...Trump by E. Jean Carroll.” The Times adds Carroll “has said that Mr. Trump raped her in a department store two decades ago and then falsely denied the attack while in office, branding her a liar and harming her reputation.” The [Washington Post](#) (10/19, Barrett, 14.2M) reports Carroll’s lawyers “have argued that the Justice Department’s legal argument is ‘inconceivable’ because no American, not even the president, has a job description that ‘includes slandering women who they sexually assaulted.’”

Supreme Court Controls Fate Of Subpoena For Trump Tax Returns.

[CNN](#) (10/19, Orden, 83.16M) says on its website that with “two weeks until the presidential election, a decision on whether to further delay handing over” President Trump’s financial records “to New York prosecutors now rests with the Supreme Court after Trump’s attorneys argued for a stay of the ‘unprecedented’ document request.” CNN describes the new brief as “the final filing by the two sides before the court can decide whether to again push off enforcement of a subpoena by the Manhattan district attorney’s office for years of Trump’s financial records, including tax returns, from his longtime accountant, Mazars USA.”

Administration Facilitates Ability To Discipline Federal Workers.

The [Washington Post](#) (10/19, Yoder, 14.2M) reports the Administration “has told federal agencies to make the fullest use of their discretion allowed by law to order disciplinary actions against their employees for reasons such as poor performance or misconduct.” The final rules “published Friday and effective Nov. 15 either strongly discourage or ban practices that many agencies have adopted, repeatedly stressing management’s ‘sole and exclusive’ authority to choose a penalty.”

Republican Voters Embracing QAnon.

In a 2,600-word article, the [New York Times](#) (10/19, Rosenberg, 18.61M) reports Republicans nationwide "are embracing QAnon." With the encouragement of President Trump, "whose espousal of conspiracy theories has only intensified in the waning weeks of his campaign, QAnon adherents are pushing such ideas into the conservative mainstream alongside more traditional issues like low taxes and limited government." According to the Times, "Many of the Republican Party's leaders and powerful donors are similarly concerned, as are a great many voters. Yet few high-profile Republicans have spoken out, demonstrating the thin line they are trying to walk between the moderate voters they need to win over and the members of their base who adore Mr. Trump."

California State Senator Highlights Dangers Posed By QAnon. In a [New York Times](#) (10/19, 18.61M) op-ed, California state Sen. Scott Wiener (D) writes that "before I became the center of a QAnon conspiracy theory, I followed the news about this internet cult with alarm, but also from afar. I saw it as a scary thing happening to people I didn't know. Then QAnon followers sent me over a thousand death threats." According to Wiener, "What happened to me was a perfect QAnon storm: I'm a progressive, gay, Jewish Democrat working to end discrimination against L.G.B.T.Q. people. I'm just the right target for an internet cult obsessed with pinning pedophilia and child trafficking on progressives, gays, Jews and Democrats." He concludes, "If we want QAnon to go away, yes, we must increase people's media literacy and hold social media platforms accountable. But we also need to make people's lives better. That's the hard truth of 2020."

Devastating Wildfires Continue In Colorado.

Lester Holt reported on [NBC Nightly News](#)^{Vi} (10/19, story 6, 1:20, 5.28M), "In Colorado, explosive wildfires including the largest in state history have forced thousands to evacuate their homes." NBC's Steve Patterson: "In Boulder County, the fast-moving fire sparked over the weekend exploding to nearly 9,000 acres, leaving whole neighborhoods in ruins, destroying at least 20 homes." [ABC World News Tonight](#)^{Vi} (10/19, story 8, 0:15, Muir, 7.01M) and the [CBS Evening News](#)^{Vi} (10/19, story 9, 0:20, O'Donnell, 4.4M) had brief updates on the fires.

Tsunami Warning Issued After 7.5 Magnitude Quake Off Alaska Coast.

The [AP](#) (10/19, Bohrer) reports that the National Tsunami Warning Center on Monday issued tsunami warnings "for a vast swath of communities, leading some schools to evacuate and send students to higher ground," after a 7.5 magnitude earthquake off the coast of Sand Point, Alaska.

New Yorker Suspends Toobin Following Report Of Improper Behavior.

The [AP](#) (10/19, Italie) reports Jeffrey Toobin "has been suspended by the New Yorker and is stepping away from his job as CNN's senior legal analyst pending what the cable network is calling a 'personal matter.'" According to the AP, Vice "reported earlier Monday that Toobin had exposed himself during a Zoom meeting with staffers of the New Yorker and WNYC radio."

SCOTUS Allows Pennsylvania To Count Ballots Received By November 6.

The [AP](#) (10/19, Sherman) reports the Supreme Court "will allow Pennsylvania to count ballots received up to three days after the election, rejecting a Republican plea. The justices divided 4-4 Monday, an outcome that upholds a state Supreme Court ruling that allowed election officials to receive and count ballots until Nov. 6, even if they don't have a clear postmark." The [New York Times](#) (10/19, Liptak, 18.61M) reports, "It takes five votes to grant a stay," and Chief Justice Roberts sided with "the court's three-member liberal wing. ...Neither side gave reasons." The [Washington Post](#) (10/19, Barnes, 14.2M) says the order "was the latest in a string of election procedure battles waged in the states between Democrats and Republicans."

The [Philadelphia Inquirer](#) (10/19) reports that as of Monday, Pennsylvania voters “had requested 2.8 million mail-in and absentee ballots – 1.79 million by Democrats and nearly 694,000 by Republicans, according to Pennsylvania Department of State data. Already, nearly 900,000 had been returned.” [Reuters](#) (10/19, Hurley), [Bloomberg](#) (10/19, Stohr, 4.73M), the [Wall Street Journal](#) (10/19, Bravin, Kendall, Subscription Publication, 7.57M), [Politico](#) (10/19, Gerstein, Montellaro, 4.29M), [The Hill](#) (10/19, Kruzel, 2.98M), and [Axios](#) (10/19, 521K) also cover the decision.

In related stories, the [Washington Post](#) (10/19, 14.2M) reports Pennsylvania elections officials were “inundated with complaints from first-time and absentee voters having difficulty registering to vote or requesting a mail ballot, fueling anxiety in the critical swing state just as the 5 p.m. Monday deadline approaches to join the voting rolls in time for the November election.” And the [Philadelphia Inquirer](#) (10/19, Goodin-Smith, Lai) reports that “people are volunteering to be poll workers in record numbers” in the Philadelphia area. In an editorial, the [Washington Post](#) (10/19, 14.2M) praises volunteer poll workers, writing that “even with an unprecedented number of ballots being cast absentee, millions will vote in-person, and poll workers are critical to that running smoothly. ... Younger Americans have been particularly responsive to the call to relieve traditionally older poll workers. ... Hopefully, this influx will mean a more sustainable workforce for decades to come.”

Early Voting Begins In Florida. David Muir reported on [ABC World News Tonight](#) (10/19, story 2, 2:30, 7.01M) that “nearly 30 million Americans have voted already,” and early voting got underway in Florida on Monday. ABC’s Victor Oquendo said, “Torrential downpours didn’t dampen enthusiasm on the first day of early voting in Florida. Lines starting at dawn stretched for more than an hour in the battleground state.” The [Washington Post](#) (10/19, Gardner, Majchrowicz, Rosza, 14.2M) reports, “In Miami, Fort Lauderdale, Fort Myers, Sarasota, St. Petersburg and many other Florida communities, voters lined up before polls opened Monday to cast their ballots in person at the first available moment.” The [Miami Herald](#) (10/19, 1.09M) reports, “More than 2.5 million Floridians have already voted by mail. But with [President] Trump casting aspersions about the legitimacy of mail voting, Monday morning offered the first opportunity to vote in person for those voters who don’t want to cast a mail ballot.” [Politico](#) (10/19, Dixon, 4.29M) also covers the start of early voting in Florida.

More Than 4M Texans Have Already Voted. The [Houston Chronicle](#) (10/19, Rosenthal) reports, “With more than 4 million votes counted as of Sunday, Texas is leading the pack when it comes to early voting. ... California has counted 3 million ballots, and Florida has seen 2.5 million people vote.”

Official Says Problems With Georgia Voting Systems Have Been Resolved. The [Atlanta Journal-Constitution](#) (10/19, 895K) reports Georgia Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger (R) “said Monday that problems with a sluggish voter check-in system have been resolved and wait times have fallen as early voting turnout surges.” He said voters “should expect a smooth early voting process after technical changes were made last week to the state computer system that looks up voter registration and check-in information at polling places.”

Absentee Ballot Delivery Delayed In Parts Of Ohio. The [Cleveland Plain Dealer](#) (10/19, 895K) reports, “Nearly two weeks after absentee ballots were to be sent to Ohio voters, thousands are still waiting for their ballots due to delays with a Cleveland-based printing company serving 16 counties, including Cuyahoga, Lorain and Summit.” Midwest Direct “is keeping mum on exactly how many ballots are still delayed.”

Fire Inside Los Angeles County Ballot Dropbox May Have Been Intentional. The [Los Angeles Times](#) (10/19, 4.64M) reports that “a fire inside an official ballot drop box” at a Los Angeles County library Sunday night “may have been set intentionally, authorities said.” The county “did not immediately respond to requests for information about the burned ballots, but voters who suspect their ballot may have been damaged in the Baldwin Park blaze can check the county’s official ballot tracker for status updates.”

In an editorial, the [Wall Street Journal](#) (10/19, Subscription Publication, 7.57M) says California Democrats who used ballot harvesting during the 2018 election are being hypocritical by criticizing state Republicans for setting up private ballot dropboxes.

GOP Hopeful About Latest Voter Registration Data In Three Key States. The [New York Times](#) (10/19, Saul, 18.61M) reports that with Trump "trailing in public polls in nearly every major battleground state, Republicans are pointing to what they see as more promising data: Updated voter registration tallies show that Republicans have narrowed the gap with Democrats" in Florida, North Carolina, and Pennsylvania. The Times says Republicans "hope that gains in voter registration in the three states...and heavy turnout by those new party members might just be enough to propel Mr. Trump to a second term."

The [New York Times](#) (10/19, Corasaniti, Epstein, 18.61M) looks at election preparations in seven key states: Arizona, Florida, Georgia, Michigan, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin.

Chicago Police Save Man Hanging From Trump Tower.

The [Chicago Tribune](#) (10/19, Fry, Rosenberg-Douglas, 2.65M) reports Chicago police "said Monday morning they had 'resolved peacefully' a standoff at Trump Tower more than 13 hours after a man suspended himself with a rope and harness from the 16th-floor landing of the downtown high-rise." A police SWAT unit "and the Chicago Fire Department had responded to a call of a man threatening to kill himself at the Trump International Hotel & Tower, 401 N. Wabash Ave. in the Near North neighborhood, about 5:30 p.m. Sunday, according to police." The [Chicago Sun-Times](#) (10/19, Camarillo, 875K) reports the man had been demanding to speak to President Trump.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

US Borders With Mexico And Canada To Remain Closed Until November 21.

[Reuters](#) (10/19, Shepardson, Scherer) reports that the Homeland Security Department announced on Monday that the US land borders with Canada and Mexico "will remain closed to all non-essential travel until Nov. 21." Acting DHS Secretary Wolf tweeted, "To continue to limit the spread of COVID, the U.S., Mexico, and Canada will extend the restrictions on non-essential travel through Nov. 21. We are working closely with Mexico and Canada to identify safe criteria to ease the restrictions in the future and support our border communities."

Countries, Cities Impose Targeted Restrictions On COVID Hot Spots.

The [AP](#) (10/19, Peltz) reports that some US states and other countries are "trying more targeted measures" to battle the coronavirus as COVID-19 cases "rise again around the world, especially in Europe and the Americas." Countries are imposing restrictions on travel in certain cities or closing schools and businesses in individual neighborhoods that are identified as COVID hot spots. While "the concept of containing hot spots isn't new," the AP says, it is "being tested under new pressures as authorities try to avoid a dreaded resurgence of illness and deaths, this time with economies weakened from earlier lockdowns, populations chafing at the idea of renewed restrictions and some communities complaining of unequal treatment." Worldwide coronavirus infections "surpassed 40 million, according to a Johns Hopkins University tally early Monday."

UNICEF To Stockpile More Than 500M Single-Dose Syringes For COVID Vaccine.

The [New York Times](#) (10/19, Gladstone, 18.61M) reports that "UNICEF, the world's largest single buyer of vaccines...said Monday that it was purchasing and distributing more than half a billion single-dose syringes and other critical equipment in countries where it operates, to be ready" for a coronavirus vaccine "when the time comes." In a statement, UNICEF "said the

advance stockpiling – a collaboration with GAVI, the Vaccine Alliance – was part of a larger plan to amass one billion syringes by 2021 to guarantee a supply 'and help ensure that syringes arrive in countries before the Covid-19 vaccines.'"

Issues With Storage May Leave 3B Without Access To COVID Vaccine. The [AP](#) (10/19, Hinnant, Mednick) reports that "the world's most promising coronavirus vaccine candidates need non-stop sterile refrigeration to stay potent and safe," but "despite enormous strides in equipping developing countries to maintain the vaccine 'cold chain,' nearly 3 billion of the world's 7.8 billion people live where temperature-controlled storage is insufficient for an immunization campaign to bring COVID-19 under control." As a result, "poor people around the world who were among the hardest hit by the virus pandemic are also likely to be the last to recover from it."

COVID Cases Hitting Record Highs In Europe.

[ABC World News Tonight](#)^{Vi} (10/19, story 4, 1:25, Muir, 7.31M) foreign correspondent James Longman said Europe is "battling through COVID's second wave. France hitting record cases, over 32,000 on Saturday alone. ... In France, the positivity rate is up, now at 13.4%, and so are the deaths. Hospitals are starting to fill up, too." He added, "Like the USA, the majority of France's COVID cases affect the young. But now, the elderly are getting it again." Moreover, "In Belgium, a 79% increase in cases over last week. Bars, restaurants, and cafes closed. And in the UK, Wales ordered to go into total lockdown from Friday. We seem to be at the beginning of a trajectory, and if it continues in this fashion, hospitals like these will be overwhelmed. It's a fear many across Europe share." Moreover, "Ireland has announced it is going to go into a full six-week lockdown from Wednesday, among the harshest in Europe, and other countries are considering doing the same."

Manchester, London Grievances Flare Up As Britain Moves Toward Lockdowns.

The [New York Times](#) (10/19, Landler, 18.61M) reports that, for days, Greater Manchester Mayor Andy Burnham "has been engaged in a war of words" with British Prime Minister Boris Johnson "and his ministers over the government's plan to elevate hard-hit Manchester to the highest level of restrictions," which "would shut down pubs, bars and gyms and forbid all socializing by people from different households." Burnham "says that the restrictions would devastate the city's economy, and that the central government has not offered adequate financial aid to the people who would lose their jobs during the lockdown." He "has been a nearly ubiquitous presence on television, waging a fierce rebellion on behalf of his 2.8 million constituents."

Iran Sets New Record For Daily Deaths.

The [AP](#) (10/19, Vahdat) reports, "Iran's single-day death toll from the coronavirus smashed a record set less than a week ago, with 337 dead confirmed Monday as a resurgence of infections is overwhelming hospitals." The AP says Monday's total "represented a significant increase over Iran's previous one-day record of 279 set Wednesday." According to the AP, "The Islamic Republic emerged early in the pandemic as a global epicenter of the virus and has since seen the worst outbreak in the Middle East, with deaths topping 30,000, as fatalities have soared in recent weeks."

Top Palestinian Diplomat On Ventilator In Israeli Hospital.

The [Washington Post](#) (10/19, Hendrix, 14.2M) reports that Saeb Erekat, "a top Palestinian leader who tested positive for the novel coronavirus earlier this month, was placed on a ventilator Monday and is in critical condition at an Israeli hospital, the facility said in a statement." The Post says Erekat, "well known to diplomats as the Palestinians' chief negotiator and the leader most frequently quoted by Western media, was rushed his from West Bank home to a hospital in Tel Aviv on Sunday, then transferred to Jerusalem's Hadassah Ein Karem Medical Center." According to the Post, "The 65-year-old has a history of respiratory illness and underwent a lung transplant in 2017."

Kenya Health Minister Warns Of Second Coronavirus Wave.

The [New York Times](#) (10/19, Dahir, 18.61M) reports that on Sunday, Kenyan Health Minister Mutahi Kagwe said the recent relaxation of COVID-19 restrictions could lead to another wave of the virus. During a press briefing on Sunday, he "said the percentage of positive test results had increased this month, after restrictions were lifted, and admissions to intensive care units had increased in recent days." Kagwe said, "We can confidently point to a potential crisis unless we take some immediate action to avert this. ... We can choose to sink or swim." The Times says Kagwe "blamed the rise in cases on the resumption of large public events including political rallies, weddings and burials" and "said club owners weren't enforcing social distancing and were not asking their patrons to wear masks." Kagwe "also accused health workers – hundreds of whom have tested positive and have protested lack of adequate protective gear – of getting lax about protection."

Abrams: US To Enact Preemptive Sanctions On Iran.

US Special Envoy for Iran Elliott Abrams told the [Washington Free Beacon](#) (10/19, Kredo, 78K) in an interview that the Administration "will preemptively sanction any country that tries to deliver arms to Iran, effectively blocking new arms deals well before they develop." Abrams "said that in the aftermath of restoring all international sanctions on Iran in late September, the administration would not wait for new weapons to be transferred to Iran – in violation of sanctions – but would act preemptively to obstruct new deals as they advance." Abrams said, "We don't have to wait until a transaction is completed and someone has physically sent arms to Iran or imported arms from Iran." Abrams added, "We can go after people engaged in exploratory visits or negotiations as well."

In an editorial, the [Wall Street Journal](#) (10/19, Subscription Publication, 7.57M) says the expiration of the international arms embargo on Iran illustrates the flaws within the 2015 nuclear deal and raises questions for how Joe Biden would respond given he supports returning to the terms of the agreement.

Turkey Abandoning Outpost Surrounded By Syrian Army.

[Reuters](#) (10/19, Al-Khalidi, Coskun) reports that Turkey is "withdrawing troops from a military post in northwest Syria that was surrounded by Syrian government forces last year, but is consolidating its presence elsewhere in the region." According to Reuters, "The observation post at Morek was one of a dozen set up by Turkish soldiers in 2018 under an ill-fated deal to calm fighting between Syrian government troops and Turkey-backed rebels controlling the northwestern Idlib region." Reuters says Morek, as well as "several other Turkish posts," were "surrounded last year by advancing Syrian government forces," but the Turkish military "has kept them manned and re-supplied since then."

Pakistan Lifts Ban On TikTok.

The [New York Times](#) (10/19, Masood, 18.61M) reports Pakistani authorities said Monday they were reversing their decision to ban TikTok "after receiving assurance from the Chinese-owned social media platform that it would moderate content according to local laws." Just 10 days after introducing the ban, the Pakistan Telecommunication Authority said in a statement, "TikTok is being unlocked after assurance from management that they will block all accounts repeatedly involved in spreading obscenity and immorality."

US Rescue Mission In Yemen Helped Pave Way For Israel-UAE Peace Deal.

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (10/19, Nissenbaum, Subscription Publication, 7.57M) reports an August 2017 mission conducted by US special forces to rescue Emirati soldiers, including a member of the royal family, whose helicopter crashed in Yemen during an offensive against al Qaeda militants played a key role in making the Israel-UAE peace deal possible three years later.

Navalny Calls On Trump To Condemn His Attempted Assassination.

[ABC World News Tonight](#)^{Vi} (10/19, story 6, 1:25, Muir, 7.31M) reported Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny delivered “a defiant warning tonight and a message for President Trump.” ABC’s Ian Pannell said Navalny was critical of Trump “for not joining world leaders in condemning the attack” on him. On [NBC Nightly News](#)^{Vi} (10/19, story 9, 1:30, 5.28M), Keir Simmons reported Navalny is demanding Trump “condemn his attempted assassination by, he claims, Russian President Vladimir Putin’s people.” Navalny: “I think it’s extremely important that everyone, of course, including and maybe in the first of all, the President of United States, to be very against using chemical weapons in the 21st century.”

Retirees Demonstrate Against Lukashenko In Belarus.

The [AP](#) (10/19) reports that for the third straight Monday, “about 3,000 retirees rallied in the Belarusian capital of Minsk...to demand the resignation of authoritarian President Alexander Lukashenko as mass protests of a disputed election continue to roil the country.” In the wake of Aug. 9 voting that was “widely seen as rigged,” retirees “marched through the streets of Minsk carrying flowers and chanting for Lukashenko to ‘Go away!’” The AP Adds that some 2,000 “pro-Lukashenko pensioners also rallied in the capital.” A [Wall Street Journal](#) (10/19, Subscription Publication, 7.57M) editorial cites the unrest in Belarus as evidence of Russian President Vladimir Putin’s declining influence in the former Soviet Republics.

Armenian, Azeri Leaders Both Say They Would Meet In Moscow For Peace Talks.

[Reuters](#) (10/19, Bagirova, Hovhannisyan) reports that on Monday, “a new ceasefire in the mountain territory of Nagorno-Karabakh was in jeopardy...with Azerbaijan and ethnic Armenian forces reporting shelling and heavy fighting.” According to Reuters, “The ceasefire was agreed on Saturday after an earlier deal brokered by Russia failed to halt the deadliest clashes in the South Caucasus since the 1990s.” Reuters says that “so far, the main driver of diplomacy between the ex-Soviet enemies has been Russia.” Reuters adds that Armenia’s Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan and Azerbaijan’s President Ilham Aliyev “both told Russia’s TASS news agency in separate interviews on Monday that they were ready to come to Moscow for talks.”

Morales Ally Triumphs In Bolivian Presidential Election.

The [AP](#) (10/19, Valdez) reports that former Bolivian President Evo Morales’ party “has claimed victory in a presidential election that appears to sharply shift Bolivia away from the conservative policies of the U.S.-backed interim government that took power after the leftist leader resigned and fled the country a year ago.” According to the AP, “The leading rival of Morales’s handpicked successor, Luis Arce, conceded defeat on Monday, as did interim President Jeanine Áñez, a bitter foe of Morales.” The AP says Bolivian officials “released no formal, comprehensive quick count of results from Sunday’s vote, but two independent surveys of selected polling places showed Arce with a lead of roughly 20 percentage points over his closest rival – far more than needed to avoid a runoff.” The [New York Times](#) (10/19, Turkewitz, 18.61M) says Bolivia’s “voters appear to have spoken clearly: They want [Morales’] socialist project to go on.” The [Washington Post](#) (10/19, Machicao, Faiola, 14.2M) and [Reuters](#) (10/19, Rochabrun, Ramos) provide similar coverage.

Thai Authorities Move To Censor Coverage Of Student Demonstrations.

The [AP](#) (10/19, Peck, Blake) reports Thai Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha’s government on Monday sought to quell growing protests “calling for the prime minister to resign by threatening to censor news coverage, raiding a publishing house and attempting to block the Telegram messaging app used by demonstrators.” The [Washington Post](#) (10/19, Mahtani, Wangkiat, 14.2M) says “young, digitally savvy Thai protesters...are at the forefront of a swelling anti-government movement that has broken the mold in Thailand – both by shattering the long-held

taboo against criticizing the powerful monarchy, and by revolutionizing mass protests and dissent in the country." Demonstrators "have borrowed from their Hong Kong counterparts, subscribing to the 'be water' strategy of fluid gatherings. ... The result so far has been harder for police to control, even in the context of Thailand's long history of crackdowns on political movements."

A [Washington Post](#) (10/19, 14.2M) editorial says the student movement offers "a ray of hope that democracy in Thailand could be revived after years of repression. ... But, as in so many other nations where opponents of autocracy struggle to gain traction, the Trump administration has been silent. No doubt Mr. Prayuth sees that as a vote of confidence, and a green light for more repression."

Indian Army Detains Chinese Soldier Who Strayed Over Border.

The [AP](#) (10/19, Hussain) reports that on Monday, the Indian army "said it apprehended a Chinese soldier...in the remote Ladakh region, where the two countries are locked in a monthslong military standoff along their disputed mountain border." The AP adds, "The soldier, Cpl. Wang Ya Long from China's People's Liberation Army, was apprehended inside Indian-controlled Ladakh's Demchok area and was to be released soon, the army said in a statement. It said the soldier 'had strayed' across the de facto border along the eastern section of what's known as the Line of Actual Control, a loose demarcation separating Indian- and Chinese-controlled areas." According to the [New York Times](#) (10/19, Gettleman, 18.61M), "The Indian troops fed the captured Chinese soldier a meal. They gave him oxygen and some warm clothes. They treated him respectfully, both sides indicated."

Chinese, Taiwanese Envoys Engaged In Fistfight During Fiji Event.

The [New York Times](#) (10/19, Hernández, 18.61M) reports that "a reception hosted this month by Taiwan officials in Suva, the capital of Fiji, gave way to a fistfight between officials representing China and Taiwan, in the latest example of rising tensions between the two governments." The Times adds, "Officials in Taipei and Beijing on Monday offered competing accounts of the altercation after reports about the clash spread widely on social media. They accused each other of initiating the feud and causing injuries." According to the Times, while Taiwan "said the Chinese government was trying to surveil its staff and guests," the Chinese government "said its officials were carrying out normal duties, and complained that a cake at the event was decorated to look like Taiwan's flag."

Beijing Blasts Trump's Climate Policies.

The [Washington Post](#) (10/19, Mufson, 14.2M) reports Beijing's Foreign Affairs Ministry "delivered a diatribe against U.S. climate policies on Monday, saying that under President Trump," the US "is widely viewed as a consensus-breaker and a troublemaker." The Ministry "blamed Trump's 'negative stance' and 'retrogression on climate change' for undermining progress on an international climate accord." A fact sheet from the Ministry said Trump had "seriously undermined the fairness, efficiency and effectiveness of global environmental governance." The Post says the comments "resembled the tit-for-tat criticism that China and the United States have traded on subjects such as human rights, trade and the expulsion of reporters and diplomats, but climate policies have been largely the exception."

Differing Administration Response To Diplomats' Symptoms In China, Cuba Draw Scrutiny.

The [New York Times](#) (10/19, Swanson, Wong, Barnes, 18.61M) reports, "What began as strange sounds and symptoms among more than a dozen American officials and their family members in China in 2018 has turned into a diplomatic mystery spanning multiple countries and involving speculation about secret high-tech weapons and foreign attacks." One of the major questions involves "whether Trump administration officials believe...diplomats in China

experienced the same mysterious affliction as dozens of diplomats and spies at the American Embassy in Cuba in 2016 and 2017, which came to be known as Havana Syndrome." The government's "treatment of the episodes has been radically different." The State Department "has produced inconsistent assessments of patients and events, ignored outside medical diagnoses and withheld basic information from Congress, a New York Times investigation found." While the Administration "withdrew most of its staff members from the embassy" in Cuba, it "took a softer approach with China."

THE BIG PICTURE

Headlines From Today's Front Pages.

Wall Street Journal:

[Intel Enters Deal To Sell NAND Memory Unit To SK Hynix](#)
[U.S. Charges Six Russian Intelligence Officers With Hacking](#)
[Auto Makers Grapple With Battery-Fire Risks In Electric Vehicles](#)
[One Man Vs. The Fax Machine: A Battle To Defeat Old Tech In Japan](#)
[Farmers Stick With Trump, Despite Trade-War Pain](#)

Washington Post:

[Big School Districts Start To Open Their Doors, Slowly](#)
[Distrust, Lethargy Worsening Within Virus Task Force](#)
[Trump: People Tired Of 'Fauci And All These Idiots'](#)
[Turkey Farmers Fear Disastrous Drop In Demand](#)
[6 Russian Officers Charged In Hacks](#)
[Justices Allow Extended Deadline For Pa. Ballots](#)

Financial Times:

[Bolivia's Socialists Proclaim Election Victory](#)
[Eurozone Budget Deficits Rise Almost Tenfold To Counter Pandemic](#)
[UK And Brussels Fight Over European Mergers Ahead Of Brexit Deadline](#)
[Taiwan Accuses Chinese Officials Of Beating Up Diplomat In Fiji](#)

Story Lineup From Last Night's Network News:

ABC: Trump-Fauci; Early Voting; COVID-Cases; COVID-Europe; US Park Police Officers Charged with Manslaughter; Russia-Alexei Navalny; Alaska-Earthquake; Wildfires; New York-Elderly Couple Rescued From Canal; Utah-Stranded Hiker Found After Two Weeks; Family Refurbishes Desks For Kids In Need.

CBS: Trump-Fauci; Campaign Trail; COVID-Cases; DOJ-Russian Cyberattack; Unemployment; Utah-Stranded Hiker Found After Two Weeks; Iowa-Snow Storm; Tropical Storm Epsilon; Wildfires; Honoring Women Judges.

NBC: Trump-Fauci; Campaign Trail; Trump-Rallies; COVID-Cases; COVID-Surge; Wildfires; Iowa-Snow Storm; DOJ-Russian Cyberattack; Russia-Alexei Navalny; Misinformation Campaigns; Boeing 737 MAX; Holiday Shopping; Third Graders Write Postcards Reminding Adults To Vote.

Network TV At A Glance:

Trump-Fauci – 9 minutes, 0 seconds
COVID-Cases – 7 minutes, 45 seconds
Wildfires – 1 minute, 55 seconds

Story Lineup From This Morning's Radio News Broadcasts:

ABC: Early Voting; Pennsylvania-Mail In Ballots; Final Presidential Debate-New Rules; California-Gov.'s Comments on Vaccine; Jeff Bridges-Lymphoma.

CBS: Final Presidential Debate-New Rules; Pennsylvania-Mail In Ballots; Pelosi/Mnuchin Stimulus Talks; COVID-Cases; DOJ-Russian Cyberattack.

FOX: Final Presidential Debate-New Rules; Trump-Arizona Rally; Sen. Harris-Florida Visit; SCOTUS Nominee.

NPR: Pennsylvania-Mail In Ballots; Pelosi/Mnuchin Stimulus Talks; COVID-Cases; Wisconsin-COVID Restrictions.

WASHINGTON'S SCHEDULE

Today's Events In Washington.

White House:

- President Trump — Participates in a Sinclair Town Hall event; delivers remarks at a Make America Great Again Rally in Erie, PA.
- Vice President Pence — No public schedule released.

US Senate:

- No schedule published.

US House:

- House meets in pro forma session – House of Representatives meets in pro forma session * Chamber on recess from 2 Oct – 16 Nov
Location: U.S. Capitol, Washington, DC; 9:00 AM
- House Ways and Means subcommittee hearing on 'Maximizing Health Coverage Enrollment Amidst Administration Sabotage' – Oversight Subcommittee hearing on 'Maximizing Health Coverage Enrollment Amidst Administration Sabotage', with testimony from New Jersey Department of Banking and Insurance Commissioner Marlene Caride; Connect for Health Colorado CEO Kevin Patterson; United States of Care Board Chair Andy Slavitt; and Manhattan Institute Senior Fellow Chris Pope; *12:00 PM*
- Dem Rep. Raul Grijalva unveils his Ocean-Based Climate Solutions Act – House Committee on Natural Resources Chair Raul Grijalva leads press conference unveiling his Ocean-Based Climate Solutions Act, to address the ocean impacts of climate change and reform federal ocean management to better account for climate mitigation. Other speakers include House Select Committee on the Climate Crisis Chair Kathy Castor and fellow Democratic Reps. Deb Haaland, Jared Huffman, and Suzanne Bonamici, former President's Counselor John Podesta, former National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Administrator Jane Lubchenco, National Geographic explorer-in-residence Enric Sala, and Gullah/Geechee Nation head Queen Quet; *1:30 PM*

Cabinet Officers:

- Secretary of State Mike Pompeo holds U.S.-United Arab Emirates Strategic Dialogue
Location: Washington, DC
- OAS General Assembly – Organization of American States General Assembly – annual meeting of the supreme political institution within the OAS, attended by the foreign ministers of the 35 member states of the Americas, with decisions made guiding the activities and priorities of the hemispheric organization for the forthcoming year ahead – held online * Secretary of State Mike Pompeo leads U.S. delegation
- Treasury Secretary Mnuchin concludes Israel / Bahrain / United Arab Emirates trip at head of U.S. delegation – Secretary of the Treasury Steven Mnuchin concludes three-day trip at the head of a U.S. delegation to Israel, Bahrain, and the United Arab Emirates to support expanded economic cooperation under the Abraham Accords, with agenda today including

concluding stop in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, before joining Israeli officials in returning to Israel on the first-ever direct commercial flight from Abu Dhabi to Tel Aviv. Other delegation members include International Development Finance Corporation CEO Adam Boehler, U.S. Ambassador to Israel Amb. David Friedman, and National Security Council officials

- Heritage Foundation virtual event on immigration, including recorded interview with Acting DHS Secretary Wolf – ‘The State of the Wall and Immigration’ Heritage Foundation virtual event, including recorded interview with Acting Secretary of Homeland Security Chad Wolf, followed by a panel discussion featuring The Remembrance Project Director Maria Espinoza, Jackson County, TX, Sheriff AJ Louderback, former Immigration and Customs Enforcement Director Thomas Homan, and Heritage Foundation Election Law Reform Initiative Manager Hans von Spakovsky; *1:00 PM*
- Defense Secretary Esper discusses U.S. alliances on Atlantic Council online event – Secretary of Defense Mark Esper speaks on Atlantic Council #ACFrontPage online event on ‘strengthening U.S. alliances and partnerships in an era of great-power competition’; *1:00 PM*
- Labor Secretary Scalia marks 75th NDEAM and 30th anniversary of ADA – ‘Building a Future that Works’: Department of Labor virtual celebration of the 75th annual National Disability Employment Awareness Month and the 30th anniversary of the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), with featured guests including Secretary of Labor Eugene Scalia, futurist Cathy Hackl, Google Vice President and Chief Internet Evangelist Vint Cerf, disability policy expert Bobby Silverstein, Microsoft Research postdoctoral researcher Dr Martez Mott, University of Pittsburgh Distinguished Professor Dr Rory Cooper, and attorney Haley Moss; *2:00 PM*

Visitors:

- No visitors scheduled.

This Town:

- U.S.-Brazil Connect Summit continues – U.S.-Brazil Connect Summit continues, virtual conference hosted by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Brazil-U.S. Business Council, to promote effective engagement and collaboration to deepen bilateral economic cooperation in a post-coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic world. Day two speakers include Republican Sen. Marco Rubio, U.S. Ambassador to Brazil Todd Chapman, Brazilian Ambassador to the U.S. Nestor Forster, and The Boeing Company Brazil Managing Director and Vice President for Global Policy Landon Loomis; *8:30 AM*
- Deputy Treasury Secretary Justin Muzinich addresses Operation HOPE Virtual Forum; *9:00 AM*
- Environmental groups discuss opposition to release of genetically engineered trees into forests – Environmental groups discuss the closing of the Department of Agriculture’s public comment period on a petition requesting approval for a genetically engineered (GE or genetically modified) American chestnut tree, designed for release into the wild, via virtual press conference. Speakers include representatives of the STOP GE Trees Campaign; Indigenous Environmental Network; Canadian Biotechnology Action Network; Dogwood Alliance; and Friends of the Earth; *12:00 PM*
- Federal Depository Library Conference – Federal Depository Library Conference, held virtually, including keynote from Archivist of the United States David Ferriero

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