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 FBI News Briefing

**TO: THE DIRECTOR AND SENIOR STAFF**

**DATE: MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 21, 2020 6:30 AM EDT**

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## LEADING THE NEWS

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### **Trump Pushes Back Against Wray's Testimony On Antifa, Russian Electoral Interference.**

The [Washington Post](#) (9/18, Itkowitz, Barrett, 14.2M) reports President Trump on Friday "didn't dispute" a suggestion that he might replace FBI Director Christopher Wray "after Wray gave congressional testimony Trump didn't like on Russian interference in the 2020 election and the threat of antifa to Americans." Speaking Thursday before the House Homeland Committee, Wray testified "that Russia is still working to interfere in the U.S. presidential election, trying to 'denigrate' Democratic candidate Joe Biden. Questioned about antifa protesters, Wray said they were not a structured group, but an ideology or movement that attracts followers, and that some of those adherents are under investigation for possible crimes." [CNN](#) (9/18, 83.16M) broadcast Wray's comments were in "sharp contrast with what we've heard from President Trump who continues to downplay Russia as a threat."

[Fox News](#) (9/18, Barrabi, 27.59M) reports Trump "hinted" that Wray's position "could be in jeopardy following his testimony before Congress earlier this week regarding Russian election interference and domestic security threats." Fox News quotes Trump telling reporters outside the White House, "We're looking at a lot of different things. I did not like his answers yesterday and I'm not sure he liked them either. I'm sure that he probably would agree with me."

[The Hill](#) (9/18, Samuels, 2.98M) reports Trump "would not say if he plans to keep or remove" Wray, "expressing displeasure with his testimony to Congress about foreign election interference and domestic terror threats for a second straight day." Trump "has questioned why Wray did not put more emphasis on China's attempts to sway the election, and the president has expressed dismay that the FBI director did not come down harder on antifa."

The [Daily Caller](#) (9/18, Hagstrom, 716K) reports Trump "criticized Wray's description of antifa. Wray referred to antifa as 'a movement or an ideology' rather than a 'group' in Congressional testimony on Thursday, a description with which Trump disagreed. Asked by reporters whether he was considering a replacement, Trump said he is 'looking at a lot of different' things, according to reporters at the White House." Moreover, "Wray has testified to Congress that white supremacist groups presented a greater domestic terror threat than antifa, an idea which stands in stark contrast to Trump's messaging in recent months." Also reporting

are [Forbes](#) (9/18, McEvoy, 9.71M), the [New York Post](#) (9/18, Nelson, 4.57M), [Politico](#) (9/18, Niedzwiadek, 4.29M), and [USA Today](#) (9/18, 10.31M).

***Flynn Lawyer Powell Reportedly On Shortlist To Replace Wray.*** [Newsmax TV](#) (9/18, 431K) reports according to reportage from Newsmax TV's Emeralds Robinson on Friday, "Sidney Powell, the lawyer for Gen. Michael Flynn, President Donald Trump's former national security adviser, is on the White House shortlist of candidates to replace FBI Director Christopher Wray." Robinson said she had been "exclusively told that the White House 'is formulating a list of replacements right now' for Wray," but that "a change won't be made until after the election."

## PROTESTS

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### **Federal Buildings Fortify In Anticipation Of Breonna Taylor Grand Jury Decision.**

[Fox News](#) (9/20, Wallace, 27.59M) reports the federal courthouse and at least one other federal building in Louisville, Kentucky, "will be closed to the public this week amid widespread anticipation that the state will decide whether to bring criminal charges against the officers involved in the Breonna Taylor shooting." The "courthouse and attached offices were being boarded up Sunday ahead what could be a controversial grand jury decision." Protestors are calling for all three officers involved in Taylor's death to be "charged with at least second-degree manslaughter. But legal experts tell Fox News it's possible some of the officers will not face homicide charges."

[NBC News](#) (9/19, 6.14M) reports the federal buildings "are closing for the week starting Monday as the city waits for a possible announcement by the state attorney general on the Breonna Taylor investigation. Federal officials have not announced why" the buildings "are closing. But the Louisville Courier-Journal reported that a courthouse official said that building is closing in anticipation of an announcement."

***Louisville City Council Declares "No Confidence" In Mayor Over Handling Of Taylor Death, Unrest.*** [USA Today](#) (9/18, Yancey-Bragg, Ladd, 10.31M) reports, "The Louisville Metro Council on Thursday approved a resolution that not only declared 'no confidence' in Mayor Greg Fischer over his handling of the death of Breonna Taylor and the subsequent unrest but also offered him a list of ways to regain the city's trust." Language calling on Fischer to resign was removed before the resolution "passed 22 to 4 after three hours of debate." The resolution called for a public investigation into "the killings of Taylor and David McAtee and subsequent civil unrest," a complete review of police procedures, and support for "home ownership without displacement in impoverished areas."

***Breonna Taylor's Mother Says She Will Not Go Away If Officers Not Charged.*** In online coverage, [NPR](#) (9/18, Booker, 3.12M) (9/18, Booker, 3.12M) reported that it interviewed Tamika Palmer, the mother of Breonna Taylor, who "was fatally shot by Louisville police during a botched narcotics raid" in March. When asked what she will do if charges are not brought against the police officers involved in that shooting, Palmer said, "I won't go away, I'll still fight." The NPR article highlighted that late last month, Kentucky Attorney General Daniel Cameron said he had obtained an FBI ballistics report that he called a "critical piece" of the Taylor shooting investigation.

### **Police Seeking Suspects In Shooting Attack On Home Of Two New Jersey Police Officers.**

The [New York Post](#) (9/18, Steinbuch, 4.57M) reports police are seeking "at least two gunmen who fired a barrage of shots on the Camden, Jew Jersey, home of two police officers and their newborn – with six of the bullets penetrating the structure in the 'targeted' attack, according to reports." The Camden County officers and their 10-day-old baby "were on the second floor at the time of the attack," Camden Police Chief Joseph Wysocki said. "FBI Special Agent Michael

Driscoll said that "the possibility that someone may have targeted law enforcement causes a true threat to the citizens of Camden."

The [AP](#) (9/18) reports authorities are offering "a \$20,000 reward for information leading to the arrests of two gunmen who opened fire on a home where two New Jersey police officers and their newborn live." The family was "inside their home when six bullets struck it on Tuesday night, authorities said. Some of the bullets penetrated the home, but the family was on the second floor and no one was hurt." The FBI and other agencies are taking part in the investigation. [USA Today](#) (9/18, Trehan, 10.31M) quotes Driscoll saying, "Obviously anyone who opens fire on a private home is a threat." Also reporting are the [Inquirer \(PA\)](#) (9/18, Goodin-Smith, Roebuck, 347K), [NJ News](#) (9/18, 1.72M), [WPVI-TV](#) Philadelphia (9/17, 536K), and the [New York Post](#) (9/19, Dorn, 4.57M).

### **Blake Shooting Occurred Amid Long-Running Tensions Between Kenosha Police, Communities Of Color.**

The [Washington Post](#) (9/20, Klemko, 14.2M) reports on an incident eleven days before the police shooting of Jacob Blake in Kenosha, Wisconsin, in which resident "Porsche Bennett heard a commotion outside her house. In a neighboring backyard, she saw police taking a Black man to the ground. Out of instinct, Bennett said, she pulled out her phone." Bennett was arrested after recording footage of the incident, "another indignity at the hands of an overwhelmingly White police force that has long drawn charges of targeting the city's Black and Latino communities. As in other cities rocked by police shootings this summer, simmering tensions between local residents and law enforcement fueled the explosion of violence that followed" Blake's shooting. Kenosha "residents, community activists, former officials and six current and former Kenosha police officers described a police culture bereft of diversity, tolerant of excessive force and determined to cover up for its own."

The [Milwaukee Journal Sentinel](#) (9/20, 632K) reports on the first of a series of listening sessions in the Kenosha, saying Mayor John Antaramian "sat onstage with a representative of the Kenosha Police Department and listened as residents talked about how they felt about the police shooting of Jacob Blake in August, the protests that followed and the clashes with police and other armed individuals." The conference "was the first of four scheduled events with the purpose of informing elected officials and law enforcement about how Kenosha residents feel on various issues and possible solutions to them."

### **DOJ Considering Federal Charges Over Portland Officials' Handling Of Protests.**

The [Washington Post](#) (9/17, Balsamo, 14.2M) reports a Department of Justice spokesperson said Thursday that the department "explored whether it could pursue either criminal or civil rights charges against city officials in Portland, Oregon after clashes erupted there night after night between law enforcement and demonstrators." This revelation "underscores the larger Trump administration's effort to spotlight and crack down on protest-related violence. The majority of the mass police reform demonstrations nationwide have been peaceful." [Breitbart](#) (9/19, 673K) also reports.

### **Authorities: Portland Murder Suspect Pointed Gun At Police During Fatal Shooting.**

[Fox News](#) (9/18, Pagonis, 27.59M) reports according to the Thurston County, Washington, Sheriff's Office, Michael Forest Reinoehl, the "murder suspect who was killed in a police-involved shooting in Washington at the beginning of September had pointed his gun at law enforcement during the confrontation." Investigators continue "to investigate Reinoehl's Sept. 3 death during a shooting near Lacey, Wash." Reinoehl was suspected in "the Aug. 29 death of Aaron 'Jay' Danielson in Portland."

### **Federal Prosecutors Charge Five With Damaging US Courthouse During Las Vegas Protests.**

The [AP](#) (9/18) reports federal officials say “five people are facing felony charges of damaging a downtown U.S. bankruptcy courthouse during protests May 30 following” the death of George Floyd. US Attorney Nicholas Trutanich “labeled defendants Alejandro Avalos, Alexander Kostan, Reginald Lewis, Kelton K. Simon and Jeanette R. Wallace ‘agitators’ and accused them of inciting and escalating violence, vandalism and destruction during demonstrations.” The AP notes that hours after the protests in Las Vegas, “police and the FBI say they arrested three Nevada men with ties to a loose movement of right-wing extremists and accused them of a conspiracy to spark violence as part of a ‘boogaloo’ overthrow of the U.S. government.”

### **Analysis: Most Violent Crime In Minneapolis Impacts Poor Neighborhoods Most.**

The [Minneapolis Star Tribune](#) (9/20, Jany, Webster, 1.04M) reports that according to its analysis of police statistics, “violent crime has surged to record highs across Minneapolis this year, rising in more prosperous neighborhoods that typically experience few such incidents while continuing to exact the heaviest toll in the city’s poor, ethnically diverse areas.” Overall, the city saw a 17% increase in violent crime “from the previous five-year average for this period.” City Council members last week “pressed Chief Medaria Arradondo to address crime in their wards. He assured them that his department was up to the task,” but “the police department has experienced a wave of officer departures since George Floyd’s killing. Insiders say that department morale has sunk, and that some officers have become more wary of conducting proactive police work out of fear they’ll be fired or prosecuted for actions taken on the job.”

### **New York AG Moves To Expedite Release Of Police Body Cam Footage.**

The [AP](#) (9/20) reports New York Attorney General Letitia James “promised Sunday to expedite the release of body camera footage in cases of alleged police misconduct that her office investigates.” Speaking in Rochester, “which has been in turmoil since the footage of Daniel Prude’s fatal encounter with police was released more than five months after his death,” James said her office “will be proactively releasing footage to the public on our own.” According to the AP, it was “unclear how many cases would be affected by the policy, since the attorney general’s office does not review all footage of police interactions with the public.”

## **COUNTER-TERRORISM**

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### **Woman Suspected Of Sending Ricin Letter To Trump Arrested.**

The [CBS Weekend News](#)<sup>Vi</sup> (9/20, story 8, 0:15, Garrett, 875K) reported, “An envelope containing the lethal poison Ricin has been intercepted in the White House mail at a government facility away from the executive mansion.” The letter was “addressed to President Trump and appeared to come from Canada.”

[NBC News](#) (9/20, 6.14M) reports, “A suspect who allegedly sent a letter containing the deadly poison ricin to the White House was detained trying to enter the United States from Canada, a federal law enforcement official said Sunday.” [CNN](#) (9/20, Perez, Correspondent, 83.16M) reports, “The woman was carrying a gun and arrested by US authorities, according to the law enforcement official.”

The [New York Times](#) (9/20, Benner, 18.61M) reports, “No links to any international terrorist groups have been found, according to two law enforcement officials.” The [AP](#) (9/20) reports the letter, which “appeared to have originated in Canada,” was “intercepted earlier this week before it reached the White House. The woman was taken into custody by U.S. Customs and Border Protection officers at the Peace Bridge border crossing near Buffalo and is expected to face federal charges.”

[Reuters](#) (9/19, Shepardson, Ljunggren) reports a spokesperson for the Royal Canadian Mounted Police “confirmed ‘it has received a request for assistance from the FBI in connection with a suspicious letter sent to the White House.’ The RCMP added ‘the FBI conducted an

analysis on the substance found in the envelope. This report indicated the presence of ricin, a toxic substance.' RCMP said it working with the FBI but declined to discuss further details."

The [Washington Post](#) (9/19, Barrett, 14.2M) reports in prior coverage that the FBI and Secret Service were "investigating an envelope mailed to President Trump that tested positive for the poison ricin, officials said Saturday." Ricin, the Post explained, "can be made from castor beans, but its effectiveness as a poison depends greatly on the care with which it is made." Meanwhile, "the FBI's Washington Field Office said in a statement that federal agents 'are investigating a suspicious letter received at a U.S. government mail facility. At this time, there is no known threat to public safety.'"

The [New York Times](#) (9/19, Benner, 18.61M) reports that in addition to the letter sent to the White House, letters containing ricin were also sent to a Texas sheriff's office as well as a detention facility in that state. The Times paraphrases "a law enforcement official briefed on the matter" as having said that investigators "have identified a woman as a suspect." Like the letter sent to the White House, the letters sent to Texas were intercepted.

[NPR](#) (9/19, Slotkin, 3.12M) reports the "Secret Service intercepted the envelope which was positively identified with mail meant for the White House, law enforcement sources tell NPR. The ricin never made it to White House grounds, but authorities are still searching for other undiscovered dangerous packages that may be linked to the ricin."

[USA Today](#) (9/19, Shannon, 10.31M) runs an article explaining what ricin is, saying the "FBI has charged people for attempting to obtain the toxin, which became illegal in July 2019." The substance "has surfaced in other plots targeting Trump and other officials. In 2018, a federal grand jury returned a seven-count indictment against a Utah man, alleging that he threatened Trump and other administration officials in letters, some of which contained the natural ingredients used to make ricin. In that case, a series of suspicious letters were addressed to Trump, then-Defense Secretary James Mattis, FBI Director Christopher Wray, CIA Director Gina Haspel and others."

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Also reporting are the [Montreal \(CAN\) Gazette](#) (9/21, 27K), [CBS News](#) (9/19, 3.68M), [NBC News](#) (9/19, 6.14M), [Fox News](#) (9/19, Dorman, 27.59M), the [Daily Caller](#) (9/19, Kruta, 716K), the [Wall Street Journal](#) (9/20, Viswanatha, Subscription Publication, 7.57M), [The Hill](#) (9/19, Deese, 2.98M), the [New York Post](#) (9/19, Italiano, 4.57M), [Business Insider](#) (9/20, Ankel, 3.67M), and the [Los Angeles Times](#) (9/19, 4.64M).

## **Federal Documents Show How Terror Networks, Drug Cartels Use Big Banks To Finance Crimes.**

[BuzzFeed News](#) (9/20, Leopold, Cormier, Templon, Warren, Singer-Vine, Pham, Holmes, Ghorayshi, Sallah, Kozyreva, Loop) reports "a huge trove of secret government documents"

dubbed the FinCEN Files “reveals for the first time how the giants of Western banking move trillions of dollars in suspicious transactions, enriching themselves and their shareholders while facilitating the work of terrorists, kleptocrats, and drug kingpins.” The documents “offer an unprecedented view of global financial corruption, the banks enabling it, and the government agencies that watch as it flourishes.” The documents “expose the hollowness of banking safeguards, and the ease with which criminals have exploited them.”

[Reuters](#) (9/20) reports the documents indicate that top global banks including HSBC Holdings Plc, JPMorgan Chase & Co, Deutsche Bank AG, Standard Chartered Plc, and Bank of New York Mellon Corp “moved large sums of allegedly illicit funds over a period of nearly two decades, despite red flags about the origins of the money.” The documents include “leaked suspicious activity reports (SARs) filed by banks and other financial firms with the U.S. Department of Treasury’s Financial Crimes Enforcement Network (FinCen).” These SARs “were obtained by BuzzFeed News and shared with the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists (ICIJ) and other media organizations.”

[Bloomberg](#) (9/20, Yang, Surane, Onaran, 4.73M) reports despite “a wave of hefty fines against major banks in the past decade” sparking “an explosion in the number of transactions that lenders flag as suspect to the U.S. government,” it remains unclear whether this is “making a difference. Banks moved money for people or entities they couldn’t identify, and in many cases failed to file the required suspicious activity reports until years afterward, according to an investigation released over the weekend by the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists.” Moreover, in some cases banks “kept moving illicit funds after receiving warnings from U.S. officials.” The documents “shed light on a faulty system where banks complain about reports that get no follow-up from authorities, while critics say lenders are checking off boxes without taking meaningful steps to stop financial crime.”

[Business Insider](#) (9/20, Dzhanova, 3.67M) reports the documents show “how some of the world’s biggest banks have for years facilitated the movement of dirty money.” This article lists a number of examples of questionable transactions documented in the files.

The [Miami Herald](#) (9/20, 19K) also reports.

### **CNN’s Lemon: President Trump Ignores Domestic Threat Of White Supremacists.**

In a video on the website of [CNN](#) (9/18, 83.16M), CNN’s Don Lemon says FBI Director Christopher Wray told Congress “that white supremacists are the largest group of racially motivated domestic terrorists. He says it accounts for the bulk of the bureau’s work on domestic threats.” Wray is shown saying, “Within the domestic terrorism bucket, the category as a whole, racially motivated violent extremism is I think the biggest bucket within that larger group, and within the racially motivated violent extremist bucket, people subscribing to some kind of white supremacist type ideology is certainly the biggest chunk of that.” Lemon complains that “people don’t want to hear” that white supremacists are responsible for terrorism threats, and laments that “the president doesn’t recognize the threat.”

### **Analysis: ISIS Has Sufficient Money To Launch Comeback.**

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (9/18, A1, Talley, Subscription Publication, 7.57M) reports an analysis of data from security officials and government documents indicates that Islamic State has ample cash reserves and continuing revenue streams despite recent setbacks, and the group has therefore sufficient resources to mount a resurgence.

### **Oregon Arsons Feed Conspiracy Theories About Wildfires.**

The [Oregonian](#) (9/19, 1M) reports there have been at least six men charged with arson in Oregon as the state deals with devastating wildfires, but none “have ties to left- or right-wing groups or appear to have been motivated by politics, according to police and court records.” Nevertheless, “the alleged acts have stoked fears amid a natural catastrophe unrivaled in Oregon’s recent past and fueled speculation into the causes behind some of the state’s largest

and most devastating wildfires.” Arson cases have “helped fuel conspiracy theories about anti-fascist activists starting the wildfires around the state, prompting local and county law enforcement officials as well as the FBI to emphatically rebut the claims.”

## COUNTER-INTELLIGENCE

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### **Book: FBI Agent Investigating Anthony Weiner Helped Spark Investigation Into Hillary Clinton’s Emails.**

[The Hill](#) (9/18, Moreno, 2.98M) reports according to an excerpt of forthcoming book “October Surprise: How the FBI Tried to Save Itself and Crashed an Election,” FBI agent John Robertson “found a tranche of top Clinton aide Huma Abedin’s emails.” Robertson “was tasked with investigating former congressman Anthony Weiner’s (D-N.Y.) interactions with a 15-year-old girl. Wiener, who was later convicted on charges of transmitting sexual material to a minor, was married to Abedin at the time.” The book says that “while Robertson was searching Weiner’s laptop on a warrant to look for possible images of sex crimes involving children, he found hundreds of thousands of emails between Abedin and Clinton.”

The [Washington Post](#) (9/17, Barrett, 14.2M) reports pressure had been building on Robertson “for weeks,” and he “felt a growing sense of alarm that the next casualty of this crazy presidential election would be his FBI career.” Robertson’s investigation of Weiner “was not the problem. ... The more pressing issue was the hundreds of thousands of Abedin’s emails, including many that were to or from Clinton, that Robertson had found on Weiner’s laptop. ... Robertson’s role has been examined by Justice Department internal investigators, but his identity, history and internal documents about his actions in 2016 are being recounted here for the first time.”

### **Wray: China Engaging In Massive Data Theft In US.**

The [Washington Times](#) (9/18, Gertz, 492K) reports FBI Director Christopher Wray, in prepared testimony for the House Homeland Security Committee, warned that “China is engaged in massive data mining in the United States and likely has stolen personal information on nearly half of the entire U.S. population.” Chinese government “hackers have conducted data collection operations, such as the 2017 theft of financial information on 150 million people from the credit bureau Equifax.” The Times quotes Wray saying, “If you are an American adult, it is more likely than not that China has stolen your personal data.” Wray added that the “theft is ‘on a scale so massive that it represents one of the largest transfers of wealth in human history.’”

### **University Of Nebraska-Lincoln Ends Confucius Institute Program.**

The [Omaha \(NE\) World-Herald](#) (9/20, Ruggles, 641K) reports, “Charles Wood built his reputation as a virus researcher at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and enjoyed a side gig running the university’s Chinese language and culture program. But his part-time role overseeing the Confucius Institute, caught up in UNL budget problems and perhaps politics, is about to end.” The university is looking to fill a \$38 million budget shortfall, and “has found about \$150,000 – 0.4% of it – by eliminating the Confucius Institute.” The article speculates on whether the university ended the program due to political pressure regarding allegations that the program is a front for Chinese propaganda and espionage.

## CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIONS

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### **North Carolina Man Arrested Over Sex Crimes Against Minor.**

The [Washington Times](#) (9/20, 492K) reports Joshua Taylor Bradshaw was “apprehended by the FBI” on Sunday, and he is “facing more than 300 separate counts for sex-related crimes involving a juvenile.”

[WRAL-TV](#) Raleigh, NC (9/20, 338K) reports Hoke County detectives "responded to the 1000 block of Fairfield Circle in Raeford for a report of a juvenile sexual assault" on August 7. The call resulted in an investigation yielding 156 charges against Bradshaw, who "fled North Carolina."

[WWAY-TV](#) Wilmington, NC (9/20, 6K) reports Bradshaw "is being held on a \$20,000,000 secured bond, and his first court appearance will be Monday, Sept. 21."

[WTVD-TV](#) Raleigh-Durham, NC (9/20) also reports.

### **Former California Lawyer Sentenced Over Murder Of Ex-Wife.**

The [Washington Post](#) (9/18, 14.2M) reported Lonnie Loren Kocontes "was sentenced Friday to life without the possibility of parole for strangling his ex-wife and throwing her body off a cruise ship in the Mediterranean in 2006." He "was convicted in June of first-degree murder with a special circumstances enhancement of murder for financial gain." The FBI investigation "began in 2008 after Kocontes tried to transfer \$1 million between various bank accounts."

### **FBI Investigating Illinois Bank Robberies.**

The [Chicago Tribune](#) (9/18, Williams Harris, 2.65M) reported that the FBI "is asking for the public's help identifying a woman suspected of robbing several banks in the area, including one Thursday on the city's Southwest Side." She "was described as a Black woman between the ages of 25 and 35 who wears a surgical mask during the robberies."

The [Chicago Sun-Times](#) (9/19, 875K) reported that the suspect "implied she had a weapon and demanded money using a note."

### **Oklahoma Man Sentenced Over Shootings.**

[KOKH-TV](#) Oklahoma City (9/18, Washington, 28K) reported that a federal jury has "found Dominice Eugene Hunt, 26, of Oklahoma City, guilty of numerous firearms, ammunition, and drug-related charges after five years of criminal conduct." He "is expected to be sentenced within the next few months."

### **Former Massachusetts Gang Member Pleads Guilty.**

The [Fall River \(MA\) Herald News](#) (9/18, 83K) reported former Latin Kings New Bedford gang member Shelton Johnson "pleaded guilty Thursday to racketeering charges," and he "admitted to participating in a June 2019 shooting of another Latin Kings member who was in bad standing with the gang." The FBI supported the investigation.

### **Arizona Man Facing Attempted Murder Charge.**

[KRQE-TV](#) Albuquerque, NM (9/17, 35K) reported Robert Benjamin Nelson "is facing a charge of attempted murder for allegedly shooting and wounding a New Mexico State Police officer last weekend west of Albuquerque." Prosecutors say he "fired through the passenger-side window of his vehicle Saturday at a uniformed state police officer working a law enforcement stop as part of a federal task force."

### **FBI Investigating Stabbing In South Dakota.**

The [Yankton \(SD\) Press & Dakotan](#) (9/17, Dockendorf, 24K) reported that the FBI "is working on the apparent stabbing death that occurred Tuesday night (Sept. 15) on the Yankton Sioux reservation." The victim "has been identified as 54-year-old Isaac Primeaux."

### **Former West Virginia VA Doctor Pleads Guilty.**

The [Miami Herald](#) (9/18, 1.09M) reported former Veterans Affairs official Dr. Jonathan Yates "pleaded guilty to three counts of depriving veterans of their civil rights and two counts of sexually abusive conduct." He "worked at the Beckley VA facility as the Whole Health Director

from April 2018 to June 2019 and is accused of sexually abusing veterans between the ages of 32 and 61 while treating them for chronic pain.”

### **Tennessee Man Sentenced Over Sex Trafficking.**

The [Jonesboro \(AR\) Sun](#) (9/20, 57K) reports Craig Gillum, who was “accused of trafficking a Trumann girl,” has been “sentenced to 23 years in federal prison for porn he produced with the teen.” Authorities say Gillum “sent explicit photos of himself to the girl and he solicited the same from her and received them.” The FBI investigated the case.

### **West Virginia Man Charged With Homicides.**

The [Martinsburg \(WV\) Journal](#) (9/18, LeRose, 51K) reported David Ray Sanford Jr, who is “incarcerated in the Eastern Regional Jail on one felony murder charge stemming from the kidnapping and killing of another man in Jefferson County,” has been “charged with allegedly murdering a witness of the killing.” He “was arraigned Wednesday in Berkeley County Magistrate Court on the” charge.

### **Illinois Police Chief Indicted Over Extortion.**

[WLS-TV](#) Chicago (9/18, 391K) reported McCook Police Chief Mario DePasquale “has been indicted on federal extortion charges in the same investigation as former McCook Mayor Jeffrey Tobolski.” Prosecutors “said the two worked together to shake down a restaurant owner who needed city approval to serve alcohol.”

### **Connecticut Drug Dealer Sentenced.**

The [San Antonio Express-News](#) (9/18, 762K) reported Maurice Tucker, who was “convicted on drug trafficking and gun charges,” has been “sentenced to serve nearly six years in prison.” The investigation “began in 2018 when the FBI’s Northern Connecticut Gang Task Force began investigating Ricardo Reyes, also known as ‘Rick the Ruler,’ a member of the ‘Los Solidos street gang who was distributing fentanyl, heroin, cocaine and crack’ in Hartford.”

[Hartford \(CT\) Patch](#) (9/18, 1.03M) also reports.

### **FBI Investigating Unsolved Indiana Child Murder.**

[WXIN-TV](#) Indianapolis (9/20, 434K) reports that the FBI is continuing to support the investigation into the unsolved death of De’Shaun Swanson, who died from gun violence in 2015. The FBI’s renewed interest in the case is part of Operation Legend.

[Indianapolis \(IN\) Star](#) (9/19, 633K) also reports.

### **Utah Man Arrested Over Crimes Against Children.**

[Gephardt Daily \(UT\)](#) (9/19) reported John Robert Krampf, who is known on YouTube as “The Happy Scientist,” has “been booked into the Washington County jail after a three-day operation by the FBI.” Dixie State University Police Chief Blair Barfuss “said Krampf first came to the attention of federal authorities when he allegedly shared digital files – containing pornographic images prepubescent children – with an IP address that was part of an undercover FBI operation.”

### **Michigan Man Sentenced Over Drug Trafficking In West Virginia.**

[WVVA-TV](#) Bluefield, WV (9/18) reported United States Attorney Mike Stuart “announced that 31-year old Clifford Howell of Eastpointe, Michigan was sentenced to 60 months in federal prison, followed by a five year term of supervised release.” He pleaded guilty in June 2020, and he “admitted that between June 2018 and September 17, 2019, he worked with other members of a drug trafficking organization (DTO) in Raleigh County, W. Va. to distribute heroin.”

### **New Mexico Police Announce Arrest Of Wanted FBI Fugitive.**

[KVIA-TV](#) El Paso, TX (9/18, 11K) reported that New Mexico State Police announced Friday the arrest of Dakota Don Briscoe, who "faces two open counts of murder and aggravated arson." The FBI "had offered a reward of up to \$10,000 for Briscoe's capture."

The [Las Cruces \(NM\) Sun-News](#) (9/19, 58K) reported he "was linked to a series of crimes on Albuquerque's West Side Sept. 7 in which he was accused of killing Eric Carbajal, 36, and Nathan Garcia, 39, torching their bodies inside a vehicle and carjacking a woman at gunpoint to make his escape."

### **Pennsylvania Gang Member Sentenced Over Narcotics Trafficking.**

The [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#) (9/18, Ove, 616K) reported U.S. District Judge Arthur Schwab has "sentenced Jaymare Jackson, 30, to that term followed by four years of probation" over his role in a narcotics trafficking operation. He "was a member of the SCO gang in Braddock that the FBI and its partners in the Greater Pittsburgh Safe Streets Task Force dismantled following a wiretap investigation."

### **California Man Pleads Not Guilty To Kidnapping.**

[KCAL-TV](#) Los Angeles (9/18) reported Alexis Ivan Romero Velez, who "was arraigned on Friday for allegedly being involved in the 2018 kidnapping and death of a luxury car dealer," has pleaded not guilty. He "could face up to life in prison."

### **FBI Investigated Causes Of Oregon Wildfires.**

The [Oregonian](#) (9/19, 1M) reported that the FBI is looking into the cause of the recent wildfires in Oregon, and it "issued a statement saying it had investigated several claims about extremist groups starting the fires in Oregon, and found them to be untrue." The rumors "emerged in the days after a public Zoom meeting in Oregon's Clackamas County on Sept. 10, when a captain from the sheriff's office said he had received reports of 'suspected antifa' agitators 'armed with chainsaws' near Estacada, Oregon."

### **Chicago Police Preparing For Gang Warfare Following Shooting.**

The [Chicago Tribune](#) (9/18, Sobol, Gorner, Nickeas, Pratt, 2.65M) reported that Chicago Police "were bracing for retaliation shootings on the South Side after a rapper was killed in a brazen Gold Coast attack, possibly because he had recently made a video featuring 'derogatory statements' about rival gang members who have died." Gangster Disciples member and local rapper Carlton Weekly "was shot Tuesday afternoon while standing in line in front of the Milani Boutique."

### **Celebrity Cheerleader Arrested On Child Pornography Charges.**

[NBC News](#) (9/17, 6.14M) reports Jerry Harris, who was featured in the Netflix documentary "Cheer," "was arrested to face a charge of production of child pornography, according to federal prosecutors." Assistant US Attorney Joseph Fitzpatrick said "Harris is expected to appear in federal court in Chicago on Thursday." According to court documents, Harris "allegedly solicited child pornography images and videos from two 14-year-old twin boys on multiple occasions. ... One of the boys told authorities that Harris had solicited oral sex from him in a bathroom during a cheerleading competition they both attended."

The [Washington Post](#) (9/17, Babwin, 14.2M) reports Harris "was arrested Thursday and charged with producing child pornography, three days after twin boys filed a lawsuit alleging he sent them sexually explicit photos of himself and cornered one of them in a bathroom and begged for oral sex." Harris "admitted during an interview after FBI agents raided his home in the Chicago suburb of Naperville on Monday that he had asked one of the teens to send him photographs and videos of his penis and buttocks on Snapchat." Harris also "admitted to requesting and receiving on Snapchat child pornography from 'at least between 10 to 15 other individuals he knew were minors,' according to the complaint."

## **Investigation: 74 Registered Sex Offenders Involved With US Cheerleading Organization.**

[USA Today](#) (9/18, 10.31M) reports that the US All Star Federation, which oversees competitive cheerleading, has "extensive rules" which "cover everything from stunt safety to hair bows." However, "a USA TODAY investigation found" many people worked "in cheerleading despite charges or convictions for sexual misconduct involving minors." The paper "identified nearly 180 individuals affiliated with cheerleading who have faced charges relating to sexual misconduct involving minors but were not banned by the sport's two governing bodies, USASF and USA Cheer. More than 140 of them – a group that includes coaches, choreographers and others directly tied to the activity – have been convicted, and 74 are registered sex offenders."

## **Judge Rules Psychiatrist Can Testify In Maryland Newspaper Shooting Case.**

The [AP](#) (9/4, White) reports a Maryland judge has ruled that "a psychiatrist retained by prosecutors in the sanity phase of a trial for a man who killed five people at a Maryland newspaper isn't barred by law from testifying about whether he believes the gunman was criminally responsible, but he can't directly compare him to other mass shooters in an FBI report." The judge ruled that "Dr. Gregory Saathoff can testify before a jury about his findings relating to the criminal responsibility of Jarrod Ramos, even though Saathoff has not examined him in person." Ramos pleaded guilty in October for killing five employees at the Capital Gazette in Annapolis.

## **Former Detroit Prosecutor Arraigned In Obstruction Case.**

The [Detroit News](#) (9/18, 825K) reports former prosecutor Eric Smith of Macomb County, Michigan, "was arraigned on an obstruction of justice charge Friday in federal court, the first step toward pleading guilty in a corruption scheme that forced him from office earlier this year." Federal prosecutors accuse Smith of "obstructing an investigation into whether he stole campaign funds, a charge punishable by up to 20-years in prison."

## **US Attorney In Nevada Addresses Need For More Human Trafficking Arrests, Prosecutions.**

[KSNV-TV](#) Las Vegas (9/20, Treanor, 62K) reports despite the massive scale of the problem of human trafficking, "according to the Human Trafficking Institute, the U.S. Attorneys Office in Nevada managed just one prosecution in 2019." Asked why it is "so hard to arrest, charge and convict traffickers," US Attorney Nicholas Trutanich said, "There's trauma bonding between victim and trafficker, and there's an issue we're dealing with right now, which is lawful access. We have phones that are encrypted and essentially warrant-proof." Trutanich "will be the first to admit that the numbers when he took office last year weren't good," but says "now his office is getting creative to try and take more criminals off the streets."

## **FINANCIAL CRIME & CORPORATE SCANDALS**

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### **FBI Investigating Hawaii Land Development Scheme.**

The [Hawaii Free Press](#) (9/20) reports on the difficulties developer Danny Julkowski has faced in trying to construct "commercial lots and housing on an oddly shaped 11.7-acre parcel he purchased in 2018" in Hawai'i County, Hawaii, which had "once been part of a much larger development that was proposed in the late 1990s as the Waikoloa Highlands golf estates." The paper reports that in buying the lot, Julkowski "unwittingly bought into a scheme that is now the subject of an FBI investigation."

### **Indictment Of Former Atlanta CFO Points To Complexity Of Federal Probe Of City Government.**

The [Atlanta Journal-Constitution](#) (9/18, Deere, scott Trubey, 895K) reports two years ago, US Attorney Byung J. "BJay" Pak "announced he had devoted nine prosecutors to the corruption investigation of City Hall" in Atlanta "-- a stunning amount of resources. The government had also added more IRS and FBI agents to the case, prompting a former federal prosecutor to compare the assets at Pak's disposal to Special Counsel Robert Mueller's Russia investigation." Thus far, the biggest "payoff of that investment was announced Wednesday, when prosecutors made public a federal grand jury indictment of Jim Beard, the city's chief financial officer under former Mayor Kasim Reed." Beard "faces eight criminal charges including wire fraud and illegal possession of machine guns."

### **Former Aide To Richard Daley Tied To Federal Corruption Investigation In Chicago.**

The [Chicago Sun-Times](#) (9/18, 875K) reports When Richard M. Daley was mayor of Chicago, "one of his most powerful – if least visible – aides was Victor Reyes, Daley's City Hall patronage chief." Reyes, now a major Chicago lobbyist, "still likes to stay out of the spotlight. But that's getting harder as federal authorities continue to pursue their wide-ranging investigation of political corruption in Chicago and the suburbs, a dragnet that so far has resulted in criminal charges against" several politicians. Reyes "hasn't been charged with any crime," but "he or one of his firms has come onto the radar of federal authorities in two of the cases they're investigating, records show."

### **Federal Prosecutors Charge Six With Bribing Amazon Employees For Marketplace Advantage.**

[CBS News](#) (9/18, Brooks, 3.68M) reports federal prosecutors announced Friday that "six people allegedly conspired to bribe Amazon employees and contractors in order to gain a competitive advantage on the retailer's marketplace." DOJ says "those charged posed as consultants and worked with third-party sellers whose products had previously been removed from Amazon Marketplace get the items back on the platform. The six then paid a total of more than \$100,000 in bribes to least 10 Amazon employees in exchange for their restoring the banned products or services, the indictment alleges."

[Reuters](#) (9/18, Bose, Dastin) reported the Justice Department announced Friday that a grand jury in the State of Washington has indicted six individuals on charges of conspiring to bribe Amazon employees and contractors in an effort to obtain advantages on Amazon marketplace. The defendants are charged with using "bribery and fraud" to "reinstate products and accounts that Amazon had suspended or blocked entirely from doing business on its marketplace." Reuters added, "Those indicted planned to pay over \$100,000 in exchange for an unfair competitive advantage on the Amazon marketplace – a platform where third-party merchants sell goods, the Department said." An Amazon spokesperson said, "We are especially disappointed by the actions of this limited group of now former employees, and appreciate the collaboration and support from law enforcement to bring them and the bad actors they were entwined with to justice."

[Bloomberg](#) (9/18, Soper, 4.73M) reported FBI supervisor in Seattle Raymond Duda explained, "Realizing they could not compete on a level playing field, the subjects turned to bribery and fraud in order to gain the upper hand. What's equally concerning, not only did they attempt to increase sales of their own products, but sought to damage and discredit their competitors." To Amazon merchant turned consultant Jason Boyce, who runs the firm Avenue7Media, "This is just the tip of the tip of the iceberg. You can find people in online selling forums willing to put you in touch with someone who can get into Amazon's system to help you sell more products or sabotage your competitors." The [Financial Times](#) (9/18, Subscription Publication, 1.34M) also reports.

### **Gambling Market Around College Football Player Availability During Pandemic Springs Up.**

[CBS Sports](#) (9/18, 3.87M) reports there were 20 players missing from the recent Arkansas State-Kansas State college football team, "the majority of those because of COVID-19. The issue was that only the wise guys in the desert seemed to know." In the two days before the game, "the line on the game in every major Las Vegas sportsbook had shifted 5 points from -9 to -14 for Kansas State. While that wasn't enough for the FBI to come sniffing around, the line shift was significant and did not go unnoticed."

## CYBER DIVISION

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### **FBI Investigating Cyberattack On Carmel, Indiana, Website.**

The [Indianapolis Star](#) (9/18, 633K) reports the FBI is investigating "Friday's hack of the Carmel website, which has shut down for the day, but that city officials said has not seriously disrupted operations." FBI Indianapolis spokeswoman Chris Bavender said, "We are aware of the incident and are providing assistance to the City of Carmel IT staff." Bavender declined to comment on whether the hack was a ransomware attack, but "the FBI has sent out warnings in the past that such attacks are increasing in prevalence."

## LAW ENFORCEMENT SERVICES

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### **FBI Warns About Sextortion Cases In Arizona.**

[KPNX-TV](#) Phoenix (9/20, 101K) reports the FBI "is warning about 'sexortion' cases, predators targeting young girls, coercing them into sending inappropriate pictures and videos that are then traded on the internet," detailing one such case that happened in Phoenix, Arizona. The teen "became the victim of what the FBI in Phoenix calls 'sexortion.' '...where an adult coerces someone 18 or younger to send them sexually explicit photos or video,' said Jill McCabe, public affairs specialist for the FBI in Phoenix. 'Oftentimes that's through deception, through threats, by offering money or gifts and they're able to obtain these photos and then they'll ask for more.'"

### **FBI Agents Develop Checklist For Investigators In Cases Of Missing Children With Autism.**

[WSOC-TV](#) Charlotte, NC (9/18, 24K) reports, "Maddox Ritch died after he disappeared at a Gaston County park in 2018. Now, his story is helping law enforcement officers better understand how to search for children with autism." The article reports Special Agent James Granozio in Charlotte, North Carolina, "has developed a checklist for investigators to use." The article quotes Granozio saying, ""He was a little boy that was just running around having a good time. And he died. So we all wanted to know what we could learn from it to hopefully prevent it from happening again."" Granozio "said the goal is to help law enforcement know how children with autism function and think."

## INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

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### **Prince Andrew Faces Increased Pressure To Cooperate With FBI After Private Chef Speaks To Agents.**

The [New York Post](#) (9/19, Gray, 4.57M) reports Prince Andrew "is feeling the heat again to cooperate with FBI after a private chef started spilling the beans about his late pedophile pal Jeffrey Epstein." Chef Adam Perry Lang worked for Epstein "from 1999 to 2003, when Epstein took the Duke of York globetrotting on his private jet, The Mirror reported." Lang "offered to talk with FBI investigators after he received a plea from ██████████ who has accused

British socialite Ghislaine Maxwell of arranging for her to have sex with the disgraced royal when she was only 17." [The Sun \(UK\)](#) (9/18, 712K) also reports.

## OTHER FBI NEWS

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### **Rubio: FBI Was Warned By Intelligence Community Not To Rely On Steele Dossier.**

The [Washington Examiner](#) (9/20, Dunleavy, 448K) reports Sen. Marco Rubio (R-FL) "said every intelligence agency warned the FBI not to rely on the 'ridiculous things' in British ex-spy Christopher Steele's discredited dossier." Rubio "criticized the bureau during an appearance on Sunday Morning Futures on Fox News, noting that the intelligence community warned the FBI the dossier might contain Russian disinformation." Rubio "told the show's host, Fox Business anchor Maria Bartiromo, that he believes the actions taken by some in the FBI were criminal, and that there was likely more wrongdoing that has not yet been made public."

Rubio, on [Fox News Sunday Morning FuturesVi](#) (9/20, 1.67M), said, "Our Russia report makes it very clear that the FBI behaved very poorly with the things they did in the 2016 and the aftermath of that election. We pointed out those things. For example, the reliance on the dossier that the intelligence community, including the CIA, told the FBI not to use those documents because they weren't reliable. Every single one of the intelligence agencies separate from the FBI said that the dossier was not the kind of document they should be relying on, we shouldn't even be talking about it, because it could very well be something the Russians completely made up and put out there and so the information in order to create all sorts of havoc. The implications here are frightening and that is you could go and hire some former spy, make up stories, put it in this document, and get someone in the US government to put the official seal of approval on it."

### **Jordan: Comey Testimony "Key" To Answering Questions About Russia Probe.**

The [Washington Examiner](#) (9/20, Soellner, 448K) reports, "Former FBI Director Jim Comey is 'at the center' of the so-called Russiagate controversy," according to Rep. Jim Jordan (R-OH). During an interview on [Fox News Sunday Morning FuturesVi](#), Jordan "talked about his expectations for Comey's appearance before the Senate Judiciary Committee scheduled for Sept. 30." He said, "I think Jim Comey's been at the center of all this. He's in every important meeting. He was the guy who went from one administration to the other. He's the one who designed the cover-up. He's the one who pushed when leaked his memos to get Bob Mueller, the special counsel appointed, which, in fact, happened. The very people on that team wiped their phones, as you just indicated. So, Comey is the key to all this. I'm glad he's coming in. I'm sure he's going to get some tough questions."

### **Tropical Storm Beta Headed Toward Texas And Louisiana.**

The [CBS Weekend NewsVi](#) (9/20, story 6, 0:10, Garrett, 875K) reported, "Tropical Storm Beta is slowly making its way towards Texas and Louisiana." [ABC World News TonightVi](#)'s (9/20, story 6, 0:40, Llamas, 5.41M) Rob Marciano reported that it "should make landfall tomorrow afternoon somewhere around Victoria." [ABC World News TonightVi](#)'s (9/20, story 5, 1:20, Llamas, 5.41M) Elwyn Lopez reported "the slow-moving storm" is "set to hit parts of Texas and Louisiana with 60-mile-per-hour winds and up to 15 inches of rain." Lopez added, "The main concern is flash flooding inland."

The [AP](#) (9/20, Lozano) reports Beta was "no longer expected to reach hurricane intensity, the National Weather Service said Sunday." Forecasters said the storm was "not expected to bring the same amount of rainfall that Texas experienced during either Hurricane Harvey in 2017 or Tropical Storm Imelda last year."

[USA Today](#) (9/20, Bacon, Falcon, 10.31M) reports that Beta would be "the ninth system to make landfall in the United States this season, tying a record set more than 100 years ago."

The storm's "slow advancement – it was moving at just 5 mph Sunday afternoon – follows a recurring theme in storms this season: slow movers that can stall over an area and dump a foot or more of rain."

### **Trump: Mail-in Ballots A Recipe For Chaos, Fraud.**

When asked about mail-in ballots during an interview with [Fox News Life, Liberty & Levin](#) (9/21), President Trump said, "Look, they know it doesn't work because there's been many races using this over the last 14 or 15 months. I heard there was one yesterday or the day before yesterday that the ballots are so mixed up they have millions of ballots going out on little races like in New York or Paterson, NJ or Virginia or many other locations and were now finding out about the one from over the past couple days. Were talking about numbers like 30 percent and 40 percent off. Were not talking one percent which is two months because you can lose by one percent. One percent is a lot, but they're off by 30, 40 percent sometimes. Ballots are missing, there's fraud, now there's a new thing where they don't want to verify signatures because that makes it easy so you don't have to verify measures."

***Some Voter Rolls Haven't Been Updated To Remove Non-Citizens.*** The [Washington Times](#) (9/20, Dinan, 492K) reports that "some local rolls haven't been cleansed of illegitimate voters, creating opportunities for fraudulent ballots to be cast." Federal prosecutors in North Carolina "last week announced charges against 19 more people they said weren't citizens yet cast votes in the 2016 election. Of those, 12 have been removed from voter rolls, according to state records." Meanwhile, "liberal activists have said prosecutors are turning honest mistakes into federal crimes."

## **OTHER WASHINGTON NEWS**

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### **Pelosi Doesn't Rule Out Impeaching Trump To Stop Ginsburg Replacement.**

News accounts are casting House Speaker Pelosi's response to a reporter's question Sunday as an indication that she has not ruled out impeaching the President again to stop him for pushing through a Supreme Court nominee to replace the late Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg. On [ABC's This Week](#)<sup>Vi</sup> (9/20, 2.46M), George Stephanopoulos said "some have mentioned the possibility" of impeaching Trump or Attorney General Barr "as a way of stalling and preventing the Senate from acting on this nomination." Pelosi replied, "We have our options. We have arrows in our quiver that I'm not about to discuss right now, but the fact is we have a big challenge in our country. This President has threatened to not even accept the results of the election with statements that he and his henchmen have made. ... The lives, the livelihood and the life of our democracy are threatened by this Administration. So again, when people say, what can I do? You can vote."

[ABC World News Tonight](#)<sup>Vi</sup> (9/20, lead story, 3:45, Scott, 5.41M) reported Sunday night that Pelosi is "signaling Democrats will do whatever it takes to stop Republicans from jamming this nominee through, not ruling out using impeachment to try to keep the Senate from acting." [Politico](#) (9/20, Weaver, 4.29M) says Pelosi said "the House has plenty of options available to delay the Senate from acting," while to [USA Today](#) (9/20, Cummings, 10.31M) "Pelosi did not rule out the possibility of impeaching...Trump if he tries to push through a Supreme Court nominee," to [Fox News](#) (9/20, Singman, 27.59M) she "would not rule out impeachment as an option to stop...Trump's US Supreme Court pick from being confirmed to the bench," and to the [New York Post](#) (9/20, Moore, 4.57M) she "refused to rule out using impeachment to block Senate Republicans from voting on...Trump's nominee." The [AP](#) (9/20, Kellman, Mascaro) recounts, meanwhile, that Pelosi "refused in a television interview to detail the 'arrows in our quiver,' even when asked about trying to impeach Trump for a second time."

[Newsweek](#) (9/20, Fearnow, 1.53M) reports "Congressional legal experts say the drafting of new articles of impeachment against Trump is within the law," but her "refusal to rule out the

possibility of using a second impeachment against Trump or initiating impeachment against Barr drew criticism from congressional Republicans." The [Washington Examiner](#) (9/20, Leonardi, 448K) indicates that House Judiciary Committee Republicans reacted to Pelosi's comments on [Twitter](#), writing, "This is one of the most ridiculous ideas ever presented by @SpeakerPelosi. And that's saying something." The Examiner also reports "Trump said he expects to announce his nominee for the Supreme Court 'next week' and will be picking a woman."

### **Reports: Barrett, Lagoa Top Trump's List As He Weighs Ginsburg Replacement.**

[ABC World News Tonight](#)<sup>Vi</sup> (9/20, lead story, 3:45, Scott, 5.41M) showed President Trump saying of his upcoming Supreme Court nominee, "It will be a woman. A very talented, very brilliant woman, who I haven't chosen yet, but we have numerous women on the list. I built this incredible list of brilliant people." ABC added "sources tell us...Amy Coney Barrett" is "an early favorite." [NBC Nightly News](#)<sup>Vi</sup> (9/20, story 3, 1:40, Williams, 5.27M) reported that "Administration officials say the President is considering two women as possible nominees. Said to be the front-runner at this point" is Barrett, who "Trump put...on the Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals based in Chicago three years ago. A native of Indiana, she's 48, a former Notre Dame law professor, and devout Catholic." NBC added that "in 2003, she questioned the reluctance of federal courts to overturn precedents."

The [CBS Weekend News](#)<sup>Vi</sup> (9/20, lead story, 2:50, Reid, 875K) showed Trump saying of Barrett, "She is very highly respected, I can say that." CBS added that "Judge Barbara Lagoa on the 11th Circuit is also a top contender." Trump said of her, "An extraordinary person, I have heard incredible things about her. I don't know her. She is Hispanic and highly respected." CBS News "has learned that over the next few days, the President will continue to confer with his top advisors, his Vice President, Chief of Staff, White House counsel, even his son in law, Jared Kushner, about this nomination. The President is expected to announce his pick sometime this week."

[USA Today](#) (9/19, Wolf, Groppe, 10.31M) reports "Barrett rocketed to the top of Trump's list of potential nominees after her 2017 confirmation hearing for a seat on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 7th Circuit, when Democrats cited her deep Catholic faith not as an advantage but an obstacle. She was confirmed, 55-43." Said Barrett at the time, "If you're asking whether I take my faith seriously and I'm a faithful Catholic, I am. ... Although I would stress that my personal church affiliation or my religious belief would not bear in the discharge of my duties as a judge." The [Wall Street Journal](#) (9/20, A1, Kendall, Subscription Publication, 7.57M) runs a similar analysis under the front-page headline "Amy Coney Barrett Is Again a Top Contender for Supreme Court Nomination."

### **Trump: Democrats, Media Denigrating Vaccine To Hurt Reelection Chances.**

President Trump, in an interview with [Fox News Life, Liberty & Levin](#) (9/18), was asked why Democrats and the media seem hostile to efforts to develop a vaccine. Trump said, "They want to denigrate it. This started about three weeks ago because they started having, hearing rumors that we would have this vaccine in super record time. ... The reason they're doing that is because they think I will get credit if we have a vaccine anywhere near the election but certainly before the election. ... They're trying to make it not a big deal when actually it's one of the greatest things that anyone has done. ... They have done in record time. If this were a typical administration, this vaccine wouldn't be ready for two or three years because of the FDA process. I have totally changed the FDA process. Same safety, but the speed is from a different world and we should have the vaccine approved very soon."

**HHS Officials Offer More Conservative Vaccine Timeline.** The [New York Times](#) (9/20, Gorman, 18.61M) reports that "top administration health officials on Sunday delicately sidestepped President Trump's ambitious declaration last week that a coronavirus vaccine would be available for every American by April." Instead, Adm. Brett P. Giroir, "who heads up national testing efforts," and HHS Secretary Azar "offered a slightly more conservative timetable for

vaccine availability." On CNN's "State of the Union," Giroir said, "In front of the Senate, Dr. Redfield and I both said that a vaccine that would be widely available in hundreds of millions of doses would not likely happen until mid-2021. That is a fact." However, he also said the President was correct in saying that "we could have as many as a hundred million doses by the end of this year. That is correct. I think everybody is right."

**Former FDA Chiefs: Vaccine Approval Process Can Be Trusted.** Former FDA commissioners Scott Gottlieb and Mark McClellan write in the [Wall Street Journal](#) (9/20, Subscription Publication, 7.57M) that the health agency's thorough and transparent approval process for a potential coronavirus vaccine won't be compromised and the public should be reassured.

## INTERNATIONAL NEWS

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### **US To Sanction Two Dozen Targets Tied To Iran Arms Sales.**

[Reuters](#) (9/20, Mohammed) reports the US on Monday will sanction "more than two dozen people and entities involved in Iran's nuclear, missile and conventional arms programs, a senior US official said." The official "said Iran could have enough fissile material for a nuclear weapon by the end of the year and that Tehran has resumed long-range missile cooperation with nuclear-armed North Korea." However, he "did not provide detailed evidence regarding either assertion." The senior US official told Reuters, "Iran is clearly doing everything it can to keep in existence a virtual turnkey capability to get back into the weatherization business at a moment's notice should it choose to do so."

### **Rouhani Dismisses US Efforts To Reimpose UN Sanctions.**

The [AP](#) (9/20, Vahdat) reports Iranian President Hassan Rouhani "dismissed US efforts to restore all UN sanctions on the country as mounting economic pressure from Washington pushed the local currency down to its lowest level ever on Sunday." Iran's currency "has lost more than 30% of its value to the dollar since June." Still, Rouhani "slammed the Trump Administration's declaration Saturday that all UN sanctions against Iran have been reimposed because Tehran is not complying with the nuclear deal." Said Rouhani, "If America uses its bullying...and does something in practice, it will have to face our decisive response."

**UN Chief: No UN Support For Reimposing Sanctions Now.** The [AP](#) (9/20, Lederer) reports Secretary-General Antonio Guterres "says the United Nations will not support reimposing sanctions on Iran as the United States is demanding until he gets a green light from the Security Council." In a letter to the council president obtained Sunday, Guterres wrote that "there would appear to be uncertainty" on whether or not Secretary of State Pompeo triggered the "snapback" mechanism in the 2015 nuclear deal. The AP says the Administration "declared Saturday that all UN sanctions against Iran have been restored, a move most of the rest of the world rejects as illegal and is likely to ignore."

The [Washington Post](#) (9/20, Morello, 14.2M) similarly says that "most of the world brushed off the US move and acted as if nothing had changed." To the Post, the US declaration Saturday "ushers in a new period of uncertainty and tension."

Secretary of State Pompeo, on [Fox News Sunday Morning Futures](#)<sup>Vi</sup> (9/20, 1.66M), said, "There would have been a whole lot more things that would have taken place, absent the UN Security Council resolutions coming back into effect last night. Air defense system, arms sales, all of those in a couple weeks would have been permitted to have been sold and the Europeans have not joined us in this. They know we're right. They tell us privately we don't want the arm sales to come back and they put it in the letter they are very concerned about these sales, but they haven't lifted a finger and done the work that needs to be done. ... I hope they will get to the right place. They are still wedded to this silly nuclear deal that was signed now five years ago."

The [New York Times](#) (9/20, 18.61M) editorializes that “in a stunning display of chutzpah, the Trump administration is now arguing that the United States is still part of the Iran deal” that it withdrew from two years ago. That, it argues, is “because it wants to use a provision in the deal to snap back’ global sanctions on Iran,” and “only a party to the agreement can trigger a resumption of global sanctions.”

### **Airstrike In Kills At Least 10 Afghan Civilians, 30 Taliban Amid Peace Talks.**

The [Washington Post](#) (9/20, George, Hassan, 14.2M) reports that “while representatives of the Afghan government and the Taliban talk peace in Doha, the sides continue to launch deadly attacks in Afghanistan, leaving dozens dead.” On Saturday, “at least 10 civilians and more than 30 Taliban fighters were killed in two airstrikes by Afghan government planes in the northern province of Kunduz, according to local officials.” Elsewhere on Saturday, “two local officials, including a deputy police chief, were assassinated” in Paktika province. No one claimed responsibility, “but Afghan officials believe armed groups linked to the Taliban are behind a string of similar attacks.”

### **US, UAE Officials To Hold Talks To Normalize Israeli-Sudanese Ties.**

Barak Ravid reports for [Axios](#) (9/20, 521K) that US, Emirati and Sudanese officials will hold “a decisive meeting in Abu Dhabi on Monday on a possible normalization agreement between Sudan and Israel, Sudanese sources told me.” According to the sources, “if the US and the United Arab Emirates accommodate Sudan’s requests for economic aid, an announcement on a normalization agreement with Israel similar to the ones struck with the UAE and Bahrain could be made within days.”

Secretary of State Pompeo said on [Fox News Sunday Morning FuturesVi](#) (9/20, 1.66M) of the recently signed Abraham Accords, “For three years, President Trump has taken a fundamentally different approach. The establishment Middle East policy was that you had to resolve the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians first. The President came to understand quickly that the real threat to these countries was the Islamic Republic of Iran, so we flipped the narrative. We worked to deliver a coalition to get the Gulf states to work together, to convince them that they could in fact work alongside and partner with and do commerce with the state of Israel and recognize them and that they’ll be safer, their people will be more prosperous. Those are the central underpinnings and it then took action. It took principled action on behalf of President Trump and our administration to convince them that the Americans will be there.”

***NYTimes Analysis: Trump Hopes Accords Will Boost Support Among Jews, Evangelicals.*** The [New York Times](#) (9/20, 18.61M) reports that the Trump campaign has “wasted little time cashing in” on last week’s White House signing ceremony for new accords between Israel and two Arab states. Two days after the event, his campaign released “a slick, 30-second ad featuring footage from the ceremony and depicting Mr. Trump as a heroic peacemaker for bringing Israel into normalized relations with the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain.” Trump allies say the deal “resonates particularly with Jewish Americans, who are a key voting bloc in the critical swing state of Florida, and evangelical Christians, who are fervent supporters of Israel and its broadest territorial claims.”

## **THE BIG PICTURE**

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### **Headlines From Today’s Front Pages.**

#### ***Wall Street Journal:***

[Supreme Court Vacancy Sets Off Debate As Trump Plans For Ginsburg Successor Amy Coney Barrett Is Again A Top Contender For Supreme Court Nomination](#)

[WeChat Ban Blocked By Federal Judge In Ruling Against Trump Administration](#)  
[No Job, Loads Of Debt: Covid Upends Middle-Class Family Finances](#)  
[TikTok Deal Faces Questions Over Security, Ownership](#)  
[The College Freshman's Life This Fall: "Definitely Weird"](#)

***New York Times:***

[Trump And Democrats Brace For Showdown Over Supreme Court Seat](#)  
['We May Be Surprised Again': An Unpredictable Pandemic Takes A Terrible Toll](#)  
[With Flags, Crosses And Photos, Mourning 200,000 Dead](#)  
[How California Became Ground Zero For Climate Disasters](#)

***Washington Post:***

[US, China Hasten An Economic Decoupling](#)  
["Don't Go There," Biden Warns Republican Senators](#)  
[GOP Moves Urgently On Ginsburg's Seat](#)  
["What Could Possibly Go Wrong?"](#)  
[In Kenosha, Pain At Hands Of Police Goes Beyond Blake](#)  
[On Campus, Upheaval And Some Signs Of Hope](#)

***Financial Times:***

[Trump Suffers Blow After California Judge Blocks WeChat Ban](#)  
[YouTube Reverts To Human Moderators In Fight Against Misinformation](#)  
[ECB To Review Flagship Bond-buying Tool In Fighting Covid Crisis](#)

***Washington Times:***

[McConnell's Vow On Trump's Supreme Court Nominee Faces Obstacles](#)  
['Fill That Seat': Trump Vows To Pick Woman To Replace Ginsburg](#)  
['Emergency' Investigation: House Democrats Threaten To Impeach AG Barr](#)  
['Not A Big Deal': Noncitizens Who Voted Illegally In 2016 Still On Voter Rolls](#)  
[Crusader Of 'Right To Work' Laws A Strong Supporter Of Unions](#)  
[US To Take On The World In Iran Sanctions Showdown](#)

***Story Lineup From Last Night's Network News:***

**ABC:** SCOTUS-RBG Seat; Remembering RBG; Coronavirus-Cases; Coronavirus-Europe; Tropical Storm Beta; Tropical Storm Beta-Tracking; Wildfires; Coronavirus-Gym Bankruptcies; NYC-Train Derailed; Chicago-Weekend Violence; RBG-Her Own Words.

**CBS:** Trump-Potential SCOTUS Nominee; SCOTUS-RBG Seat; Coronavirus-Cases; Coronavirus-Europe; Wildfires; Tropical Storm Beta; Coronavirus-Airlines; USPS-Letter Containing Poison; Belarus-Protests; Tour de France; London-WWII Aircraft; Plastics Pollution.

**NBC:** SCOTUS-RBG Seat; Remembering RBG; Trump-Potential SCOTUS Nominee; Coronavirus-Tribute to Lives Lost.

***Network TV At A Glance:***

Coronavirus – 13 minutes, 10 seconds  
SCOTUS-RBG Seat – 8 minutes, 55 seconds  
Remembering RBG – 6 minutes, 20 seconds

***Story Lineup From This Morning's Radio News Broadcasts:***

**ABC:** SCOTUS-RBG Seat; Dems-Fundraising; Tropical Storm Beta; Emmy Results.

**CBS:** SCOTUS-RBG Seat; Tropical Storm Beta; Wildfires; Coronavirus-Cases; Emmy Results.

**FOX:** SCOTUS-RBG Seat; New York-Police Accountability Policy; Coronavirus-Cases.

**NPR:** SCOTUS-RBG Seat; Coronavirus-Rep. Hayes Tests Positive; Tropical Storm Beta.

## WASHINGTON'S SCHEDULE

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### Today's Events In Washington.

#### **White House:**

- President Trump — Delivers remarks on Fighting for the American Worker; delivers remarks at a Great American Comeback Event
- Vice President Pence — No public schedule released

#### **US Senate:**

- Senate aims to end debate on judicial nominee – Senate convenes and proceeds to executive session to resume consideration of the nomination of Edward Hulvey Meyers to be a U.S. Court of Federal Claims Judge, with agenda including vote on a motion to invoke cloture on the nomination

*Location: U.S. Capitol, Washington, DC; 3:00 PM*

#### **US House:**

- House Rules Committee hearing – Hearing on 'H.R. XXXX – Continuing Appropriations Act, 2021 and Other Extensions Act', 'H.R. 4447' – the legislative vehicle for the Clean Economy Jobs and Innovation Act, 'H.R. 6210 – Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act', and 'H.R. 6270 – Uyghur Forced Labor Disclosure Act of 2020'

*Location: U.S. Capitol, Washington, DC; 1:00 PM*

- House Intelligence Committee takes deposition from former DHS official following whistleblower reprisal complaint – House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence conducts deposition with former Acting Under Secretary of Homeland Security for Intelligence and Analysis Brian Murphy, as part of an investigation into allegations he made in a whistleblower reprisal complaint submitted to the Department of Homeland Security Office of Inspector General earlier this month that featured 'serious misconduct by senior Administration officials to politicize, manipulate, and censor intelligence to benefit President Donald Trump'

#### **Cabinet Officers:**

- No public schedules released

#### **Visitors:**

- No visitors scheduled

#### **This Town:**

- The Atlantic Festival commences – The Atlantic Festival, held virtually, hosted by The Atlantic to explore the events of 2020 with forums on race and justice, education, small business, the future of work, and health equity, and the annual 'Women of Washington' event. Day one speakers include U.S. Chamber of Commerce President Suzanne Clark, Emerge President A'shanti Gholar, and Color of Change President Rashad Robinson; *10:00 AM*
- GMF event on subnational diplomacy, with Dem Rep. Ted Lieu and LA Mayor Garcetti – German Marshall Fund of the U.S. online event, with Democratic Rep. Ted Lieu and Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti discussing how to harness the power of cities and states to solve new challenges, such as pandemic preparedness, green recovery, trade and investment, and innovation; *12:00 PM*
- CAP online discussion on elections during the coronavirus pandemic – 'States and Cities Must Lead on Voting: Governors and Mayors Talk Elections During COVID-19' Center for American Progress online discussion, with Oregon Governor Kate Brown, Detroit Mayor Mike Duggan, and Tucson, AZ, Mayor Regina Romero discussing the critical steps state and local elected officials are taking to make sure every person can vote in November; *1:30 PM*

- Poor People's Campaign Moral Monday event – The Poor People's Campaign: A National Call for Moral Revival holds Moral Monday event, with activists 'caravanning and digitally marching' on Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell's home and offices in Kentucky and Washington, DC. Speakers include Poor People's Campaign leaders Rev. Dr William Barber and Dr Liz Theorharis and actor Ashley Judd; *3:30 PM*
- The Poor People's Campaign caravan to GOP Sen. Mitch McConnell's home and offices – The Poor People's Campaign caravan to Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell's home and offices in Kentucky and in Washington, DC, to demand an end to 'his meanness, misery and mayhem'; *3:30 PM*
- CBO releases long-term budget outlook – Congressional Budget Office releases 'The 2020 Long-Term Budget Outlook', providing projections of what federal spending, revenues, deficits, and debt would be for the next 30 years if current laws generally did not change, consistent with the agency's latest baseline budget and economic projections

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