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 FBI News Briefing

**TO: THE DIRECTOR AND SENIOR STAFF**

**DATE: THURSDAY, OCTOBER 22, 2020 6:30 AM EDT**

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## LEADING THE NEWS

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### **Ratcliffe, Wray Say Iran Behind Threatening Emails To Voters.**

The [AP](#) (10/21, Bajak) reports DNI Ratcliffe and FBI Director Wray have accused Iran "of being behind a flurry of emails sent to Democratic voters in multiple battleground states that appeared to be aimed at intimidating them into voting" for President Trump. The announcement "at a rare, hastily called news conference just two weeks before the election underscored the

concern within the U.S. government about efforts by foreign countries to spread false information meant to suppress voter turnout and undermine American confidence in the vote." DNI Ratcliffe said, "These actions are desperate attempts by desperate adversaries."

The [New York Times](#) (10/21, Barnes, Sanger, 18.61M) reports Ratcliffe said Iran obtained American voter registration data and used it "to send threatening, faked emails to voters. ... Intelligence agencies had collected information that Iran planned to take more steps more steps to influence the vote, prompting the unusual timing of the briefing as an effort to deter Tehran." Ratcliffe said, "This data can be used by foreign actors to attempt to communicate false information to registered voters that they hope will cause confusion, sow chaos and undermine your confidence in American democracy." The [New York Post](#) (10/21, Feuerherd, 4.57M) reports that Ratcliffe added that "some voter registration information" had been obtained by both Iran and Russia. [Politico](#) (10/21, Geller, 4.29M) reports that Ratcliffe added that there "is no indication that either Russia or Iran hacked into voter registration databases to obtain the information that they used to send the emails. Voter data is publicly available in many states."

The [Washington Post](#) (10/21, Stanley-Becker, Timberg, 14.2M) reports that Wray said, "We are not going to tolerate foreign interference in our elections or any criminal activity that threatens the sanctity of your vote or undermines public confidence in the outcome of the election. When we see indications of foreign interference or federal election crimes, we're going to aggressively investigate and work with our partners to quickly take appropriate action." [NBC News](#) (10/21, Collier, 6.14M) reports that Wray "said there was still no way for Iranian or Russian intelligence to change Americans' votes."

[USA Today](#) (10/21, Slack, Sassoon, 10.31M) reports that CISA Director Christopher Krebs added, "These emails are meant to intimidate and undermine American voters' confidence in our elections."

The [Miami Herald](#) (10/21, Ceballos, 1.09M) reports that the FBI "was investigating the emails Wednesday. Ratcliffe said the intelligence community caught the activity 'immediately.'"

The [Washington Post](#) (10/21, Stanley-Becker, Timberg, 14.2M) reports, "The claim that Iran was behind the email operation, which became news Tuesday as Democrats in several swing states reported receiving emails demanding that they vote for President Trump, came without specific evidence, and other U.S. officials, speaking privately, stressed that Russia still remained the major threat to the 2020 election." [Fox News](#) (10/21, Dorman, 27.59M) reports the operation "apparently used email addresses obtained from state voter registration lists, which include party affiliation and home addresses and can include email addresses and phone numbers. Those addresses were then used in an apparently widespread targeted spamming operation."

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (10/21, Volz, Gurman, Subscription Publication, 7.57M) reports that Ratcliffe also said that Iran is disseminating a video promoting a false claim that fraudulent ballots are being cast from abroad. The [Washington Times](#) (10/21, Dinan, 492K) reports the video "suggests that the Federal Write-in Absentee Ballot, primarily a backup ballot for military and overseas voters, could change election outcomes. Mr. Krebs's organization said relatively few are cast, so they are not likely to be able to swing an election. And if there were a spike in their use, it 'would be detected as anomalous.'"

More broadly, [NPR](#) (10/21, Ewing, 3.12M) reports that since 2016, Ratcliffe and Wray "said American officials have worked to toughen U.S. election infrastructure and become more vigilant about election security — work they said has paid off with the awareness demonstrated Wednesday night." The FBI and CISA "have kept up a drumbeat of regular bulletins about what they call the latest intelligence about prospective election cyber-threats." [CNN](#) (10/21, Herb, Cohen, 83.16M) reports that Ratcliffe said, "We are prepared for the possibility of actions by those hostile to democracy." [Business Insider](#) (10/21, Sheth, 3.67M) reports Russia, Iran, and China "have been at the top of national security officials' radars as foreign adversaries looking to meddle in the US election. Over the summer, the US intelligence community concluded that Russia does not want Biden to win the election, while China does."

Meanwhile, [NBC News](#) (10/22, Dilanian, 6.14M) reports that Trustwave, a global cybersecurity firm, "says it has found a hacker selling personally identifying information from more than 200 million Americans, including the voter registration data of 148 million." However, "much of the data" is "publicly available, and almost all of it is the kind that is regularly bought and sold by legitimate businesses."

Also reporting on the announcement are [Bloomberg](#) (10/21, Strohm, 4.73M), [Reuters](#) (10/21), [ABC News](#) (10/21, Mallin, Barr, 2.97M), [Courthouse News](#) (10/21, Solis, 2K), the [Daily Beast](#) (10/21, Quinn, 1.39M), the [Daily Caller](#) (10/21, Hagstrom, 716K), [The Verge](#) (10/21, Peters, Kelly, 2.05M), and [Axios](#) (10/21, Knutson, 521K), among others.

**Rubio, Warner Stress Elections Are Secure.** [CBS News](#) (10/21, Watson, Hymes, Quinn, 3.68M) reports that shortly before the announcement, Acting SSCI Chair Marco Rubio and Vice Chair Mark Warner "emphasized that U.S. elections are secure." They said in a joint statement, "As we enter the last weeks before the election, we urge every American – including members of the media – to be cautious about believing or spreading unverified, sensational claims related to votes and voting. State and local election officials are in regular contact with federal law enforcement and cyber security professionals, and they are all working around the clock to ensure that Election 2020 is safe, secure, and free from outside interference."

**Democrats, Clapper Question Ratcliffe's Announcement.** [MSNBC](#) (10/22, 7.86M) reports that House Intel Chair Adam Schiff "says voters should be cautious about information announced" by Ratcliffe "on election interference because of his history of providing 'campaign fodder for the president.'" Schiff told "Lawrence O'Donnell the information about Russian and Iranian interference must be further investigated to determine whether it's 'Ratcliffe spin or the assessment of the analysts.'"

[MSNBC](#) (10/21, 7.86M) reports that Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer "points out to Rachel Maddow that even though DNI John Ratcliffe said at his press conference that Iran was trying to damage Donald Trump, that was not conveyed in the classified briefing he received, which emphasized a goal of general chaos."

[CNN](#) (10/22, 83.16M) reports that in an appearance, former DNI James Clapper questioned the time of Ratcliffe's news conference.

## PROTESTS

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### **NYTimes Analysis: Meaning Of "Militia" Has Broadened.**

The [New York Times](#) (10/21, MacFarquhar, 18.61M) looks at the evolution of the term "militia," writing that "the term has taken on new meaning as makeshift vigilante groups have popped up with increasing frequency in the months leading up to a contentious election. Once limited to the far-right fringe, the term 'militia' now encompasses a far wider spectrum, representing everything from armed-to-the-teeth neighborhood watch organizations to an all-Black paramilitary group that marches to protest police violence."

## OPERATION LEGEND

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### **Barr Touts Operation LeGend In Memphis.**

The [Memphis \(TN\) Commercial Appeal](#) (10/21, 338K) reports that Attorney General Barr "spoke in Memphis on Wednesday, praising police officers, attacking the news media for what he called a 'false narrative' of bad cops, and saying a federal surge in Memphis has resulted in arrests of numerous homicide suspects." The MCA adds that as Barr "left the Hickory Hill police station where he spoke, escorted by the Memphis Police Department, several demonstrators swore at him and the police, who worked to clear the station's driveway. In the moments after Barr left, one activist, Hunter Demster, was detained by police." Police spokesman Louis Brownlee "confirmed two people were arrested." According to the MCA, "Barr's visit came while the nation

is under the ongoing shadow of the COVID-19 pandemic, severe gun violence in Memphis and a national election in which President Trump is pressuring Barr to intervene against his opponent.”

The [Daily Memphian \(TN\)](#) (10/21, Jones) reports that Barr said on Wednesday “that 5,500 arrests have been made nationwide, including 66 in Memphis, as part of Operation LeGenD, an initiative designed to help curb violent crime in select cities.” Barr “came to Memphis to provide an update on the operation, thanking Memphis police for doing their jobs in spite of, what Barr said, was the media painting them as bad guys. Barr told more than two dozen officers at MPD’s Ridgeway police precinct that media coverage ‘often distorts the work of the police and somehow has taken some very unfortunate incidents and used them to paint a false narrative or create a false narrative of our police and make them appear to be sometimes the bad guys.’ ‘I salute all of you for standing tall during these times and continuing to perform your mission,’ Barr said.” Barr “also said he thinks there has been an increase in violent crime because of Covid-19 and because of ‘the demonization of police officers, with the community less willing to help.’”

[WATN-TV](#) Memphis, TN (10/21) reports that “a dozen of demonstrators waved signs and attempted to block a Memphis Police motorcade carrying U.S. Attorney General Bill Barr, from MPD’s Ridgeway Station. Our cameras saw two of those demonstrators detained by officers, just moments after the attorney general thanked MPD officers for their commitment in the community. ‘I think it’s the toughest job in the United States but today in this climate it’s probably 10 times as harder as it’s ever been,’ Barr said. ‘Businesses will not be able to take root in communities if the streets are shooting galleries, so the foundation for social progress is peace,’ Barr said.”

### **Barr To Discuss Operation LeGenD In Indianapolis Today.**

[WTHR-TV](#) Indianapolis (10/21, 465K) reports that Attorney General Barr “will be in Indianapolis Thursday to discuss Operation Legend at a law enforcement roundtable.” WTHR-TV adds, “At the start of October, it was announced Operation Legend’s 45-day run in Indianapolis would be extended indefinitely in an effort to crackdown on gun violence.” Barr “launched Operation Legend July 8 in Kansas City, Missouri. Since the launch of Operation Legend in Indianapolis, U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of Indiana Josh Minkler said there has been a 22 percent reduction in homicides. The effort comes as Indianapolis is on pace to set a record for yearly homicides. As the operation marked 54 days in Indianapolis, Minkler said 201 guns had been seized and 97 fugitives taken off the streets. Those fugitives were wanted for crimes including homicide, sexual assault, aggravated assault and robbery.”

### **US Attorney Concerned About Milwaukee Violence.**

[WTMJ-TV](#) Milwaukee (10/21, Vitrano, 142K) reports, “Milwaukee is on pace to break a horrifying record, and it could happen in just a matter of weeks. 2020 could be the worst year ever for homicides. The Federal Government is increasingly worried about violent crime problem in Milwaukee, and offering collaborative resources through Operation Legend.” According to WTMJ-TV, “1991 is the worst year on record for murders in Milwaukee, with 165 people killed. As of the beginning of this week, Milwaukee Police say there have been 155 homicides, well on pace to break the record.” US Attorney Matthew Krueger “points to a series of factors colliding in tragic fashion to cause the unprecedented number of murders. ‘Certainly we think the pandemic, economic insecurity, reduced respect for law enforcement and the prevalence of firearms are all contributing factors,’ Krueger said. ‘I also point to drug trafficking.’”

### **101 Arrested In Cleveland Area Under Operation LeGenD.**

[WXYZ-TV](#) Detroit (10/22, 236K) reports, “More than a hundred people in the Cleveland area are facing federal charges relating to crimes targeted under Operation Legend, according to an update from the U.S. Attorney’s Office.” WXYZ-TV adds, “A total of 101 people have been charged. Of those, 59 people have been brought up on narcotics charges, authorities said.

Thirty-eight people have been charged with firearm offenses, and four individuals have been charged with violent crimes. 'Thanks to the hard work of all those involved in our collaborative law enforcement partnership, we have now charged over 100 defendants in Cleveland under Operation Legend,' said U.S. Attorney Justin Herdman. 'Among those charged are career criminals, heroin and fentanyl traffickers, felons with rifles and other high-powered weapons, carjackers, bank robbers and many more. We will continue to pursue these violent criminals and drug traffickers until everyone in Cleveland can live safely and peacefully.'"

### **Under Operation LeGend, 126 People Charged In Albuquerque.**

[KRQE-TV](#) Albuquerque, NM (10/21, 35K) reports from Albuquerque, New Mexico, "The U.S. Department of Justice has given another update about the nationwide crime-fighting initiative called Operation Legend. In Albuquerque, 126 people have been charged with federal crimes, 64 of them related to guns. Another 52 have been charged with drug crimes; 10 others are charged with violent crimes. Nationwide, 5,500 have been arrested and more than 1,100 of those have been charged with federal crimes."

## **COUNTER-TERRORISM**

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### **Former CIA Analyst Kristen Wood Interviewed About Al Qaeda, 9/11.**

[CBS News](#) (10/21, 3.68M), in an episode of "Intelligence Matters: Declassified," interviews "Kristin Wood, a veteran of the CIA who managed the team of analysts charged with preparing the CIA director for briefings" to Congress and NSC meetings at the CIA. Wood discusses "the time she spent as briefer to Scooter Libby, Vice President Cheney's chief of staff, and being the backup briefer for Cheney." Wood is quoted saying the "Murky Paper" report was "written in the context of some of the administration using questionable intelligence reports to justify their views that Iraq was somehow complicit in the 9/11 attacks."

### **German Authorities Treating Killing Of Tourist As Possible Islamist Terror Attack.**

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (10/21, Pancevski, Subscription Publication, 7.57M) reports that German prosecutors have detained an IS supporter for the killing of a tourist, who they are now considering as a terror suspect. The Syrian asylum seeker was arrested on Tuesday after an incident on October 4 in which two tourists were stabbed in Dresden. The 20-year-old suspect arrived in 2015 as an asylum seeker, and had recently completed a three-year juvenile sentence for assaulting a police officer. [Reuters](#) (10/21) also reports.

### **Beheaded Teacher Honored Amid Crackdown On Islamists In France.**

The [Washington Post](#) (10/21, McAuley, 14.2M) reports that on Wednesday in Paris, Samuel Paty, "the middle school history teacher who was beheaded for having shown his students caricatures of the prophet Muhammad during a lesson on free expression, was posthumously granted France's highest award, the Légion d'Honneur, and commemorated in a national ceremony at the Sorbonne University." The Post adds, "His gruesome killing in the Paris suburb of Conflans-Sainte-Honorine has revived the nation's horror at the 2015 attack on the offices of Charlie Hebdo. And just as France stood by the satirical newspaper then, it is rallying around its teachers." According to the Post, "The killing has provided further impetus for a French government effort to rein in radicalization and – controversially – to 'reform' how Islam is practiced in France."

The [AP](#) (10/21) reports that "authorities have identified the killer as Abdoullakh Anzorov, an 18-year-old Moscow-born Chechen refugee who was later shot dead by police." The AP says Anzorov "paid students to help him identify the victim, France's terrorism prosecutor said Wednesday." According to the AP, "Prosecutor Jean-Francois Ricard said a 14-year-old and a 15-year-old are among seven people who appeared before an investigating magistrate on

accusations of 'complicity in murder in relation with a terrorist undertaking' and 'criminal conspiracy.'" The AP adds, "The other suspects also include a student's father who posted videos on social media that called for mobilization against the teacher and an Islamist activist who helped the man disseminate the virulent messages, which named Paty and gave the school's address."

The [New York Times](#) (10/21, Nossiter, 18.61M) reports that as "national homage" to "the slain teacher, Samuel Paty" continued, special antiterrorism prosecutor Jean-François Ricard "unveiled the new findings in the inquiry on Wednesday as part of a probe into what he termed a 'terrorist murder conspiracy.'" The Times says, "That designation suggests officials are attempting to cast a broad net and don't view the suspect...as merely a lone-wolf killer, an approach that dovetails with the government's view that the killing reflects a menacing surge of militant Islamism." This view "has justified dozens of raids all over France, the closure of a prominent mosque, the shutting down of Muslim aid organizations and the mass expulsion of foreigners identified in government antiterrorism files."

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (10/21, Bisserbe, Subscription Publication, 7.57M) reports that French President Emmanuel Macron positioned Paty and his killing as representative of the country's fight against Islamist extremism in a national tribute to the schoolteacher. The government said it will visit and potentially dissolve over 50 of these purported extremist groups as part of a broader crackdown on Muslim associations.

## COUNTER-INTELLIGENCE

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### **Fox News: Laptop Linked To Hunter Biden Connected To FBI Money Laundering Probe.**

[Fox News](#) (10/21, Singman, 27.59M) reports, "The FBI's subpoena of a laptop and hard drive purportedly belonging to Hunter Biden came in connection with a money laundering investigation in late 2019, according to documents obtained by Fox News and verified by multiple federal law enforcement officials who reviewed them. It is unclear, at this point, whether the investigation is ongoing or if it was directly related to Hunter Biden." Fox News adds, "Multiple federal law enforcement officials, as well as two separate government officials, confirmed the authenticity of these documents, which were signed by FBI Special Agent Joshua Wilson," and "one of the documents, obtained by Fox News, was designated as an FBI 'Receipt for Property' form, which details the bureau's interactions with John Paul Mac Isaac, the owner of 'The Mac Shop' who reported the laptop's contents to authorities."

The [New York Post](#) (10/21, O'Neill, 4.57M) reports, "One document was designated as an FBI 'Receipt for Property' form, which details the bureau's interactions with the owner of 'The Mac Shop' who reported the laptop's contents to authorities. The document has a 'Case ID' section, which is filled in with a hand-written number: 272D-BA-3065729. According to multiple officials, and the FBI's website, '272' is the bureau's classification for money laundering, while '272D' refers to 'Money Laundering, Unknown SUA [Specified Unlawful Activity]—White Collar Crime Program.' One government source said '272D' mean 'transnational or blanket,' while 'BA' means the case was opened in the FBI's Baltimore office, which covers Wilmington, Del., where the subpoena was executed. 'The FBI cannot open a case without predication, so they believed there was predication for criminal activity,' a government official told Fox News. 'This means there was sufficient evidence to believe that there was criminal conduct.'"

***Giuliani Turns Over Hunter Biden Laptop To Delaware Authorities.*** The [Delaware News Journal](#) (10/21, Baker, 360K) reports, "Rudy Giuliani's efforts to tarnish Joe Biden's presidential campaign continued in Delaware when he visited a police station Monday to share files from what he said was Hunter Biden's laptop." A spokesman for Delaware Attorney General Kathy Jennings (D) said, "They've got a hard drive, or a laptop, or something to that effect. They try to turn it over to New Castle County PD. New Castle County PD calls us."

[TIME](#) (10/21, 18.47M) reports on its website that "explicit photos and emails purportedly belonging to Hunter Biden were circulating in Ukraine last year at the same time that Rudy

Giuliani was searching for dirt there on former Vice President Joe Biden," according to "two people approached about the material during that period. ... The emails' alleged availability, which has not been previously reported, comes to light in the wake of Giuliani's recent claims that he obtained private photos and emails of Hunter Biden from a broken laptop abandoned in Delaware."

White House Senior Communications Advisor Ben Williamson said on [Fox Across America](#) (10/21), "You had Democrats over the weekend...making the sort of preliminary allegation that this was Russian disinformation as they so often like to do with anything that is inconvenient to the Democrat Party, but we're slowly starting to see more and more evidence, as we usually do, come out that that's not the case, that this is a real, legit concern." Asked about criticism of Rudy Giuliani on [One America News Network](#)Vi (10/21, 28K), Morgenstern said, "He has uncovered information that is incredibly damaging and threatening. It shows that a major party's candidate may have been compromised by a foreign power."

**Joe Biden Says Son Did Not Profit Off Family Name.** [Fox News](#) (10/21, Fordham, 27.59M) reports on its website that Joe Biden, in a Wisconsin interview, denied that his son profited because of his family name. Joe Biden said, "This is the same garbage [from] Rudy Giuliani, Trump's henchman. It's the last-ditch effort in this desperate campaign to smear me and my family." The [Daily Caller](#) (10/21, 716K) reports Biden was responding to claims from Sen. Ron Johnson (R-WI) "that Hunter Biden has 'profited off the Biden name' through his foreign business dealings."

Chief of Staff Meadows said on [Fox News' Bill Hemmer Reports](#) (10/21), "This is not about Hunter Biden. This is about the Biden family, this is about pay-for-play. This is actually about what kind of access did Hunter Biden sell to his father, the Vice President? That's what this is all about."

**Trump: Facebook, Twitter Are Trying To Protect Biden.** President Trump was asked in a town hall hosted by [Sinclair Broadcasting Group](#)Vi (10/21, 11K) if Facebook and Twitter are biased. Trump said, "Oh, 100%. And frankly, that's turning out to be as big a story as the corruption itself. They are trying to protect [Joe Biden] because that's the way it is with the Democrats. It's a part of the Democrat Party, I guess. But they're trying to protect Biden from this corruption where they get caught."

### **Russian Analyst Behind Dossier Claims Steele Paid Him For "Raw Intelligence."**

The [New York Times](#) (10/21, Savage, Goldman, Kessel, 18.61M) reports that "when the publication of a dossier of unproven rumors about Donald J. Trump and Russia rocked American politics in early 2017, one salacious claim jumped out: Russia intelligence services supposedly had a video showing Mr. Trump cavorting with prostitutes in Moscow's Ritz-Carlton hotel." The Times says "no evidence emerged supporting the existence of any tape." The claim came from Igor Danchenko, "a Russia analyst who gathered leads about possible Trump-Russia links for what turned out to be Democratic-funded opposition research." The Times reports that Danchenko "describe[s] hearing rumors from two sources about a possible sex tape involving Mr. Trump and the Ritz-Carlton, then obtaining more nebulous information from two hotel employees he took as corroborative." The Times adds that Danchenko claims he was "assigned simply to gather 'raw intelligence' for his employer, Christopher Steele."

### **Judge Rules Against Releasing Russia Probe Docs Despite Trump Tweet To The Contrary.**

[Politico](#) (10/21, Gerstein, 4.29M) reports that on Wednesday, US District Court Judge Reggie Walton ruled that two tweets from President Trump that "appeared to call for the declassification of all documents related to the probe of Russian influence on the 2016 presidential election won't trigger any further release of information to the public." According to Politico, Walton "lamented the president's sweeping language, but said a clarification White House chief of staff Mark Meadows submitted to the court Tuesday amounted to a retraction of

the tweets. ... 'Obviously, when there's ever a reference to declassification of classified information those words spoken should be artfully spoken, so there's no ambiguity as to what the intent was and, obviously, that's not what occurred here,' Walton said during a brief telephone hearing on Freedom of Information Act lawsuits." Politico says BuzzFeed and CNN have "argued that Trump's Oct. 6 tweets constituted an unambiguous order to declassify the requested materials."

The [Washington Post](#) (10/21, Hsu, 14.2M) reports, "In a teleconference hearing Wednesday," DOJ trial lawyer Courtney D. Enlow "said the May 23, 2019, authorization was not an order but a delegation of discretionary authority" to AG Barr "as he conducted the review into Trump's claims that he was improperly spied on by Obama administration appointees." Enlow said, "It simply refers again to the fact that the attorney general, quote 'may' declassify information – not that is directed to, not that he has to, not that he's ordered to."

### **Documents: Clinton Operatives Engaged Officials With "Anti-Trump" Information After 2016 Election.**

The [Washington Times](#) (10/21, Scarborough, 492K) reports, "Hillary Clinton operatives continued to push false information against Donald Trump" to Deputy Attorney General Bruce Ohr, according to "Repeated Clinton-funded communications in 2016 and 2017." The "Hillary Clinton operatives" engaged Ohr on with theories such as a "supposed secret trip to Prague, a Trump campaign-Kremlin liaison team and a mysterious Moscow bank server." The FBI conducted 12 interviews "with Mr. Ohr, whose wife, Nellie, worked at Fusion [GPS]." That company's "co-founder Glenn R. Simpson handled his main researcher, Christopher Steele, the former British intelligence officer who in 2016 produced what Republicans say is a hoax dossier." According to the interview notes, "Steele was interested in working with the FBI and had additional information if the FBI was interested."

### **Danchenko Says Allegations He Is A "Russian Agent" Are "Slander."**

[The Hill](#) (10/21, Castronuovo, 2.98M) reports that Igor Danchenko "said on Wednesday that he wants to clear his name, adding that the claim by Trump's allies that he is a 'Russian agent' is 'slander.'" Danchenko is a "Russia analyst who gathered intelligence on possible links between President Trump and Russia that was used in a controversial dossier." In the New York Times interview, "Danchenko said that after his identity was revealed in July, he began receiving threats and harassment, especially following Attorney General William Barr's declassification of the fact that Danchenko was the subject of an FBI counterintelligence investigation a decade ago." Also reporting is the [Daily Caller](#) (10/21, 716K).

### **Pentagon Announces \$23B Budget For Military Intelligence In FY20.**

[The Hill](#) (10/21, Kheel, 2.98M) reports, "The Pentagon's classified military intelligence budget received \$23.1 billion for the recently ended fiscal year," DOD announced Wednesday. A statement read, "The department has determined that releasing this top line figure does not jeopardize any classified activities within the MIP." DOD added no other "MIP budget figures or program details will be released, as they remain classified for national security reasons." The Hill writes the "\$23.1 billion for fiscal 2020 includes both base budget funding and a war fund known as the Overseas Contingency Operations account." The sum is the "highest amount for the military intelligence budget since fiscal 2010." Also reporting is [Defense News](#) (10/21, Mehta, 21K).

### **US Agencies Coordinating Efforts To Thwart Russian Election Meddling.**

The [Washington Post](#) (10/21, Nakashima, Timberg, 14.2M) says "the U.S. government is mounting a major effort to prevent a repeat of 2016 – when federal agencies were slow to address Russia's attempts to manipulate the presidential election – and is taking a range of actions despite the disinterest of President Trump, who questions intelligence that the Kremlin

is intent on undermining American democracy.” According to the Post, “Top security agencies are coordinating actions to thwart foreign hackers, prevent Russia-linked individuals from entering the United States and freeze any of their assets subject to U.S. jurisdiction. They are also passing intelligence to social media firms, and helping state and local election officials shore up their defenses.” FBI, CISA, and ODNI have “briefed candidates, parties and the congressional intelligence committees on foreign threats to the election and their systems,” and the “last briefings for the campaigns are expected this week.” Meanwhile, “CyberCom and the NSA are undertaking broader and more sophisticated actions, including against the Russian military spy agency, the GRU, and a botnet run by Russian-speaking criminals, U.S. officials said.”

### **New Facebook Report Shows How Spammers, Scammers Are Profiting Off US Election.**

[Reuters](#) (10/21) writes that in a report about “inauthentic behaviour” on its platform, Facebook said the Nov. 3 election had become a common lure to trick users into visiting online stores or websites laden with pay-per-view adverts.” Fraudsters are “posting about U.S. politics and the upcoming presidential election to build fake audiences, maximise clicks and make money online.” On Wednesday, Nathaniel Gleicher, head of head of cybersecurity policy for Facebook, said, “If you are a financially motivated actor who’s trying to make money based on clicks, you are going to use whatever content is going to get you eyeballs.” Gleicher added Facebook wants “people to be aware of the full range of deception that is happening out there.”

### **Senate Intelligence Committee Warns Of Threats To Election Systems.**

[The Hill](#) (10/21, Budryk, 2.98M) reports, “Senate Intelligence Committee Chairman Marco Rubio (R-Fla.) and Vice Chairman Mark Warner (D-Va.) warned in a joint statement Wednesday that foreign actors may seek to attack U.S. election infrastructure or create the impression they have.” The Senators wrote, “Our adversaries abroad seek to sow chaos and undermine voters’ belief in our democratic institutions, including the election systems and infrastructure that we rely on to record and properly report expressions of the voters’ will.” Rubio and Warner added, “They may seek to target those systems, or simply leave the impression that they have altered or manipulated those systems, in order to undermine their credibility and our confidence in them.”

### **Trump Signs Bill Making It A Federal Crime To Hack Voting Systems.**

[The Hill](#) (10/21, 2.98M) reports that on Tuesday, President Trump signed the Defending the Integrity of Voting Systems Act, which makes it a “federal crime to attempt to hack federal voting systems.” The legislation was approved by the Senate last year and the House last month. The Act empowers DOJ “to pursue charges against anyone who attempts to hack a voting system under the Computer Fraud and Abuse Act, commonly used by the agency to pursue charges against malicious hackers.” The original bill was the “result of a 2018 report compiled by the DOJ’s Cyber Digital Task Force, which evaluated ways the federal government could improve its response to cyber threats.” DHS Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency Director Christopher Krebs said on Tuesday, “We remain confident that no foreign cyber actor can change your vote, and we still believe that it would be incredibly difficult for them to change the outcome of an election at the national level.”

### **Google Report Says Foreign Hackers Are Now Using Malware.**

[Fox News](#) (10/21, Crothers, 27.59M) reports, “Foreign hackers who have been trying to hack the Biden and Trump campaigns are now using fake McAfee and YouTube videos and Dropbox-based malware, Google said in a report.” The tech company also “outlined other Advanced Persistent Threats (APTs), a term usually reserved for nation-state actors.” The report said, “As part of our wider tracking of APT31 activity, we’ve also seen them deploy targeted malware campaigns.” Digital Shadows cyber threat intelligence analyst Austin Merritt told Fox News, “By

hosting malware on legitimate websites, threat actors can bypass automated defenses by abusing the many genuine websites that often won't be blocked for business reasons, thus offering a window of opportunity to evade early detection."

### **FBI, Maryland US Attorney's Office Launch Voter Misinformation Initiative.**

[WJZ-TV](#) Baltimore (10/21, 74K) reports, "The Maryland US Attorney's office is teaming up with the FBI to fight against election misinformation." They have "launched a national voter misinformation initiative to find potential voter suppression schemes." Voters are urged to "check [their] sources and report misinformation on social media or to the FBI."

### **Experts Fear China's Disinformation Ops Pose A Threat Past Election Day.**

[NBC News](#) (10/21, 6.14M) reports that security experts "fear that the Chinese government's disinformation operations pose a far more insidious menace to democracy that will continue well past Election Day." Meanwhile, "U.S. intelligence experts generally agree that Russia is better than any other country at spreading disinformation to undermine voter confidence leading up to the election." Scholars "say the Chinese are growing bolder and more brazen, often taking pages from what used to be seen as Russia's playbook in discrediting the United States." DNI Director Ratcliffe has "said dozens of lawmakers had been more broadly targeted by Chinese influence campaigns, a fact first reported by The Hill newspaper." An unnamed congressional official said, "The Chinese can't afford to see us in chaos, because we are their biggest market. They are trying to accelerate the relative decline of the United States and their ascension to primacy."

### **Poll: Four-Fifths Of Americans Call Misinformation About Campaigns "Major Problem."**

The [AP](#) (10/21) reports, "A new survey by The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Opinion Research and USAFacts finds that" voters have a hard time "knowing whether there's any factual basis for the information they're getting from and about the candidates." The poll found "More than 8 in 10 rated the spread of misinformation about government a 'major problem.'" Some 35% of those polled "turn to the web to see if news about the contest is true," while "13% said they turn to cable news networks, 8% said national news networks and only 3% went with newspapers or online news sites, reflecting a broader loss of trust in news organizations." A former CIA officer and the current vice president of analysis at Alethea Group, Cindy Otis, said, "We are living today in the biggest period of false information in history." She added, "Americans are losing trust in what they read and see online." Meanwhile, the poll shows, at least 6 in 10 "say it's easy to find factual information about registering to vote and casting their ballot."

### **Navalny Ally Says Kremlin Is Intimidating Him To Discourage Return To Russia.**

[Reuters](#) (10/21, Zverev, Nikolskaya) reports, "The Kremlin is trying to intimidate opposition politician Alexei Navalny to discourage him from returning to Russia to campaign once he recovers from his poisoning," according to Leonid Volkov, a member of his team. Since his poisoning, Russia has "accused Navalny of working with" the CIA, "prompting the pro-government Federal News Agency to report that Navalny could be guilty of treason." Volkov said, "We see all kinds of intimidation by them: 'let's arrest his apartment ... let's open cases into state treason,'" adding it is "clear these are all just fakes designed to intimidate."

### **House Independent Throws Support Behind Resolution Clearing Snowden, Assange.**

The [Washington Times](#) (10/21, Blake, 492K) reports that Rep. Justin Amash (I-MI) on Wednesday supported "congressional resolutions calling for the U.S. government to abandon its cases against wanted leakers Edward J. Snowden and Julian Assange." Amash announced "he signed on to become a co-sponsor of separate, similar resolutions urging the government to drop the charges facing the two secret-spillers." The resolutions were introduced by Rep. Tulsi

Gabbard (D-HI) "and had already gained slight bipartisan support before Mr. Amash...joined in." Snowden is "wanted in the U.S. to face charges related to admittedly leaking classified material to members of the media in 2013." Assange "was charged last year under the Espionage Act with crimes stemming from his longtime role as founder and publisher of the WikiLeaks anti-secrecy website."

## CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIONS

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### **Maryland Man Faces Federal Charges For Threatening Biden And Harris.**

The [CBS Evening News](#)<sup>Vi</sup> (10/21, story 3, 1:45, O'Donnell, 4.55M) reported, "A Maryland man is facing three federal charges after threatening to kill Joe Biden and Kamala Harris." CBS' Jeff Pegues added, "Federal prosecutors say this is James Reed, captured on a door camera, leaving his threatening handwritten note at the Maryland home of a Biden supporter. The note says, 'We're the ones with those scary guns. When we capture grandpa Biden, we will all severely beat him to the point of death and would execute both Biden and Kamala Harris on national television.'"

The [Baltimore Sun](#) (10/21, Prudente, 1.33M) reports Reed "was arrested last week by Frederick Police and remains held without bail. After agents asked for his fingerprints and a handwriting sample, he confessed to writing the letter because he was upset at the political situation, they wrote in charging documents." The [New York Times](#) (10/21, Dewan, 18.61M) reports Reed "provided a palm print and handwriting sample and acknowledged having written the letter, according to the complaint. He is charged with the federal offense of threatening a major candidate, which carries a penalty of up to five years in prison, and two violations of state law: threatening mass violence and voter intimidation." [USA Today](#) (10/21, Peter, 10.31M), the [Wall Street Journal](#) (10/21, Viswanatha, Subscription Publication, 7.57M), the [New York Daily News](#) (10/21, Goldiner, 2.52M), the [New York Post](#) (10/21, Moore, 4.57M), the [Washington Times](#) (10/21, Mordock, 492K), and the [Atlanta Journal-Constitution](#) (10/21, 895K) also have brief reports on the arrest.

### **Two South Carolina Men Charged With PPE Theft.**

The [Charlotte \(NC\) Observer](#) (10/21, Monk, 470K) reports from Charleston, South Carolina, "Two Charleston area men have been indicted by a federal grand jury on charges of stealing a large stash of coronavirus Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) from a major law enforcement training facility." According to the Observer, "The PPE included high quality respirator masks, other kinds of masks and goggles that help protect people from catching the highly contagious, sometimes fatal COVID-19 virus that has killed more than 220,000 Americans. The men, Frank Smail, Jr., 49, of Round O, and Mike Pellegrini, 58, of North Charleston, were charged in a multi-count federal indictment alleging conspiracy to steal the protective gear from the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center in Charleston." Smail "was also charged with PPE theft, obstruction of justice, and lying to federal agents."

### **Prosecutors Denounce False Claim That Missing New Jersey Girl Was Found Dead.**

The [Cumberland County \(NJ\) News](#) (10/21, Gray, 1.75M) reports, "Authorities say a post circulating on social media suggesting a child who vanished from a Bridgeton park more than a year ago has been found dead is false." Dulce Maria Alavez "was 5 years old when she disappeared from Bridgeton City Park on Sept. 16, 2019, and her whereabouts remain unknown. The fraudulent post is made to look like an official announcement from law enforcement." Cumberland County Prosecutor Jennifer Webb-McRae "issued an announcement on Facebook Tuesday night saying the post – which includes her office's logo, a photo of Dulce and a message indicating a press conference will be held 'when we know all the details' – is

phony. She included a screenshot of the post in her announcement with the words 'false information' written over the image."

### **DOJ: 127 Suspected MS-13 Members Were Charged This Year.**

The [AP](#) (10/21, Balsamo) reports, "Federal prosecutors have charged 127 suspected members of the violent MS-13 street gang this year, and six face sentences of life in prison after being convicted in 2020, the Justice Department said Wednesday." The AP adds, "The statistics – detailed in a report being released by the Justice Department Wednesday night – emphasize the priority the Trump administration has given to prosecuting members of MS-13 and the aggressive effort by the FBI and other law enforcement agencies to try to dismantle the gang. MS-13, also known as Mara Salvatrucha, is considered one of the top transnational organized crime threats in the United States." According to the AP, "The Justice Department's statistics show that federal prosecutors brought cases against 749 defendants in MS-13 related cases since 2016. Six defendants convicted this year were sentenced to life in prison and 26 others received sentences of over five years in federal prison."

### **Ten Suspected Gang Members Charged In Texas.**

[KWKT-TV](#) Waco, TX (10/21, Omari) reports from Temple, Texas, "Temple Police and the FBI announced new charges Wednesday against ten people in connection with Project Safe Neighborhoods." According to KWKT-TV, "Chief Shawn Reynolds, FBI Assistant Special Agent in Charge Jason Hudson, and several other law enforcement agents held a press conference Wednesday afternoon in Temple. In federal grand jury indictments unsealed" on Wednesday, "these members of Killas With Aggression Gang, or KWA, are accused of racketeering, federal drug trafficking, and other crimes." Officers and agents "arrested 3 people Wednesday and already had six others in custody. 'Today's indictment and the related complaint reveal a reign of terror perpetrated by a violent enterprise resulting in death and suffering on a frightening scale,' said U.S. Attorney Gregg Sofer."

The [Temple \(TX\) Daily Telegram](#) (10/21, Sanchez, 48K) reports, "The indictment alleges that five suspects conspired to commit five murders — including three in Temple and one each in Belton and Hearne; violent assault; drug trafficking; extortion; and armed robberies. It also charges that six men brandished a firearm during a robbery and another two men fired a gun during a violent crime. Additionally, the indictment states three suspects conspired to distribute more than 100 kilograms of marijuana. 'The city of Temple and Central Texas area is a safer place with these violent offenders off the streets,' Temple Police Chief Shawn Reynolds said."

### **Georgia Man Sentenced For Bank Robbery.**

[WJBF-TV](#) Augusta, GA (10/21, Ceneviva, 23K) reports from Augusta, Georgia, "28-year-old Ronnie Dean Brown 'Man' of Augusta has been sentenced to 252 months in federal prison after pleading guilty to robbing two banks in Augusta." Brown "is charged with one count of Possession of a Firearm in Furtherance of a Crime of Violence and Possession of a Firearm by a Convicted Felon. He will serve five years of supervised release." Brown "was armed with an AR-15-styke rifle December 30, 2017 when he threatened a bank teller at Fifth Third Bank on the 2700 block of Peach Orchard Rd. Chris Hacker, Special Agent in Charge of FBI Atlanta said, 'Carrying weapons into peaceful places of business and terrorizing hard-working citizens is something the FBI and our law enforcement partners will make every effort to prosecute and punish. More than 20 years in prison should be a teaching moment for Brown, and some sense of comfort for the victims he terrorized.'"

### **Michigan Man Charged With Sex Trafficking.**

The [Detroit News](#) (10/21, 825K) reports Dallas Ephraim Jordan-King has "been bound over to Oakland County Circuit Court on charges related to alleged prostituting and sex trafficking of college-age women." He "was arraigned in August following a joint investigation involving the

Auburn Hills Police Department and the FBI's Oakland County Gang and Violent Crime Task Force."

The [Detroit Free Press](#) (10/21, Pepple, 1.52M) reports that Jordan-King, 23, "was bound over to Oakland County Circuit Court after a preliminary hearing Tuesday in 52-3 District Court in Auburn Hills, according to the state Attorney General's Office, which is prosecuting the case. Jordan-King's arrest, which includes a gun charge, came after a joint investigation by 10 police agencies, with key partners being detectives from Auburn Hills — the location of Oakland University, as well as an Oakland Community College campus." The Free Press adds, "The alleged sex-trafficking was so widespread that uncovering it involved the FBI, State Police, Oakland County Sheriff's Office and officers from numerous local police departments, including Bloomfield Township, Ferndale, Madison Heights, Novi, Southfield and Troy."

### **Law Enforcement Operation Nets Heroin, Firearms In Massachusetts.**

[WRGB-TV](#) Albany, NY (10/21, 69K) reports from Pittsfield, Massachusetts, "A multi-agency law enforcement team has seized thousands of bags of heroin, several firearms, and thousands of dollars in cash." According to WRGB-TV, "At about 8 p.m. Tuesday, the Berkshire County Law Enforcement Task Force, State Police Detective Unit assigned to the Berkshire District Attorney's Office, Berkshire County Sheriff's Office and the Pittsfield Police Department executed multiple search warrants in Pittsfield, after observing several suspects arriving at a hotel on West Housatonic Street. Task force members also executed search warrants, in coordination with the Hampden County State Police Detective Unit, with two residences in Springfield. In total, police seized approximately 13,500 bags of heroin, three firearms and approximately \$8,000 in cash." Police "arrested 24-year-old Raekwan Jackson, of Springfield, 25-year-old Ka'refi Hillery, of Woonsocket, R.I., 27-year-old Shawn Sanders of Dorchester, and 23-year-old Bertram Oram of Springfield during the Tuesday night operation."

### **Maryland Corrections Officers Charged With Smuggling Contraband Into Jail.**

The [Baltimore Sun](#) (10/21, Fenton, 1.33M) reports Chesapeake Detention Facility Corrections Officers Andre Davis, Darren Parker, and Talaia Youngblood "have been indicted by a federal grand jury after an investigation revealed ongoing smuggling of drugs, cellphones and other contraband." The investigation "was initiated by the corrections systems' internal investigations unit, and carried out in collaboration with federal authorities."

[WJZ-TV](#) Baltimore (10/21, 74K) reports from Baltimore, "Nine people, including three correctional officers, have been indicted in an alleged racketeering conspiracy at the Chesapeake Detention Facility in downtown Baltimore." According to WJZ-TV, "The accused include three correctional officers, four inmates and two 'outside facilitators,' according to an announcement from the office of the U.S. Attorney for the District of Maryland. 'The indictment alleges a troubling amount of corruption,' U.S. Attorney Robert Hur said during a news conference Wednesday afternoon." The group "allegedly smuggled contraband, including drugs, tobacco and cell phones, into the jail beginning at least as far back as 2016. The group was indicted last week and the indictment was unsealed Wednesday, according to the announcement. 'Their criminal activities did not change much while they were inside the building,' said Jennifer Boone with the FBI's Baltimore field office."

### **US Charges 11 In Washington Marijuana Trafficking Operation.**

The [Mercer Island \(WA\) Reporter](#) (10/21, Hunter, 13K) reports, "Eleven defendants were indicted in three separate indictments for their parts in manufacturing, distributing and profiting from the production and distribution of illegal marijuana across the country and in the Puget Sound region, including six South County cities." The Reporter adds, "Some of the defendants were arrested Wednesday, Oct. 21 in coordinated searches of 27 locations in the Puget Sound region and additional searches in New York. Many of the locations in Washington were illegal grow houses, and others were businesses that allegedly served as front companies. Those

arrested before noon Wednesday will make their appearance this afternoon in U.S. District Court in Seattle, according to a U.S. Department of Justice news release. Search teams, led by investigators and agents from the U.S. Postal Inspection Service and the IRS Criminal Investigation, executed search warrants at locations in Skyway, Renton, Kent, Lake Tapps, Maple Valley, Federal Way, Covington, SeaTac and Snohomish."

### **Florida Woman Who Managed Tennessee Pill Mill Operation Sentenced To 33 Years.**

The [Knoxville \(TN\) News Sentinel](#) (10/21, Satterfield, 307K) reports, "A federal judge on Wednesday sentenced a 56-year-old Miami grandmother who managed East Tennessee's largest pill mill operation to more than 33 years in prison for racketeering and related charges. With her in charge, a Florida group dubbed 'Italians' prospered in East Tennessee, netting \$21 million in profits in four years, putting more than 12 million prescription painkillers into the hands of addicts and leaving a trail of dead patients, court records show." US District Judge Tom Varlan "ordered Sylvia Hofstetter imprisoned for 400 months after a jury earlier this year convicted her in a Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organization, or RICO, conspiracy involving pain clinics in Lenoir City and Knoxville and a slew of related money laundering and drug distribution charges."

### **Connecticut Man Charged With Solicitation Of Minor.**

The [New London \(CT\) Day](#) (10/21, 109K) reports U.S. Attorney for the District of Connecticut John Durham "announced a New Haven federal grand jury's indictment of Norwich man William Meier for allegedly soliciting sex with a minor." He is "charged with one count of the use of the internet to attempt to persuade a minor to engage in sexual activity and one count of attempted transfer of obscene materials to a minor." The FBI investigated the case.

The [Norwich \(CT\) Bulletin](#) (10/21, 42K) reports he "pleaded not guilty to the charges."

### **FBI Raids Florida Pharmacy.**

[WJAX-TV](#) Jacksonville, FL (10/21, Husker, 44K) reports that the FBI Jacksonville Field Office "has confirmed they were serving a search warrant for Cure Pharmacy on Merrill Road Wednesday morning."

[WJXT-TV](#) Jacksonville, FL (10/21, Ready, 298K) reports that agents "spent several hours inside Cure Pharmacy on Merrill Road and could be seen wheeling boxes out of the business, which is in a shopping center with several other businesses."

### **Tennessee Man Arrested For Attempted Murder.**

The [Columbia \(TN\) Daily Herald](#) (10/21, 15K) reports that the Columbia Police Department announced Wednesday the arrest of Quortez Deshawn Duncan, who "was charged with attempted first degree murder, weapons offenses and violation of probation." He "was named the sole suspect in an armed altercation that authorities say involved Duncan and a 27-year-old man at approximately 12:45 p.m. on Dec. 15, 2019."

### **Rhode Island Man Arrested For Child Pornography.**

The [Warwick \(RI\) Post](#) (10/21) reports Owen Batista "was ordered held until a hearing on Friday during an initial appearance in U.S. District Court in Providence on child pornography charges." The FBI "alleges that Batista, 26, posted links on a social media platform where members allegedly distribute videos and images of child pornography," and they "allege that Batista directed members of the platform to online digital storage folders that, a forensic review by FBI agents determined, contained 738 files."

### **Florida Man Accused Of Serial Bank Robbery.**

[WFOR-TV](#) Miami (10/21) reports that the FBI "confirmed Wednesday the arrest of a South Florida attorney as being a suspected South Florida serial bank robber." The agency "says Aaron

Honaker, 41, of Miami, is suspected in at least five robberies or attempted robberies of South Florida banks." He "was arrested Tuesday evening without incident in Coral Gables by the Coral Gables police as he was attempting to enter a bank."

### **Continuing Coverage: New Jersey Man Sentenced For Child Molestation, Child Pornography.**

The [Shore News Network \(NJ\)](#) (10/21) reports former Michigan teacher James Verne Russell "was sentenced to serve 720 months in the Federal Bureau of Prisons for sexual exploitation of two minors." U.S. District Judge Janet T. Neff "stated the offense 'is about as serious as it gets' because of the extended length of time and 'circumstances in which you took advantage of children.'"

### **Massachusetts Man Arrested On Charges Of Bank Robbery.**

The [Brockton \(MA\) Enterprise](#) (10/21, 52K) reports Louis Anthony Mays "has been arrested on armed robbery charges in connection with a bank robbery earlier this month." The FBI Bank Robbery Task Force supported the investigation, which "learned Mays allegedly had a gun and demanded money from the teller."

### **New Jersey State Police Arrest Man For Solicitation Of Minor.**

[Daily Voice](#) (10/21, 98K) reports that New Jersey State Police arrested Derrick V. Ross after he "paid a couple for sex with a 14-year-old girl who was trafficked at an Atlantic City casino hotel." The victim was rescued by police after undercover officers arranged a meet.

### **Washington State Man Sentenced For Domestic Violence.**

The [Spokane \(WA\) Spokesman-Review](#) (10/21, 183K) reports Stephen Seymour "was sentenced Wednesday to five years in federal prison and three more under supervision" after he "pleaded guilty to assault resulting in substantial bodily injury to an intimate partner in Indian Country in July." The FBI investigated the case.

### **Alaska Man Sentenced For Federal Firearms Violations.**

The [Anchorage \(AK\) Daily News](#) (10/21, 287K) reports Michael Graves "was required to learn about the Holocaust and read about overcoming extremist beliefs as part of his sentence in federal court for illegally owning a machine gun and silencers." He "was sentenced Wednesday to 18 months in prison, time that he has already served since his arrest," and he must "read specific books and took classes during his incarceration that were aimed at moving him away from extremist viewpoints."

### **Oklahoma Pair Arrested On Sex Trafficking Charges.**

[KFOR-TV](#) Oklahoma City (10/21, 216K) reports Stacia Guinn and Brandon Carter "have been booked into the Oklahoma County Detention Center in recent weeks after a sex trafficking bust in Oklahoma City." Court records say that the pair "are both accused of sex trafficking two teenagers, one age 15 and the other age 16." The investigation began after the victims' pictures "were found on an ad placed on a well-known prostitution website."

## **FINANCIAL CRIME & CORPORATE SCANDALS**

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### **DOJ Announces \$8.3B Purdue Settlement Over Opioids Distribution.**

On [ABC World News Tonight](#)<sup>vi</sup> (10/21, story 5, 2:10, Muir, 6.08M), Adrienne Bankert reported, "It's being hailed by the federal government as a major victory against a company, whose drug, Oxycontin, is part of the public health crisis of opioid addiction that has led to the deaths of hundreds of thousands of Americans. Purdue Pharma pleading guilty to felony charges of

defrauding federal health agencies and violating federal kickback laws for inducing doctors to prescribe those powerful opioids." The company has agreed "to pay \$8.3 billion in penalties," though "multiple states are still suing." Massachusetts Attorney General Maura Healey (D) said, "No one's going to jail, no one's going to prison, and worse yet, they've set up a situation where Purdue's going to be able to continue on." The deal "has to be approved by a judge, but the Department of Justice says that money will go to redressing past wrongs as well as new programs for treatment and care for those struggling through opioid addiction."

The [CBS Evening News](#) (10/21, story 9, 0:20, O'Donnell, 4.55M) reported, "The company that makes Oxycontin has agreed to plead guilty to criminal charges related to how it marketed the drug. Purdue Pharma will pay \$8 billion to resolve claims. Some of that money will go towards treating opioid addiction. Purdue still faces criminal probes in several states."

Kate Snow of [NBC Nightly News](#) (10/21, story 6, 1:40, Holt, 5.81M) reported the settlement is "the most dramatic effort yet by the federal government to hold a drug maker accountable for the more than 450,000 American deaths from opioid addiction," but "critics say with Purdue in bankruptcy, it is unlikely the company will ever really pay \$8 billion." Healey said, "It was clear the Department of Justice wanted to make a deal and make an announcement before the election, and they ended up making a lousy deal. It doesn't bring justice, it doesn't bring accountability."

The [New York Times](#) (10/21, A1, Hoffman, Benner, 18.61M) reports that on Wednesday, the Justice Department announced that Purdue Pharma "has agreed to plead guilty to criminal charges and face penalties of roughly \$8.3 billion for its role in the opioids epidemic." According to the Times, "The settlement could pave the way for a resolution of thousands of lawsuits brought against the company for its role in a public health crisis that has killed more than 450,000 Americans since 1999." The Times says Purdue's "owners, members of the wealthy Sackler family, have agreed to pay \$225 million in civil penalties," but "prosecutors said the agreement did not preclude the filing of criminal charges against Purdue executives or individual Sacklers."

The [AP](#) (10/21, Balsamo, Mulvihill) reports that Purdue Pharma is "the company behind the powerful prescription painkiller OxyContin that experts say helped touch off an opioid epidemic." As does the Times, the AP reports that that "the deal does not release any of the company's executives or owners...from criminal liability." The AP says "a criminal investigation is ongoing." Nevertheless, according to the AP, "some state attorneys general said the agreement fails to hold the Sacklers accountable."

[Reuters](#) (10/21, Spector) reports, "Soon after a Purdue Pharma LP affiliate pleaded guilty to misbranding its addictive opioid painkiller OxyContin in 2007, the company's Sackler family owners fretted about possible threats to their wealth" in emails disclosed by US prosecutors on Wednesday. The company "transferred more than \$10 billion, including roughly \$4 billion in cash to Sackler-controlled entities" between 2008 and 2009, though "family members on Wednesday said the transfers were proper and that documents scheduled to be released in the future would support that claim." Reuters says that nonetheless, "in settlement papers, prosecutors called some of the money movements 'fraudulent transfers.'"

[USA Today](#) (10/21, 10.31M) reports that "the settlement is the highest-profile display yet of the federal government seeking to hold a major drugmaker responsible for an opioid addiction and overdose crisis linked to more than 470,000 deaths in the country since 2000." Deputy Attorney General Jeffrey Rosen "said that if the resolution wins court approval it 'will redress past wrongs, and will also provide extraordinary new resources for treatment and care of those affected by opioids addiction.'" However, the agreement was met with "immediate resistance from lawmakers and some state officials who believe it did not go far enough to address the swath of human destruction caused by the epidemic."

The [Washington Post](#) (10/21, Kornfield, Rowland, Bernstein, Barrett, 14.2M) also reports that "state authorities and families who have lost loved ones to their products said the Justice Department's terms go easy on the Sacklers." The Post goes on to say, "While numerous other

lawsuits and court fights over opioids will continue, the Purdue Pharma settlement highlights how, for more than two decades, the widespread problem of overprescribing, diverting, and abusing pain pills raged across America while drug manufacturers, distributors, pharmacists, and doctors profited from the problem and largely deflected responsibility.”

[CNN](#) (10/21, Isidore, 83.16M) reports on its website that the dissolved company’s assets “will be used to create a new ‘public benefit company’ controlled by a trust or similar entity designed for the benefit of the American public. The Justice Department said it will function entirely in the public interest rather than to maximize profits. Its future earnings will go to paying the fines and penalties, which in turn will be used to combat the opioid crisis.”

[Politico](#) (10/21, Luthi, 4.29M) reports that “the resolution with the Trump administration also includes a mandate to dissolve Purdue, with the Sacklers relinquishing all ownership and control. The company’s assets, pending the approval of a bankruptcy court, will be redirected to a government-owned ‘public benefit company’ that will still produce OxyContin and opioid addiction treatment.” [Reuters](#) (10/21, Spector) reports, “Sackler family members, in a statement, said when they were on the board, ‘we adopted rigorous policies requiring Purdue to be in full compliance with the law,’ adding that they relied on management assertions the company acted lawfully.” The [Wall Street Journal](#) (10/21, A1, Randazzo, Subscription Publication, 7.57M) also reports.

### **Attorney Denies Former Houston Official Was Involved In Kickback Scheme.**

The [Houston Chronicle](#) (10/21, Carpenter, 730K) reports, “The \$90,000 in cash seized by federal agents from former Houston ISD chief operating officer Brian Busby’s house earlier this year came from gambling winnings, rental income and money used to care for his ailing mother, his lawyers said this week.” The Chronicle adds, “In their first public comments since agents raided Busby’s home and district headquarters, lawyers for the former administrator denied allegations that the cash was the product of a kickback scheme involving an HISD contractor. Federal prosecutors leveled the accusations last month in a civil forfeiture proceeding, but they have not filed criminal charges or released extensive details about the case. Lawyer Dick DeGuerin, who is representing Busby, said his client has the necessary receipts to prove the cash was obtained legally. Federal officials are trying to keep the money agents took from a safe in Busby’s home while executing a search warrant in late February.”

### **Former Blue Bell President Charged With Wire Fraud Tied To Listeria Outbreak In 2015.**

The [AP](#) (10/21) reports, “The former president of Blue Bell Creameries has been charged with wire fraud for allegedly trying to cover up a 2015 listeria outbreak linked to the company’s ice cream that killed three people in Kansas and sickened several others, federal prosecutors announced Wednesday.” A grand jury “returned a seven-count indictment Tuesday charging Paul Kruse with six counts of wire fraud and one count of conspiracy to commit wire fraud, according to a Justice Department statement.” According to the AP, “prosecutors allege that Kruse schemed to deceive Blue Bell customers by directing employees to remove potentially contaminated products from store freezers without alerting grocers and consumers as to why.”

[CNN](#) (10/21, Goodwin, 83.16M) reports, “Kruse instructed employees to tell customers who asked about the removed items that there was an ‘unspecified issue with a manufacturing machine,’ the indictment alleges.” The company “did not issue an immediate recall of the products nor did the company inform customers about the listeria contamination, according to the indictment.” FDA Associate Commissioner for Regulatory Affairs Judy McMeekin said, “US consumers rely on food producers and suppliers to ensure the safety of the nation’s food supply. The charges announced today show that if an individual violates food safety rules or conceals relevant information, we will seek to hold them accountable.”

## **Former Pennsylvania Court Clerk Sentenced For Mail Fraud, Misappropriation Of Funds.**

[WBRE-TV](#) Wilkes-Barre, PA (10/21) reports, "The former Schuylkill County Clerk of Courts was sentenced for mail fraud and falsification of records." US Attorney David Freed "says that Steven Lukach, 70, of Nesquehoning was sentenced on Tuesday. Lukach served as the Clerk of Courts for Schuylkill County for 27 years. During the years of 2013-2014, county auditors conducted an in-depth examination and found misappropriation of funds by Lukach." The FBI "conducted an investigation during the county audit, and Lukach interfered with the audit by stealing mail that was sent to banks, forged records and sent the fake bank records to the controller's office, according to Freed's office. According to Freed, Lukach interfered to cover up that he was taking funds from multiple accounts for his own personal expenses. He used funds for meals, car payments and other personal expenses. The attorney's office says Lukach misappropriated \$40,000 worth of funds."

## **CYBER DIVISION**

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### **Virginia Man Pleads Guilty To Cyberstalking Tulsa, Oklahoma Mayor.**

The [AP](#) (10/21) reports from Tulsa, Oklahoma, "A Virginia man who sent dozens of harassing emails and phone messages to Tulsa Mayor G.T. Bynum and his family in a failed attempt to stop President Donald Trump's campaign rally in June pleaded guilty Wednesday to cyberstalking." The AP adds, "Appearing via video from his home state, Adam Maxwell Donn, of Norfolk, admitted during a federal court hearing in Tulsa that he sent Bynum and his wife 44 emails and left them 14 phone messages in June, some of which referenced the couple's children and their home address, U.S. Attorney Trent Shores said in a news release. Donn, 41, faces up to five years in prison when he is sentenced in January."

### **NSA Issues Advisory Warning Of Chinese State-Sponsored Cyber Attacks.**

[MeriTalk](#) (10/21) reports that the NSA "has issued a cybersecurity advisory aimed at defense and intelligence community contractors warning of Chinese state-sponsored cyber actors exploiting publicly-known network vulnerabilities." The advisory "provides Common Vulnerabilities and Exposures (CVEs) known to be recently leveraged, or scanned-for, by Chinese state-sponsored cyber actors to enable successful hacking operations against a multitude of victim networks," the NSA said. The advisory added, "The same process for planning the exploitation of a computer network by any sophisticated cyber actor is used by Chinese state-sponsored hackers."

[Defense Systems](#) (10/21, 93K) reports that the CVEs "cover a variety of systems, including email and application servers as well as domain controllers, but the common thread is that they involve tools that manage connections between networks and the open internet." Most of them "were identified in the last two years, but a few date back longer than that, and patches and other mitigation strategies already exist that address all of them." The NSA is now "identifying Chinese state-sponsored groups as actively leveraging these weaknesses to target information networks belonging to the defense industrial base," DOD, and "other national security systems."

Also reporting are [ExecutiveGov](#) (10/21), [Gov Info Security](#) (10/21), and [Computer Weekly](#) (10/21).

### **US-China Tensions Expected To Escalate Over Chip Manufacturing.**

[Bloomberg](#) (10/21, Crawford, Wu, Murphy, 4.73M) reports that "chips for everything from artificial intelligence and data centers to autonomous cars and smartphones [have] become an issue of national security." Tensions over the chips are "injecting government into business decisions over where to manufacture chips and to whom to sell them," and could "kick into

overdrive as Communist Party leaders set a five-year plan that includes developing China's domestic technology industry, notably its chip capabilities." Semiconductors are "arguably one of the world's most important industries, with sales of \$412 billion last year; scale that up to the electronics industry that depends on chips, and it's worth some \$5.2 trillion globally, according to German manufacturers." An executive at a Chinese semiconductor maker "said three of its deals had been aborted because of concerns raised" by CFIUS.

### **US, Foreign Officials Discuss Cybersecurity, Threat Of China At Atlantic Future Forum.**

[Reuters](#) (10/21, Hefher) reports that National Security Advisor Robert O'Brien "accused China on Wednesday of trying to steal COVID-19 vaccine research from the West, casting it as a malign rival that was seeking to monopolise every important industry of the 21st Century." At the Atlantic Future Forum, the US official "told top British and U.S. military and intelligence officials that China was a predatory power that repressed its people and had sought to coerce both neighbours and Western powers." O'Brien said, "Most recently the PRC used cyber-enabled espionage to target companies developing Covid vaccines and treatments in Europe, the UK and the United States all the while touting the need for international cooperation." He added that since the end of the Cold War, Chinese leaders have "doubled down on their totalitarian approach and mercantilist, state-dominated economy."

[Reuters](#) (10/21, Faulconbridge, Stubbs) reports separately that GCHQ Director Jeremy Fleming "said on Wednesday it was seeking to engage more with business to harness top cyber talent behind programmes to accelerate world-class technology." He told the Atlantic Future Forum, "We have a whole range of accelerator programmes...and we're looking to do much more of that." Fleming added, "We are trying to create ecosystems that bring in academia." GCHQ has a "close relationship" with the NSA "as well as with the eavesdropping agencies of Australia, Canada and New Zealand in a consortium called 'Five Eyes.'" Fleming is concerned the "security and defence services were able to organise themselves quickly enough to defend against the full range of modern security threats."

### **German Cybersecurity Consultant Outed For Moscow Ties Met Top Trump Officials.**

The [Daily Beast](#) (10/21, 1.39M) reports, "On Nov. 11, 2019, Hans-Wilhelm Dünn," a German who has been "accused by counterintelligence officials in Germany of being part of a Russian influence operation," visited DHS in Washington, DC. While there, he "met with a host of U.S. cybersecurity officials" from DHS and "public utility companies as well as corporate executives from Amazon and Microsoft – all of whom were seemingly unaware of his controversial status back home." Though the meetings "might have otherwise counted as any other ho-hum calendar event," Dünn had six months prior "been publicly exposed in the German media as having numerous links to Russian intelligence and influence operations, including one financed by the U.S.-sanctioned oligarch Yevgeny Prigozhin."

### **Cyberattacks, Payment Industry At Center Of National Cybersecurity Awareness Month.**

Jeffrey Tasse, Chairman of the board of the Electronic Payments Coalition, writes in [Forbes](#) (10/21, 9.71M) that "reports of cyberattacks have skyrocketed in both frequency and scope" amid an increase in "America's dependence on technology" during the pandemic. Daily breaches "have up to quadrupled since the start of the pandemic," according to the FBI. Tasse says organizations should "support National Cybersecurity Awareness Month, which takes place each October." The initiative is championed by DHS and the National Cyber Security Alliance. National Cybersecurity Awareness Month "is a collaboration between government and industry to make sure every American has the resources needed to stay safe and secure online." The theme this year is "Do Your Part. Be #CyberSmart."

### **TikTok Announces Policy Changes To Restrict QAnon, Hate Speech.**

The [New York Times](#) (10/21, 18.61M) reports TikTok has “a less-publicized darker side – one where Holocaust deniers and QAnon conspiracy theorists run rampant,” and this week, it “announced a series of policy changes restricting the types of content it would allow. The changes include a crackdown on QAnon supporters and a prohibition of ‘coded’ language that could serve to normalize hate speech across TikTok.”

### **Critics Worry About Palantir’s Use Of Personal Information.**

The [New York Times](#) (10/21, Steinberger, 18.61M) reports Palantir Technologies’ “two primary software programs, Gotham and Foundry, gather and process vast quantities of data in order to identify connections, patterns and trends that might elude human analysts.” Many of Palantir’s customers “consider its technology to be transformative.” The technology “is rumored to have been used to track down Osama bin Laden” and it “is used for counterterrorism by a number of Western governments.” Amid the coronavirus pandemic, “a dozen countries were using its technology to track and contain the virus.” But “Palantir’s work on the coronavirus has also highlighted the mistrust that trails the company.” The “main source of apprehension is simply the nature of Palantir’s work. Although Palantir claims it does not store or sell client data and has incorporated into its software what it insists are robust privacy controls, those who worry about the sanctity of personal information see Palantir as a particularly malignant avatar of the Big Data revolution.”

## **LAW ENFORCEMENT SERVICES**

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### **Trump Grants Clemency To Five People.**

The [AP](#) (10/21, Madhani, Freking) reports President Trump has granted clemency to five people who were “convicted of committing drug and financial crimes.” Wednesday’s move comes after Trump commuted a prison sentence that was being served by Alice Marie Johnson, who “said that she spoke to White House officials about all five of the individuals” affected by Trump’s decision. The move also “comes less than two weeks before Election Day and as Trump has been hammering Democrat Joe Biden over his tough-on-crime record during his time in the US Senate.”

[The Hill](#) (10/21, Chalfant, 2.98M) reports Trump granted clemency to a group of people that “includes four individuals convicted on drug charges, including one associate of Alice Marie Johnson.” Johnson “has been a prominent” Trump supporter since he commuted her drug-related prison sentence.

### **WPost: Virginia Making Progress On Criminal Justice Reform, But Has More To Do.**

The [Washington Post](#) (10/21, 14.2M) says in an editorial that Virginia state lawmakers “should congratulate themselves for a number of worthwhile criminal justice and policing reforms” during the special legislative session “and prepare themselves for even more difficult, necessary work when the regular session begins in January. ... Already, lawmakers have a lot on their plates for January: expunging criminal records, reforming mandatory minimum sentences and reinstating parole, to name a few urgent issues. The long list left to tackle is not a sign that lawmakers did not accomplish important work this session – rather that the status quo is the result of decades of injustices that will take sustained effort to unwind.”

## **OTHER FBI NEWS**

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### **Wray’s Future Reportedly Uncertain As Trump Considers Firing Him.**

The [Washington Post](#) (10/21, Barrett, Dawsey, 14.2M) reports, “President Trump and his advisers have repeatedly discussed whether to fire” Director Wray “after Election Day – a scenario that also could imperil the tenure of” Attorney General Barr “as the president grows

increasingly frustrated that federal law enforcement has not delivered his campaign the kind of last-minute boost that the FBI provided in 2016, according to people familiar with the matter." According to the Post, "The conversations among the president and senior aides stem in part from their disappointment that Wray in particular but Barr as well have not done what Trump had hoped – indicate that Democratic presidential nominee Joe Biden, his son Hunter Biden, or other Biden associates are under investigation, these people say."

The [AP](#) (10/21, Tucker) reports, "With Washington abuzz about his possible dismissal, Wray and the FBI have engaged in a delicate balancing act as they address hot-button issues. He has sought to defend the FBI's independence and its integrity even as it puts him at odds with Trump and his allies. Yet the bureau has also tried to avoid confrontations where possible, making clear that it is striving to be responsive to Republican lawmakers on politically charged investigations." Wray's actions "appear crafted with an eye toward helping Wray retain his job and preserving stability at an agency that has been riven by turbulence in the last four years and that is also determined to avoid becoming entangled in presidential politics as it did in 2016."

### **Cuomo Could Probe Judge Dispute After Reported FBI Investigation.**

Behind a paywall, [Law360](#) (10/21, Subscription Publication, 8K) reports, "Following an alleged short-lived FBI probe, New York Governor Andrew Cuomo has discretion over whether the state attorney general investigates why one of his 'political heroes' – a judge he appointed – was not arrested or charged for shoving a Buffalo police officer after a fight with neighbors." Law360 adds, "The neighbors, Gina and Joseph Mele, told Law360 a federal prosecutor indicated the Erie County district attorney could be investigated at the state or local level following a two-month FBI investigation examining whether law enforcement bowed to New York Supreme Court Justice Mark Grisanti's influence and improperly failed to charge him."

## **OTHER WASHINGTON NEWS**

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### **Senate Judiciary Democrats To Boycott Barrett Vote.**

The [AP](#) (10/21, Mascaro, Jalonick) reports Senate Judiciary Committee Democrats say they will boycott the committee vote on the Supreme Court nomination of Amy Coney Barrett on Thursday, "but there is little they can do to prevent Republicans from rushing to confirm [Barrett] before Election Day." Senate Minority Leader Schumer said, "There is no precedent in history of the Senate for confirming a Supreme Court justice this close to an election. The truth is that the Republican majority is perpetrating the most rushed, most partisan, least legitimate process in the long history of Supreme Court nominations."

The [Washington Post](#) (10/21, Cassata, 14.2M) reports, "In announcing that the committee's 10 Democrats will boycott, Schumer highlighted" Senate Majority Leader McConnell's actions in 2016 "when he refused to consider Supreme Court nominee Merrick Garland, the choice of President Barack Obama to fill the vacancy created by the death of Justice Antonin Scalia in February." [Reuters](#) (10/21) reports Judiciary Chairman Lindsey Graham "has signaled that even with Democrats boycotting he will be able to move the nomination forward, according to a panel spokeswoman. The panel's expected approval of Barrett would pave the way for a confirmation vote on the Senate floor planned by Republicans for Monday." The [Washington Times](#) (10/21, Swoyer, 492K), [Politico](#) (10/21, Levine, 4.29M), [The Hill](#) (10/21, Carney, 2.98M), [Roll Call](#) (10/21, Ruger, 154K), and [Townhall](#) (10/21, Vespa, 177K) also cover the planned boycott.

Asked on [WZFG-AM](#) Dilworth, MN (10/21) about any potential delays to the confirmation, White House Senior Communications Advisor Ben Williamson said, "We're prepared for anything. We know that the Democrats, they've been willing to stoop to very low levels in the past and that certainly could be the case this time, but knock on wood, we're on a pace to

confirm her out of committee this week and then next week in the full Senate on Monday." Williamson said on [Fox Across America](#) (10/21), "Things look good, she's done a phenomenal job. We couldn't be more proud of the President's nominee."

***USA Today: "Rushed" Process "A Slap In The Face To The American People."***

[USA Today](#) (10/21, 10.31M) says in an editorial that if Barrett is confirmed, "for the first time in more than a century, the majority of the court's nine members will have been selected by presidents who reached the Oval Office by losing the popular vote. Also novel is that this nomination is being rammed through in the midst of a presidential election, against 230 years of precedent. ... This rushed nomination and confirmation process is a slap in the face to the American people."

***Barrett Was Trustee At School With Anti-Gay Policies.*** The [AP](#) (10/21, Biesecker) reports that Supreme Court nominee Amy Coney Barrett "served for nearly three years on the board of private Christian schools that effectively barred admission to children of same-sex parents and made it plain that openly gay and lesbian teachers weren't welcome in the classroom." According to the AP, "the policies that discriminated against LGBTQ people and their children were in place for years at Trinity Schools Inc., both before Barrett joined the board in 2015 and during the time she served." The three schools "are affiliated with People of Praise, an insular community rooted in its own interpretation of the Bible, of which Barrett and her husband have been longtime members."

The [Minneapolis Star Tribune](#) (10/21, 1.04M) has a feature on People of Praise, writing that "national media have seized upon" Barrett's involvement in the group "in her hometown of South Bend, Ind. But Minnesota is home to the largest branch of People of Praise in the nation. More than 440 of its 1,700 members live in the Twin Cities, a group launched in the 1980s that still benefits from its early popularity."

***Trump: Biden "Wants To Pack The Court."*** President Trump was asked in a town hall meeting hosted by [Sinclair Broadcasting Group](#)<sup>Vi</sup> (10/21, 11K) if he expects there to be additional Supreme Court vacancies in the next four years. Trump said, "That's one of the reasons it's so important to go out and vote, because [Joe Biden] is going to put in radical left judges, which will destroy our country. One of the most important things a president does is Supreme Court justices, and you can't let that happen. ... And you know he wants to pack the court. ... It would be a terrible thing for this country."

The [Washington Free Beacon](#) (10/21, 78K) reports a Opportunity Solutions Project poll shows that "59 percent of likely voters oppose court packing, compared with just 26 percent who favor it. Support is highest among Democrats at 50 percent. A strong majority of independents, 62 percent, oppose court packing, while just 19 percent support it. Those results track with figures from other polls that consistently show lopsided opposition to court packing, even as interest in judicial reform swells on the left."

**Trump Says There Is "Not Much" He Would Change About His COVID Response.**

President Trump was asked in a town hall meeting hosted by [Sinclair Broadcasting Group](#)<sup>Vi</sup> (10/21, 11K) if there is anything he would change about his coronavirus response. Trump said, "Not much. ... Look, it's all over the world, you have a lot of great leaders, there's a lot of smart people. It's all over the world. It came out of China. China should have stopped it. ... No, not much, I did it very early."

**Pelosi Optimistic About Passage Of Spending Deal After Election.**

The [AP](#) (10/21, Taylor) reports while negotiations over coronavirus stimulus bill "are inching forward" it is "clear the window for action before the Nov. 3 election is closing and the issue will be tossed to a postelection lame-duck session of Congress." Treasury Secretary Mnuchin and House Speaker Pelosi "spoke again Wednesday but her office signaled no real progress, and she acknowledged for the first time publicly that the measure won't pass before the election."

[Politico](#) (10/21, Niedzwiedek, 4.29M) reports Pelosi told [MSNBC's Andrea Mitchell Reports](#)<sup>Vi</sup>,

"I'm optimistic, because even with what Mitch McConnell says – we don't want to do it before the election – but let's keep working so that we can do it after the election. ... We want it before, but again I want people to know help is on the way."

Chief of Staff Meadows also expressed optimism Wednesday. [Roll Call](#) (10/21, Lerman, 154K) reports Meadows said in an interview with the [Hugh Hewitt Show](#)<sup>P</sup> that Pelosi has been unwilling to compromise so far. But "we're hopeful that in the next 48 hours or so that there'll be some breakthroughs where she actually starts negotiating. ... She hasn't really been negotiating." Meadows said on [Fox News' Bill Hemmer Reports](#) (10/21), "We've been obviously engaged with Speaker Pelosi for a long time. ... There continues to be a number of differences, but as I mentioned earlier, we've entered a new phase where we're actually looking at some of the technical language." Meadows said, "At \$1.9 trillion, which is really where we're at right now, when you look at \$1.9 trillion, is Nancy Pelosi really going to tell the American people that 'I'm not going to send that relief to you just for political reasons'? ... At some point, Nancy Pelosi has to take yes for an answer."

Director of Trade and Manufacturing Policy Navarro said on [WKRG-TV](#)<sup>Vi</sup> Mobile, AL (10/21, 28K), "We are now at a point where we might possibly get a deal within the next 24 to 48 hours." NEC Director Kudlow said on [Newsmax TV](#)<sup>Vi</sup> (10/21), "There's discussions going on, but there are also some considerable policy differences that have not yet been resolved, so we'll have to wait and see."

Transportation Secretary Chao said on [Fox News Radio](#) (10/21), "Right now, the other side is basically throwing everything into a package. This package, the Republicans say, should really be relevant to helping people, companies, organizations related to COVID relief, and that's a big issue here."

White House Director of Strategic Communications Alyssa Farah said on [WBAP-AM](#)<sup>Vi</sup> Dallas (10/21, 13K) that "there's been some progress today on Capitol Hill. I don't...always assume the best when it comes to the Speaker's motives or actions, but we've had some positive talks. It's not impossible that we might be able to get a deal before the election, and I can tell you this President is going to be fighting for one."

[Bloomberg](#) (10/21, Wasson, House, 4.73M) says Pelosi and Mnuchin "made further progress on a coronavirus stimulus package Wednesday and will speak again Thursday, according to a Pelosi aide." After Pelosi and Mnuchin spoke for 45 minutes Wednesday, Pelosi spokesman Drew Hammill [tweeted](#), "Today's conversation brings us closer to being able to put pen to paper to write legislation. With the exchange of legislative language, we are better prepared to reach compromise on several priorities."

[ABC World News Tonight](#)<sup>Vi</sup> (10/21, story 8, 0:20, Muir, 6.08M) reported there are reports Pelosi and Mnuchin "are close, but that it's not finalized and may not be done before the election." But the [New York Times](#) (10/21, Cochrane, 18.61M) says President Trump "cast doubt" on the prospects for a deal before Election Day. [Reuters](#) (10/21, Cornwell) says Trump accused Democrats "of being unwilling to craft a compromise on coronavirus aid, despite reports of some progress earlier in the day." In a [tweet](#) Wednesday afternoon, Trump said he did not believe Democrats "will be willing to do what is right for our great American workers, or our wonderful USA itself, on Stimulus."

The [New York Times](#) (10/21, Cochrane, Fandos, 18.61M) says "With coronavirus cases continuing to rise across the country and tens of millions of American families and businesses going without critical federal benefits they relied on for much of the year, economists and the chair of the Federal Reserve have said now is the time for a substantial infusion of federal money to fuel a still-shaky economic recovery." The Times adds that "a majority of voters agree, saying they would support a \$2 trillion stimulus package. And Mr. Trump, who only two weeks ago scuttled the bipartisan talks, is now also pushing urgently for Congress to 'go big,' as he grasps for political advantage in the waning days of his re-election race."

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (10/21, Peterson, Subscription Publication, 7.57M) says putting off a bill until after the election could delay its passage for months because if Joe Biden wins the

presidency, Democrats could opt to wait until he takes off in order to push for larger bill that address more of their priorities. [USA Today](#) (10/21, Menton, 10.31M) says putting off the bill "threaten[s] to delay urgently needed unemployment aid and a second round of \$1,200 direct payments by at least a month. That would affect millions of out-of-work Americans who are struggling financially following a wave of job losses in the coronavirus recession, especially those in hard-hit industries like travel and hospitality who are relying on another stimulus check to make ends meet, experts say."

Meanwhile, [CNN](#) (10/21, Raju, Barrett, 83.16M) reports on its website, "Senate Republicans reiterated on Wednesday their stiff opposition to the White House's last-ditch effort to cut a major stimulus deal...the latest indication that passing any new relief package almost certainly will have to wait until after Election Day." During a closed-door lunch, Meadows "fended off serious concerns raised by GOP senators over the Trump administration's efforts to finalize a roughly \$2 trillion package before the elections, even as Pelosi reported progress in her negotiations with the Trump administration on Wednesday."

[Politico](#) (10/21, Levine, 4.29M) reports Senate Democrats on Wednesday "blocked a narrow \$500 billion Republican-led coronavirus relief proposal." The GOP measure, "which failed to clear the 60-vote threshold needed to move forward, was nearly identical to the Senate GOP bill Democrats rejected in September." Politico says Republicans are "accusing Democrats, who are pushing for a multi-trillion dollar plan, of taking an all-or-nothing approach to coronavirus relief, while Democrats dismissed Wednesday's vote as nothing more than a political stunt." [Axios](#) (10/21, Basu, 521K), [The Hill](#) (10/21, Carney, 2.98M), and the [Washington Post](#) (10/21, Werner, 14.2M) provide similar coverage.

### **Trump Has Reportedly Said Fauci Is Seeking Job At CNN.**

The [Daily Beast](#) (10/21, 1.39M) reports, "In recent months, [President] Trump has routinely gossiped with close associates and advisers" that NIAID Director Fauci is "behaving like a member of anti-MAGA 'resistance' commentators. In the past few weeks, the president has told multiple people that he believes Fauci is angling to earn the media's adulation and that it at times appears to him that the famous infectious disease expert is 'audition[ing]' or 'trying to get a job at CNN,' according to two sources with knowledge of his private comments."

Trump was asked in a town hall hosted by [Sinclair Broadcasting Group](#)<sup>Vi</sup> (10/21, 11K) about his relationship with Fauci. Trump said, "I get along with him fine, but he's made mistakes." Trump added that Fauci "said, 'No masks, don't wear masks,' and then he said, 'wear masks,, and he didn't want me to stop people from coming in from China, and then he admitted it was a great move that I made against him. You know I overrode him. But with all of that, I get along with him, I like him."

### **CDC Updates Guidance On Contact With COVID-Infected Individuals.**

David Muir reported on [ABC World News Tonight](#)<sup>Vi</sup> (10/21, story 4, 3:05, 6.08M) that the CDC "is out with new guidance on close contact with an infected person." ABC's Whit Johnson added, "A new CDC study find[s] that even multiple brief exposures within six feet in a 24-hour period may increase the risk of COVID-19 transmission. Until now, health officials had said you can contract the virus if you spend at least 15 minutes within close proximity of an infected person. Today, in a rare briefing in Atlanta, CDC doctors urg[ed] Americans not to let their guard down."

On [NBC Nightly News](#)<sup>Vi</sup> (10/21, story 3, 1:55, Holt, 5.81M), Miguel Almaguer said, "The new guidelines come as new outbreaks or superspreader events are tied to close gatherings. In Minnesota, at least 20 Salvation Army employees contracted the virus during a conference. At church events in North Carolina and in Maine, nearly 100 tested positive after few took precautions. Some Americans are still spreading the virus because they don't know they're infected." The [AP](#) (10/21, Stobbe) reports, "The definition change was triggered by a study of a 20-year-old Vermont correctional officer, who was diagnosed with a coronavirus infection in August. The guard, who wore a mask and goggles, had multiple brief encounters with six

transferred prisoners before test results showed they were positive. At times, the prisoners wore masks, but there were encounters in cell doorways or in a recreational room where prisoners did not have them on, the report said." The [CBS Evening News](#)<sup>Vi</sup> (10/21, story 5, 0:20, O'Donnell, 4.55M), the [Washington Post](#) (10/21, Sun, 14.2M), and the [Wall Street Journal](#) (10/21, Abbott, Subscription Publication, 7.57M) also have reports.

### **Human Vaccine Results Expected Soon From Pfizer And Moderna.**

The [Washington Post](#) (10/21, Johnson, 14.2M) reports that "in a matter of weeks, one of the most closely watched human experiments in history will start to report early results, with data on prospective coronavirus vaccines possibly coming this month or in November from the pharmaceutical giant Pfizer and the biotechnology company Moderna." According to the Post, "Amid the turmoil, chaos and misinformation that have defined the U.S. response to the pandemic, progress toward a vaccine, or vaccines, has been steady, reassuring and scientific." The Post adds that "political meddling has so far been largely deflected," and "drug companies, working closely with the U.S. government and fueled by an infusion of more than \$10 billion of taxpayer money, have developed, tested and scaled up a half-dozen potential vaccines at unprecedented speed."

Asked on [WDAK-AM](#) (10/21) about the politicization of coronavirus vaccines, HHS Secretary Azar said, "There are many out there who, for whatever reason, are jumping in with the anti-vaccine crowd, and are really impairing public health. ... Frankly, it's disgusting to see, because these are decisions that are going to be made, there are at least five totally independent checks on the vaccine approval process." [WSB-TV](#)<sup>Vi</sup> Atlanta (10/21, 149K) reported Azar "visited Grady Memorial Hospital and the CDC" on Wednesday and "told [WSB-TV] he believes a limited supply of one or more vaccines could be available to part of the population as soon as the end of December," which "he says is crucial given the expected surge of cases during the colder months."

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (10/21, A1, Woo, Subscription Publication, 7.57M) reports on the controversy surrounding the University of Oxford's vaccine program, while the [AP](#) (10/21, Neergaard) reports that "the global hunt for a COVID-19 vaccine for kids is only just beginning – a lagging start that has some U.S. pediatricians worried they may not know if any shots work for young children in time for the next school year."

### **COVID Cases Spike Across US.**

Norah O'Donnell said on the [CBS Evening News](#)<sup>Vi</sup> (10/21, story 6, 2:40, 4.55M) that "almost every state in the US is seeing a surge in new COVID cases." [Reuters](#) (10/21, Caspani, Meijer) reports COVID deaths "hit fresh daily records in Hawaii, Kansas, Iowa, Minnesota, Montana and Wisconsin, a state that also reported a record daily increase in new cases together with Colorado, Illinois, Kentucky and Ohio." The [AP](#) (10/21, Pane, Johnson, Peters) reports hospitals "are starting to buckle from a resurgence of COVID-19 cases, with several states setting records for the number of people hospitalized and leaders scrambling to find extra beds and staff. New highs in cases have been reported in states big and small...in recent days."

HHS Secretary Azar said on [WDAK-AM](#) (10/21), "We're seeing an increase in cases across a good part of the country right now. What that's driven by is we're getting colder weather in the North and folks are getting indoors...and we're really seeing a lot of the spread happening from just those household gatherings. ... Even if you're having those casual gatherings, please mind your protections, because you are very much at risk of getting it or giving it, even if you're related to someone or friends with someone." The [New York Times](#) (10/21, 18.61M) reports that Alaska's experience with events moving inside due to the cold may provide a suggestion of what lies ahead in the winter.

**California "Has Largely Avoided" New Wave Of Cases.** The [Los Angeles Times](#) (10/21, 4.64M) reports California "has largely avoided a new wave of coronavirus cases that has sparked alarm elsewhere in the country, but the state faces new dangers in the coming

weeks as key businesses reopen and the holidays arrive." Health experts credit Gov. Gavin Newsom (D) for an "overhauled system – introduced Aug. 28 and much tougher than the state's disastrous first reopening – as a big reason for California having so far staved off a new surge in cases."

**NYC Girds For New Wave.** The [New York Times](#) (10/21, 18.61M) reports some New York City residents are preparing for a potential second wave of coronavirus cases. The Times describes people stockpiling supplies, staying at home more, and wearing masks more frequently in response. Recently, Gov. Andrew Cuomo (D) and New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio (D) ordered "lockdowns in several parts of Brooklyn and Queens where the infection rate has risen most sharply."

**La Crosse, Wisconsin, Cases Spread From Students To Elderly.** The [Washington Post](#) (10/21, A1, Eilperin, Dennis, Mooney, 14.2M) looks at the spike in cases in La Crosse, Wisconsin – "a wildfire of infection that first appeared predominantly in the student-age population, spread throughout the community and ultimately ravaged elderly residents who had previously managed to avoid the worst of the pandemic."

### **GOP Governors Seek Basic Public Health Precautions.**

[Politico](#) (10/21, Goldberg, Ollstein, 4.29M) reports, "Republican governors are pleading for basic public health precautions" against COVID, even as President Trump "downplays the pandemic's severity and tells people to move on with their lives." Ohio Gov. Mike DeWine (R) "urged attendees at an upcoming Cincinnati campaign rally headlined by Vice President Mike Pence to wear masks," while Tennessee Gov. Bill Lee (R) on Tuesday "announced a new statewide ad campaign promoting face coverings." Earlier this week, Mississippi Gov. Tate Reeves (R) "issued a mask mandate and limited indoor gatherings to 10 people and outdoor gatherings to 50 people in nine counties."

### **Adams To Be Arraigned Next Month Over Alleged Hawaii Emergency Order Violation.**

The [Honolulu Star-Advertiser](#) (10/21, Bernardo, 691K) reports Surgeon General Adams and an aide "will be arraigned in an Oahu court next month after police cited the two men in late August for being in a Kaneohe park during a COVID-19 emergency order-mandated closure of the island's beach parks." A videoconference hearing was held Wednesday, and "both men were cited for allegedly violating an emergency order." Adams' attorney said he intends to plead not guilty. The [AP](#) (10/21, Jones) reports, "Because the charge is a 'full misdemeanor,' the judge said the not guilty plea could not be entered until Adams decided if he would waive his right to a jury trial." Adams' attorney said he would not waive that right.

### **Carroll's Lawyer Says DOJ Did "Not Even Try To Argue The Case."**

The [AP](#) (10/21, Neumeister) reports that E. Jean Carroll, "who has accused President Donald Trump of raping her in the 1990s," said she "was stunned and speechless after the Justice Department on Wednesday turned down an opportunity to make oral arguments on whether Trump can substitute the United States for himself as the defendant in her defamation lawsuit." DOJ attorney William Lane told US District Judge Lewis Kaplan that "the government would rest on its papers, meaning it would rely solely on already submitted written arguments." Carroll attorney Roberta Kaplan "said it was a 'shocking scenario for the government to just, essentially surrender, and not even try to argue the case.'"

[USA Today](#) (10/21, 10.31M) reports Judge Kaplan "abruptly adjourned" the Wednesday hearing "after the government lawyer tapped to argue a key issue was denied access to the New York courthouse because of coronavirus restrictions imposed by the state." The judge "had offered the government the options of substituting another approved lawyer, arguing the case remotely or foregoing arguments in favor of the written submissions. Justice chose the latter, and Kaplan ended the hearing, denying a request by Carroll's lawyer to submit additional arguments in writing." [Reuters](#) (10/21, Stempel) also reports.

[USA Today](#) (10/21, 10.31M) has a detailed look at the "19 women [who] have accused Trump of sexual misconduct," writing that 13 of them "said he kissed them without consent, often out of the blue, sometimes holding them firmly in place," and that there are women beyond the 19 who "have alleged other inappropriate behavior of a sexual nature from Trump." The [Boston Globe](#) (10/21, 972K) has a piece on Trump's "habit of bashing women who challenge him."

### **Pelosi: Trump's Chinese Bank Account Is A "National Security Issue."**

[Reuters](#) (10/21) reports House Speaker Pelosi made the case on Wednesday that the existence of a Chinese bank account belong in to President Trump "raises serious national security concerns...following a New York Times report revealing the previously undisclosed account." According to Reuters, Pelosi "cited the Chinese government's ties to its financial industry and said Trump's banking there risked his exposure and opened him up to vulnerabilities. 'They can watch the flow of money there and perhaps have some, shall we say, sway over the person who's taking money or putting money into that account so it is a national security issue,' she told MSNBC in an interview."

### **Morgan Touts Administration's Border Policies.**

Acting CBP Commissioner Morgan said on [KABC-AM](#)<sup>Vi</sup> Los Angeles (10/21, 6K), "The successes that we have achieved, and we have achieved a lot on the immigration front, is directly related to this President and this Administration giving us the tools and the network of initiatives and policies we need to address the threat." Morgan said, "MPP...that policy, that initiative alone, where we got Mexico to join us as true partners, was one of the cornerstones to change and end catch and release. One of the biggest pull factors. They knew that if they made it to our borders, we were releasing them. That has ended completely and it's because of this Administration."

### **Pham: Operation Rise Focused On "Dangerous Aliens," Local Partnerships.**

Acting ICE Director Pham said on [Philadelphia's Morning Answer](#) (10/21), "What ICE and my organization are doing right now is we're focusing on these dangerous aliens with criminal records or criminal charges...and I don't think a lot of localities truly appreciate, or their leadership truly appreciate, that that's what my organization is focusing on. So our Operation Rise, Phase One and Two...we're there to remind them that, as a federal law enforcement agency, we're here to partner with them. We're here to show them exactly who we're looking for, to combat the narrative that we're out there doing what they would like to characterize as raids and sweeps, and that's not accurate."

### **Deported Parents Of 545 Migrant Children Are Unaccounted For.**

On [ABC World News Tonight](#)<sup>Vi</sup> (10/21, story 7, 2:05, Muir, 6.08M), Tom Llamas reported, "Tonight, the Trump Administration again under fire over its controversial child separation policy. The ACLU making a stunning accusation, saying they've been unable to reach the parents of 545 migrant children taken from their families at the border before June of 2018." The Department of Homeland Security refuted "the accusations" on Wednesday "in a statement, saying they tried to reunify many families, but quote, 'the simple fact is this: after contact has been made with the parents to reunite their children, many parents have refused.'" The ACLU challenged the DHS explanation: "We have not even found these 545 parents, so neither we nor certainly the Administration can know whether they want to be reunited."

Manuel Bojorquez of the [CBS Evening News](#)<sup>Vi</sup> (10/21, story 7, 1:35, O'Donnell, 4.55M) reported that "the ACLU says it's also been unable to find 362 of the children, who are likely living either with relatives or in foster care. Today, the Trump Administration blamed parents who want their children to stay in the US." White House Deputy Press Secretary Brian

Morgenstern said, "We've contacted these families, and the sad truth is that many of them have declined to accept their children back."

[NBC Nightly News](#)<sup>Vi</sup> (10/21, story 8, 0:20, Holt, 5.81M) reported, "The parents of 545 migrant children separated at the border by the Trump Administration cannot be found, according to lawyers appointed by a federal judge. The government calls them 'unreachables.' A White House spokesman says many of the deported parents declined to accept their children back, but that is disputed by the ACLU."

[Reuters](#) (10/21) reports that "'arduous on-the-ground searches' for parents deported to their countries of origin – many in Central America – have been complicated by the COVID-19 pandemic, the filing said." The "government has identified more than 4,200 children who could fall under Judge Dana Sabraw's reunification order," and a committee has "formed to locate family members focused on trying to reach families of children for whom the government provided phone numbers for a sponsor or parent." However, "most of the children were released from government custody to sponsors in the United States, often family members."

According to the [New York Times](#) (10/21, Dickerson, 18.61M), "A new report shows hundreds of cases in which migrant children were taken from their families, and their parents, who were deported, cannot be located." The Times says "it is now clear that the parents of 545 of the migrant children still have not been found," and "about 60 of the children were under the age of 5 when they were separated." The Times goes on to report that "the Trump administration fought for months against providing documentation on the additional families, arguing that it was not necessary because the children had already been released from federal custody into the care of sponsors, who are typically relatives or family friends," and "the parents of the children had already been deported without them."

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (10/21, Caldwell, Subscription Publication, 7.57M) reports that while the Administration has said parents were offered the option of being deported alongside their children, court filings from groups like the ACLU show some parents claiming they were misled or coerced into being separated.

The [Washington Post](#) (10/21, A1, Armus, 14.2M) reports that "months before the Trump administration rolled out its "zero-tolerance" policy on the U.S.-Mexico border, hundreds of migrant children were already quietly being separated from their families. As those children were shuttled around the country in late 2017, their parents were swiftly detained or deported, with few records taken by the government about where they went or how to contact them." The Post adds, "It was only in 2019, after a federal judge ordered officials to hand their names over to immigration lawyers, that the American Civil Liberties Union and other groups tried in earnest to begin reuniting them."

The [New York Times](#) (10/21, Dickerson, Thrush, 18.61M) reports that on Wednesday, Joe Biden "called President Trump's border policy an 'outrage' and a 'moral failing' that he would reverse if elected, responding to court filings that revealed that the parents of 545 children separated from their families under the Trump crackdown have yet to be located. 'This administration ripped babies from their mothers' arms, and then it seems, those parents were in many cases deported without their children and have not been found. It's an outrage, a moral failing, and a stain on our national character,' Mr. Biden said in a statement." The Times goes on to say that Trump "and his allies have often made the misleading claim that the separations began on President Barack Obama's watch and that Mr. Biden, who was then the vice president, was complicit." According to the Times, "While the Obama administration did order the detention of migrants during a surge at the border in 2014, splitting up families was rare."

**WPost: "Children Were Kidnapped" By US Government.** The [Washington Post](#) (10/21, 14.2M) editorializes that "the Trump Administration's immorality, cruelty and bureaucratic malpractice in tearing migrant toddlers, tweens and teens away from their parents in 2017 and 2018" has left a "perhaps even more shocking...present-day legacy," with over 500 children still separated from their families. The Post says, "For all intents and purposes, these

children were kidnapped by the U.S. government," a policy "justified in the name of inflicting such emotional trauma on migrant families that further illegal crossing of the southern border would be deterred."

### **Stanford Study Shows No Crime Increase In Sanctuary Cities.**

The [Washington Post](#) (10/21, Miroff, 14.2M) reports that according to a new Stanford University report comparing data from over 200 jurisdictions between 2010 and 2015, "cities that have adopted 'sanctuary' policies did not record an increase in crime as a result of their decision to limit cooperation with federal immigration authorities," rebutting "the Trump Administration's rhetoric about the policies' dire effects on public safety." The statistics "show that the policies were effective at limiting deportations of nonviolent offenders but did not result in higher crime rates in those cities," with "violent criminals...deported at the same pace." Researcher David Hausman said, "The government itself keeps the data I rely on, and if the Administration had looked at its own data, it would know these claims are not true."

### **Heritage Foundation Report Says Biden Would Resume Obama Immigration Policies.**

[Fox News](#) (10/21, Shaw, 27.59M) reports on its website that according to an unreleased report by the Heritage Foundation, "Joe Biden, if elected president, would undo a number of key Trump Administration's policies related to immigration." The report predicts Biden "would return to many of the same immigration policies in place during the Obama Administration," including "protecting and expanding the DACA program, admitting at least 125,000 refugees annually and seeking amnesty" for 11 million migrants. Heritage also forecasts Biden would rescind "Trump's travel restrictions on countries deemed to be national security threats," as well as the Migrant Protection Protocols.

### **Giuliani Appears In "Compromising Position In A Hotel Room" In New "Borat" Movie.**

The [AP](#) (10/21) reports, "Rudy Giuliani is shown in a compromising position in a hotel room with a young woman acting as a television journalist in a scene in Sacha Baron Cohen's latest mockumentary, a sequel to his hit 'Borat' film." The scene "includes a moment when Giuliani is seen lying on a bed, tucking in his shirt with his hand down his pants and the young woman nearby." [USA Today](#) (10/21, Truitt, 10.31M) reports, "Giuliani told Page Six in July that he went to The Mark Hotel in New York for what he thought was a real interview about the Trump administration's response to the coronavirus crisis." The [New York Times](#) (10/21, Thrush, Vigdor, 18.61M) reports Giuliani told a New York radio station Wednesday that he "had been tucking in his shirt after removing microphone wires."

The [Washington Post](#) (10/21, Rao, 14.2M) headlines its report "Rudy Giuliani's Compromising Scene In The 'Borat' Sequel Is Another Hit For Trump's Personal Attorney." The [New York Daily News](#) (10/21, Sommerfeldt, 2.52M) and [Politico](#) (10/21, Choi, 4.29M) also cover the incident.

### **Army Leaders Focus On Military Housing Program.**

The [Washington Times](#) (10/21, Glenn, 492K) reports, "Army leaders met with bankers and private investors last week to discuss plans for pumping more money into the service's troubled privatized housing program, which has been accused of failing to provide safe and adequate homes for military members and their families." Army Secretary McCarthy said military housing officials "are 'on track' to invest up to an additional \$2.8 billion for Army housing over the next five years."

### **Ex-Spy Recruited By Prince Had Key Role In Project Veritas Hiring.**

The [New York Times](#) (10/21, Goldman, Mazzetti, 18.61M) reports, "A British former spy recruited by Erik Prince, the security contractor close to the Trump administration, played a central role in a secretive effort to hire dozens of operatives for the conservative group Project

Veritas, deposition testimony shows." Job applicants traveled to Wyoming for interviews with Richard Seddon "as Project Veritas sought to expand its operations" in 2017. The Times says the "new details about Project Veritas show the extent of the group's ambitions to build an intelligence-gathering apparatus to infiltrate Democratic congressional campaigns, labor organizations, news media and other groups."

## INTERNATIONAL NEWS

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### **Bolsonaro Rejects Previously Announced Purchase Of Chinese Vaccine.**

The [AP](#) (10/21, Savarese) reports that on Wednesday, Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro "rejected...the announced purchase of 46 million doses of a potential vaccine against COVID-19 being developed by a Chinese company and tested in the state governed by his political rival, prompting concern he was allowing politics to steer public health decisions. 'The Brazilian people will not be anyone's guinea pig,' Bolsonaro said on his social media channels, adding that the shot is yet to complete testing – which is true of all potential vaccines." According to the AP, Brazil's health minister Eduardo Pazuello "had announced the purchase on Tuesday."

***Brazilian Volunteer In AstraZeneca Vaccine Trial Dies.*** The [CBS Evening News](#) (10/21, story 4, 0:25, O'Donnell, 4.55M) reported, "Tonight, health officials in Brazil report that a volunteer in AstraZeneca's COVID vaccine trial has died. Now, a photo was released of the male volunteer. It's unclear whether he received the vaccine or a placebo shot. AstraZeneca says there are no concerns about continuing the study in Brazil. ... Its trial here in the US was put on hold last month after a volunteer in Europe developed neurological symptoms."

[Reuters](#) (10/21, Burger) reports that "a source familiar with the matter told Reuters that the trial would have been suspended if the volunteer who died had received the COVID-19 vaccine, suggesting the person was part of the control group that was given a meningitis vaccine." CNN Brasil "reported that the volunteer was a 28-year-old man who lived in Rio de Janeiro and died from COVID-19 complications," though Brazilian health authority Anvisa "provided no further details, citing medical confidentiality of those involved in trials."

The [Washington Post](#) (10/21, McCoy, 14.2M) reports that the National Health Surveillance Agency "said the international safety committee had recommended the trial continue." The Post says, "The death of the patient casts more uncertainty over trials that were suspended last month after a patient developed an unexplained illness." The [Wall Street Journal](#) (10/21, Magalhaes, Pearson, Subscription Publication, 7.57M) also reports.

### **Spain Is First European Country To Surpass 1M Cases.**

[Reuters](#) (10/21, Gutierrez, Dominguez) reports, "Spain became the first Western European country to exceed 1 million COVID-19 infections on Wednesday, doubling its tally in just six weeks despite a series of increasingly stringent measures to control the second wave of the virus." Data from the health ministry showed the "the infection rate accelerated to frequently exceed 10,000 cases a day from late August, hitting a new peak of more than 16,000 last week," with many blaming "impatience to be rid of state-imposed restrictions meant to contain coronavirus contagion, or weariness with social distancing guidelines" and "deeply entrenched political polarization" for the increase.

### **Czech Republic To Tighten COVID Restrictions Amid Spike.**

The [New York Times](#) (10/21, Specia, 18.61M) reports that "the Czech Republic on Wednesday, responding to an influx in cases that in mid-October made it the country with the highest coronavirus transmission rates in Europe, announced plans to close most shops and further tighten restrictions on movement." The country last week "closed schools, bars, restaurants, and clubs," implementing a curfew for "places serving takeout food." Through November 3, "nonessential shops will also be closed and people will be urged to keep contact to a minimum."

Prime Minister Andrej Babis "apologized to the nation, saying the steps were necessary to prevent the health system from being overwhelmed."

### **Turkey Reportedly Considering Resuming Coronavirus Restrictions.**

[Reuters](#) (10/21, Coskun, Devranoglu) reports that an anonymous senior official revealed that Turkey may reimpose certain measures to curb a resurgence of COVID-19 infections, including stay-at-home orders for youth and older citizens or weekend lockdowns. Vice President Fuat Oktay "said later on Wednesday that there were regional rises and falls in COVID-19 cases depending on how much citizens were adhering to personal hygiene and social distancing measures, but no restrictive measures were on tap." The official "said draconian measures like 'a full lockdown' were not on the agenda," with any new restrictions having "a 'narrower scope'" to "protect the economy."

### **Colombia Faces Protests Over Pandemic Response.**

The [AP](#) (10/21) reports, "Protesters filled a historic square in Colombia's capital Wednesday to demonstrate against the government's handling of a wide range of issues including the economic fallout of the pandemic and implementation of the peace accord." The coronavirus "had largely put a halt to demonstrations this year, but organizers were hoping to renew momentum after the government lifted six months of strict quarantine measures aimed at containing the virus." Colombia "is on track to reach 1 million confirmed virus cases this week," and "though President Iván Duque's approval rating has improved during the pandemic, the country remains divided on a host of issues."

### **State Department Approves Sale Of Weapons Systems To Taiwan.**

[Reuters](#) (10/21, Brunnstrom) reports the Pentagon said Wednesday that the State Department "has approved the potential sale of three weapons systems to Taiwan including sensors, missiles and artillery that could have a total value of \$1.8 billion." The [AP](#) (10/21) reports the State Department announced "it had greenlighted the sale of 135 precision land attack missiles, associated equipment and training to Taiwan to improve its defense capabilities." The Department said in a statement, "This proposed sale serves U.S. national, economic and security interests by supporting the recipient's continuing efforts to modernize its armed forces and to maintain a credible defensive capability. ... The proposed sale will help improve the security of the recipient and assist in maintaining political stability as well as military balance and economic progress in the region. The recipient will be able to employ a highly reliable and effective system to increase their warfighting effectiveness as needed, which can counter or deter aggressions by demonstrated precision against surface targets." [Bloomberg](#) (10/21, Capaccio, 4.73M) provides similar coverage.

***Pompeo Unveils Further Steps To Isolate China And Prevent Spread Of Propaganda.*** [Reuters](#) (10/21, Pamuk, Brunnstrom) reports that on Wednesday, Secretary of State Pompeo announced that the State Department is "designating the U.S. operations of six more China-based media companies as foreign missions, a move he said was aimed at pushing back against communist propaganda." In addition, Pompeo "also told a State Department news conference the United States would launch a dialogue on China with the European Union on Friday and that on Sunday he would begin a trip to India, Sri Lanka, the Maldives and Indonesia." Pompeo "said he expected the meetings would include discussions about how 'free nations can work together to thwart threats posed by the Chinese Communist Party.'"

State Department spokesperson Morgan Ortagus said on [Fox Across America](#) (10/21), "One of the ways in which...we've made some actions over the past year is, why do we have these Chinese propaganda organizations that are directed, employed by the Chinese Communist Party in the United States, masquerading as media outlets?" She said, "We're designating them the same as we would the Chinese Embassy, for example. We're saying

you're a foreign mission, you're a part of the Chinese government," adding "It's vitally important, I think, that we reset the relationship with China."

**Navarro: CCP Must Be Held Accountable For "Death And Destruction" Imposed On American People.** Asked on [KTLK-AM](#) Minneapolis (10/21, 7K) about second term strategies regarding China, Director of Trade and Manufacturing Policy Navarro said, "Clearly, what we need to do is address those seven deadly structural sins the way President Donald J. Trump has been doing, which is to stand up to China – he's the only President who's ever done that – using tools like tariffs and sanctions. ... We are at a situation now where the Chinese Communist Party has inflicted trillions of dollars of costs on our economy, sent tens of millions of Americans to the unemployment line, and killed, killed over 200,000 Americans. So in a second term, the second thing that has to be dealt with is holding this Chinese Communist Party accountable for the death and destruction and cost they've imposed on the American people."

### **Grenell Engaged In Talks Aimed At Persuading Maduro To Step Down.**

The [New York Times](#) (10/21, Vogel, Jakes, 18.61M) reports Richard Grenell "quietly embarked on a pre-election mission last month that was at least partly intended to persuade President Nicolás Maduro of Venezuela to give up power." Grenell, who is "a close Trump ally" and "a vocal and combative supporter of President Trump's re-election campaign, met near Mexico City on Sept. 17 with Jorge Rodríguez, a former Venezuelan vice president and close ally of Mr. Maduro, to facilitate a peaceful transition of power, a White House official said." The Times says Maduro's agreement to step down "could have been a major foreign policy victory for Mr. Trump in the weeks before the election," but "there is no evidence that Mr. Grenell's trip had any effect." The Times adds it was "not clear why Mr. Maduro, a socialist strongman who has maintained power despite international opposition, would suddenly consider stepping down."

### **Armenian, Azerbaijani Leaders Suggest Fighting Is Likely To Persist.**

[Reuters](#) (10/21, Hovhannisyan, Bagirova) reports that on Wednesday, Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan "said...he saw no possibility of a diplomatic solution at this stage in the conflict with Azerbaijan over the mountain enclave of Nagorno-Karabakh." Pashinyan's comments, "after Azerbaijan's president said he believed the conflict could be solved militarily, increased doubts over a diplomatic push by major powers to bring peace to the South Caucasus region." Also on Wednesday, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov "said...he had held separate talks with the foreign ministers of Armenia and Azerbaijan, who are expected to meet" with Secretary of State Pompeo on Friday in Washington.

The [New York Times](#) (10/21, Gall, Prickett, 18.61M) reports that Azerbaijan "has not released numbers of military casualties, but funerals are underway, bringing the war home to its people." Azerbaijan is "in full war mode as it engages in the heaviest fighting since the original conflict with Armenia in the early 1990s over the disputed territory of Nagorno-Karabakh, an ethnic Armenian district inside Azerbaijan." The Times says Azerbaijan "suffered a bitter defeat then, losing about 13 percent of its territory, with as many as 26,000 dead and around 800,000 displaced."

### **Dozens Of Nigerian Protesters Hit By Security Forces' Gunfire.**

The [AP](#) (10/21, Olukoya, Oyekanmi) reports "protesters demanding an end to police brutality" in Nigeria "defied a curfew as gunfire rang out where they were setting up a blockade Wednesday, a day after shots were fired into a crowd of demonstrators singing the country's national anthem."

The [New York Times](#) (10/21, Lawal, Mark, 18.61M) reports "dozens of people were hit by gunfire from security forces," Tuesday "some fatally, and images of bloodied protesters and their bloodied flags strewn on the ground flooded the social media accounts of millions of Nigerians." The [Washington Post](#) (10/21, Paquette, 14.2M) provides similar coverage.

### **Thailand's PM Will Withdraw Decree Cracking Down On Pro-Democracy Protesters.**

The [New York Times](#) (10/21, Paddock, Suhartono, 18.61M) reports Thailand's Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha delivered "a conciliatory speech" Wednesday in which he "acknowledged that the country cannot become" a "better society through the use of water cannon" and "said he intended to withdraw an emergency decree cracking down on pro-democracy protests." Prayuth said in a televised address, "I will make the first move to deescalate this situation. ... I am currently preparing to lift the state of severe emergency in Bangkok and will do so promptly if there are no violent incidents."

### **Pompeo: US Has Not Determined What Caused Illnesses Overseas.**

The [New York Times](#) (10/21, Jakes, Wong, 18.61M) reports the government "has not determined what caused some American diplomats and intelligence officers to suffer from a mysterious, debilitating affliction while they were overseas, despite devoting vast resources over more than three years to investigating it," Secretary of State Pompeo said Wednesday. Pompeo "said the government was still examining multiple theories" in what he said it a "a very complicated situation." Speaking at a news conference, Pompeo said, "There is not yet any complete US government analysis which definitively tells us precisely how these all came to be, whether they're part of a single cohort. ... There are significant US government resources now, what, three-plus years on, devoted to getting to the bottom of this and then holding those responsible accountable – should we determine that that's required."

### **Administration Weighs Labeling Human Rights Groups "Anti-Semitic."**

The [Washington Post](#) (10/21, Hudson, 14.2M) reports the Administration is considering labeling prominent human rights groups including Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch and Oxfam, "as 'anti-Semitic,' according to two people familiar with the discussions." According to the people, the State Department could issue a declaration "as early as this week." the Times says the proposal faces "sharp opposition from career officials in the department, who say it would be a gift to authoritarian governments that have long sought to delegitimize human rights groups."

### **Analyses: Biden Intends To Reverse Trump's Policies On Iran, Climate Change And Turkey.**

In an analysis titled "Biden Foreign Policy Begins With Telling The World: 'America's Back,'" the [Washington Post](#) (10/21, DeYoung, 14.2M) reports that if he wins the presidency, Joe Biden "has pledged to immediately rejoin the Paris Climate Accord, the World Health Organization and other U.N. bodies." In addition, Biden "plans to return to the Iran nuclear deal, if Tehran also returns to compliance." The Post goes on to report that Biden "has said that on Day 1, he will remove the 'gag order' prohibiting any health organization that performs or provides advice on abortions from receiving U.S. foreign aid," will "lift Trump's 'Muslim ban,'" and will "reverse his 'cruel and senseless' immigration policies."

[Reuters](#) (10/21, Spicer) reports that Turkey "stands to lose more than most other countries if Joe Biden is elected president since he is expected to toughen the U.S. stance against President Tayyip Erdogan's foreign military interventions and closer cooperation with Russia." Reuters adds, "Investors and analysts say the beleaguered Turkish lira is especially vulnerable if a Biden White House pulls the trigger on long-threatened sanctions over Ankara's purchase of Russian S-400 missiles, which Washington says compromise NATO defences."

### **Pope Francis Voices Support For Same-Sex Civil Unions.**

[ABC World News Tonight](#) (10/21, story 6, 2:00, Muir, 6.08M) reported Pope Francis has become "the first Pope in history" to voice support for same-sex couples. ABC's James Longman added, "In an historic shift from the leader of an ancient institution," the Pope says in a new

documentary, "Homosexual people have a right to be in a family. They are children of God and have a right to a family. ... What we have to create is a civil union law. That way they are legally covered. I stood up for that." The [CBS Evening News](#)<sup>Vi</sup> (10/21, story 8, 1:30, O'Donnell, 4.55M) called the development "stunning news and a major departure from his predecessors," and [NBC Nightly News](#)<sup>Vi</sup> (10/21, story 7, 1:25, 5.81M) said Francis "cement[ed] his reputation as the Pope of surprises."

The [Washington Post](#) (10/21, Harlan, Boorstein, Bailey, 14.2M) reports while the comment "does nothing to alter Catholic doctrine," it "represents a remarkable shift for a church that has fought against LGBT legal rights – with past popes calling same-sex unions inadmissible and deviant." The [New York Times](#) (10/21, A1, 18.61M) says Francis' remarks "had the potential to shift debates about the legal status of same-sex couples in nations around the globe and unsettle bishops worried that the unions threaten what the church considers traditional marriage – between one man and one woman."

The [AP](#) (10/21, Winfield) reports the comments "spark[ed] cheers from gay Catholics and demands for clarification from conservatives, given the Vatican's official teaching on the issue." [USA Today](#) (10/21, Bote, 10.31M) reports, "For LGBTQ advocates, Pope Francis' message was not just an endorsement of same-sex civil unions – a stance that he has, indeed, tacitly taken before. It's also approval of same-sex parents having the privilege of raising families." The [Wall Street Journal](#) (10/21, Rocca, Subscription Publication, 7.57M) and the [Washington Times](#) (10/21, Vondracek, 492K) provide similar coverage.

### **WSJournal Praises Administration's Diplomacy With Sudan.**

A [Wall Street Journal](#) (10/21, Subscription Publication, 7.57M) editorial praises the Trump Administration's diplomatic efforts with Sudan and urges Congress to support a negotiated agreement under which Khartoum will create compensation fund for victims of the 1998 US Embassy bombings in Kenya and Tanzania in exchange for the US lifting its designation of Sudan as a state sponsor of terrorism.

## **THE BIG PICTURE**

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

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

[Purdue Pharma Reaches \\$8.34 Billion Settlement Over Opioid Probes](#)

[Quibi Is Shutting Down Barely Six Months After Going Live](#)

[Google, U.S. Government Each Face Challenges In Court Fight](#)

[Oxford Developed Covid Vaccine, Then Scholars Clashed Over Money](#)

[What Rhymes With 5G? Metal Band Croons About Smartphones](#)

#### **New York Times:**

[Iran and Russia Seek to Influence Election in Final Days, U.S. Officials Warn](#)

[Pope Francis, in Shift for Church, Voices Support for Same-Sex Civil Unions](#)

[Purdue Pharma Pleads Guilty to Criminal Charges for Opioid Sales](#)

[A Biden Landslide? Some Democrats Can't Help Whispering](#)

[Can Trump Win? Yes. But the Path Is Narrow and Difficult](#)

[In Azerbaijan, Pain and Loss Drive War Fever](#)

#### **Washington Post:**

[Purdue To Plead Guilty To 3 Felonies](#)

[FBI Chief In Crosshairs For Lack Of Election Lift](#)

[Pope Backs Civil Unions For Couples Of Same Sex](#)

[Advocates Still Searching For Parents Of Migrant Children](#)

[‘The Very Thing We Worried About’  
Iran Accused Of Targeting U.S. Voters In Email Threats](#)

**Financial Times:**

[Pope Challenges Church Orthodoxy By Voicing Support For Gay Unions](#)  
[China’s Covid-19 Vaccine Diplomacy Steals A March On US](#)  
[Tesla’s Move Into Mining Aimed At Energising Battery Supply Chain](#)  
[Apollo Investor Halts New Commitments Over Black’s Epstein Ties](#)

**Washington Times:**

[No October Surprise: Potential Bombshells Turn Into Duds This Election Year](#)  
[New Voters Give Hope To Trump Campaign](#)  
[Biden Tax Hikes Trickle Down To Middle Class](#)  
[Army Promises To Fix Problems With Privatized Troop Housing](#)  
[Clinton Agents Pushed Dossier Lies After Election](#)

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

**ABC:** Biden-Obama; Trump-60 Minutes; Election-Pennsylvania; COVID-CDC; Purdue Pharma Settlement; Vatican-Support For Same Sex Unions; Child Separation Policy; Stimulus Talks; Oklahoma-Unmarked Mass Grave; FBI-Serial Bank Robber; Midwest-Snow Storms; Asteroid Images.

**CBS:** Biden-Obama; Trump-North Carolina; Maryland-Election Threats; COVID-AstraZeneca Vaccine; COVID-CDC; COVID-Cases; Child Separation Policy; Vatican-Support For Same Sex Unions; Purdue Pharma Settlement; California-Officer Rescues Woman From Car Fire; 3M Science Winner.

**NBC:** Biden-Obama; Trump-Controversies; COVID-CDC; COVID-Cases; COVID-Expert Comment; Purdue Pharma Settlement; Vatican-Support For Same Sex Unions; Child Separation Policy; Georgia-Voter Suppression; Midwest-Snow Storms; COVID-Remote Learning; Online Scams; Pre-Med Student Volunteers To Deliver PPE.

**Network TV At A Glance:**

Biden-Obama – 9 minutes, 45 seconds  
COVID-CDC – 6 minutes, 5 seconds  
Vatican-Support For Same Sex Unions – 4 minutes, 55 seconds  
Purdue Pharma Settlement – 4 minutes, 10 seconds  
Child Separation Policy – 4 minutes, 0 seconds

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

**ABC:** DNI-Foreign Interference in Election; Trump-North Carolina; Biden-Obama; DHS-Death Threats Sent to Black Students; Puerto Rico-911 Call Centers Shutdown Due to COVID.

**CBS:** DNI-Foreign Interference in Election; Trump-North Carolina; Biden-Obama; COVID-North Dakota; Purdue Pharma Settlement; Vatican-Support For Same Sex Unions.

**FOX:** DNI-Foreign Interference in Election; Trump-North Carolina; Biden-Obama; Senate Judiciary Cmte-Dems Boycott; Death of Amazing Randi.

**NPR:** Alabama-Curbside Voting Ban; DNI-Foreign Interference in Election; Senate Judiciary Cmte-Dems Boycott; COVID-Vaccine; Puerto Rico-911 Call Centers Shutdown Due to COVID.

## WASHINGTON'S SCHEDULE

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**Today’s Events In Washington.**

**White House:**

- President Trump — Participates in a roundtable with supporters; participates in a Presidential Debate.

- Vice President Pence — Campaigns in Michigan and Indiana, holding 'Make America Great Again!' events at Barnstormers, Watership Township, MI and Fort Wayne Aero Center, Fort Wayne, IN.

**US Senate:**

- Senate Judiciary Committee votes on SCOTUS nominee Amy Coney Barrett – Executive Business Meeting, with agenda including nomination of Amy Coney Barrett to be U.S. Supreme Court Associate Justice

*Location: Rm G50, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Washington, DC; 9:00 AM*

**US House:**

- House of Representatives on recess from 2 Oct – 16 Nov

**Cabinet Officers:**

- Secretary of State Pompeo hosts first U.S. Govt conference on combating online anti-Semitism, day two – 'Ancient Hatred, Modern Medium' – first-ever U.S. Govt conference focused on combating online anti-Semitism, hosted by Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, organized by the Office of the Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Anti-Semitism, and held virtually and pre-recorded, day two. Secretary Pompeo delivers opening remarks, with other speakers over the two days including Deputy Attorney General Jeffrey Rosen, Republican Sen. James Lankford, Democratic Rep. Debbie Wasserman Schultz, U.S. Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Anti-Semitism Amb. Elan Carr and Special Envoy for Holocaust Issues Amb. Cherrie Daniels, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and minister Orit Farkash-Hacohen, UK minister Michael Gove, International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance President Michaela Kuchler, European Commission Coordinator on Combating Anti-Semitism Katharina von Schnurbein, and United Nations Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief Dr Ahmed Shaheed

**Visitors:**

- No visitors scheduled.

**This Town:**

- Venezuelan Embassies to the U.S. and OAS forum on human rights violations – Venezuelan Embassies to the U.S. and Organization of American States holds 'Hablan las Victimas' online forum with Presidential Commissioner for Human Rights Humberto Prado; *11:00 AM*
- Karen Pence on campaign trail for President Trump in Ohio – Second Lady Karen Pence campaigns for President Donald Trump in Ohio, headlining a 'Make America Great Again!' event in Tipp City  
*Location: Cedar Springs Pavilion, 7951 S Co Rd, Tipp City, OH; 1:00 PM*
- Working America media briefing on battleground states and campaign strategy – Working America Executive Director Matt Morrison holds media briefing to detail early vote / absentee vote analysis in battleground states, from survey data of 117,000 voters; Working America's program to add one million votes for 2020 Democratic presidential nominee Joe Biden and other labor-endorsed candidates across 12 battleground states; what Working America organizers are hearing and learning from their engagement of over 22.2 million voters; and competitive Senate and House race trends and analysis \* Working America is the community affiliate of the AFL-CIO; *1:00 PM*
- Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights Award ceremony – Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights Award ceremony, held virtually, honoring Alessandra Korap Munduruku for her work defending the culture, livelihoods, and rights of Indigenous peoples in Brazil. Includes keynote from former Secretary of State John Kerry and panel discussion with Columbia University Earth Institute Director Andrew Revkin, UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Francisco Cali Tzay, French-Brazilian documentary photographer Sebastiao Salgado, and Amazon Watch Program Director Christian Poirier; *6:00 PM*

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