

From: [REDACTED]

To: [REDACTED]

Subject: [EXTERNAL EMAIL] - FBI Public Affairs News Briefing Wednesday, September 23, 2020

Date: Wed, 23 Sep 2020 10:28:00 +0000

Importance: Normal

Mobile version and searchable archives available at fbi.bulletinintelligence.com.

 FBI News Briefing

TO: THE DIRECTOR AND SENIOR STAFF

DATE: WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 23, 2020 6:30 AM EDT

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LEADING THE NEWS

Nearly 200 Arrested, \$6.5 Million Seized In Worldwide Opioid Bust.

The [AP](#) (9/22) reports that according to the Justice Department, 179 people have been arrested and "\$6.5M seized in worldwide crackdown on opioid trafficking on darknet." The [Cincinnati Enquirer](#) (9/22, Knight, 223K) quotes FBI Director Wray as saying, "With the spike in opioid-related overdose deaths during the COVID-19 pandemic, we recognize that today's announcement is important and timely. ... The FBI will continue to use all investigative techniques and tools to identify and prosecute Darknet opioid dealers, wherever they may be located." Domestically, adds the Enquirer, "the operation lasted nine months and resulted in prosecutions in California, Georgia, Virginia and Texas."

[BBC News Online \(UK\)](#) (9/22, 1.02M) reports that "the operation, known as DisrupTor, was a joint effort between the Department of Justice and Europol," and [Voice of America](#) (9/22, 48K) that "most of the arrests took place in the United States, while others were apprehended in Canada, Germany, the Netherlands, Britain, Austria and Sweden."

[USA Today](#) (9/22, Phillips, 10.31M) reports, "Investigators have seized more than \$6.5 million in cash and virtual currencies, as well as 500 kilograms of drugs worldwide, including more than 200 kilograms of heroin, cocaine, and various kinds of opioids – a haul that officials said made a significant dent in online drug trafficking." USA Today adds, "Darknet sites, which exist on encrypted networks and aren't easily accessible, have enabled drug traffickers to create a new kind of 'criminal underworld' that allowed them to sell and advertise from anywhere in the world, Deputy Attorney General Jeffrey Rosen said. 'For an increasing number of young addicts, opioids are purchased not from local dealers but from pushers online,' Rosen said. 'Hiding behind anonymizing software known as Tor, a new sort of drug kingpin now is able to reach more buyers than ever before, through online marketplaces peddling every sort of illicit good and service imaginable.'"

[CyberScoop](#) (9/22, Lyngaas) reports, "The alleged drug dealers are accused of advertising on infamous dark-web sites such as AlphaBay and Dream," and "the takedown...involved investigators from Austria, Cyprus, Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden, Australia, Canada, the United Kingdom and the U.S."

[CNET News](#) (9/22, Ng, 1.99M) reports, "The majority of the arrests took place in the US with 121 cases, followed by 42 cases in Germany, eight cases in the Netherlands, four cases in the United Kingdom, three cases in Austria and one case in Sweden. Police said investigations are still ongoing to identify people behind these dark web accounts." According to CNET News, "The operation announced on Tuesday was the 'largest ... to date' for the US against the dark web," Rosen said, and "charges included those against a group called 'Pill Cosby' that allegedly distributed more than 1 million fentanyl-laced pills in Ohio and against a man who allegedly bought data that belonged to a murdered couple in Georgia. Prosecutors in Virginia also charged someone who allegedly sought to bomb a competing drug dealer, according to the Justice Department."

[Wired](#) (9/22, Barrett, 3.49M) quotes Director Wray as saying, "In some ways this is just the perfect storm combination of traditional criminal activity of all shapes and sizes merging with this more sophisticated technology. But the point of today's announcement is it doesn't matter where you go to try to do it or how you try to hide it, we're coming for you."

[ABC News](#) (9/22, Barr, 2.97M) reports that Director Wray "told ABC News that the dark-net is a 'perfect storm' of traditional crime and cyber crime. Acting Drug Enforcement Administration head Tim Shea, said many of the drugs are coming from Mexico. 'At the same time, we've seen an increase in fentanyl deaths, and that's synthetic opioids, which is a major threat emanating from Mexico, drugs, produced on industrial scale in Mexico are shipped to the United States using the dark-web,' Shea said."

The [Washington Times](#) (9/22, Mordock, 492K) reports that Director Wray "said the operation was critical to countering the spike in opioid-related deaths occurring during the coronavirus crisis. Although national figures are not yet available, individual states have released numbers showing opioid overdoses have risen over the past few months."

[Forbes](#) (9/22, Fox-Brewster, 9.71M) reports, "The U.S. probe involved a wide range of investigators from the FBI, ICE, the DEA, Customs and Border Protection (CBP) and the Defense Department. The Justice Department claimed it was the 'largest international law enforcement operation targeting opioid traffickers on the dark net.'" [NBC News](#) (9/22, 6.14M) and [WDBD-TV](#) Jackson, MS (9/22) post video reports on their websites. [The Hill](#) (9/22, Coleman, 2.98M), the [New York Post](#) (9/22, Moore, 4.57M) and [Fox News](#) (9/22, Pagonos, 27.59M), among other news outlets, also cover the story.

PROTESTS

House Republicans Urge FBI To Probe Funding Behind Recent Riots.

[Fox News](#) (9/22, Shaw, 27.59M) reports, "A number of House Republicans are urging FBI to investigate who has been funding the recent riots across the country, and bring federal charges against those who they say are 'aiding and abetting' criminal activity. 'The Department of Justice and FBI's leadership is needed to bring to justice those who have funded these criminal organizations and to give justice to the communities who have been devastated by these individuals and organizations,' the letter to FBI Director Christopher Wray, signed by Rep. Andy Biggs., R-Ariz., along with nearly two dozen other Republicans, says." Fox News adds, "Riots tore through a number of cities across the country in the wake of the death of George Floyd in May. Against the backdrop of peaceful protests, the riots caused significant damage and injury in cities like New York City, Chicago and Portland."

Pittsburgh Man Pleads Guilty To Destruction Of Police Vehicle During Protests.

[Fox News](#) (9/22, Singman, 27.59M) reports, "A Pittsburgh man pleaded guilty Tuesday in federal court to a charge of obstruction of law enforcement during civil disorder after destroying a police vehicle during protests over the death of George Floyd in May, Fox News has learned." US Attorney Scott Brady "told Fox News that Brian Bartels, a 20-year-old Pittsburgh man, 'incited the largest and most destructive riot in Pittsburgh history since 1968.'" The Justice Department "told Fox News the incident took place on May 30 in downtown Pittsburgh. Bartels, according to officials, was part of a large crowd of protesters and approached an unoccupied Pittsburgh Police SUV. Brian Bartels, 20, pleaded guilty Tuesday in federal court to a charge of obstruction of law enforcement during civil disorder after destroying a police vehicle during protests over the death of George Floyd in May."

USA Today/Ipsos Poll: 64% Say US Cities "Under Siege" By Protesters.

[USA Today](#) (9/22, Morin, 10.31M) reports, "As protests against systemic racism continue across the US and law and order becomes a major theme in the 2020 presidential race, a new poll shows most Americans say cities are under siege." USA Today adds that "more than two-thirds (64%) of those surveyed say they believe protesters and counter-protesters are overwhelming American cities, according to a USA Today/Ipsos [poll](#). ... Significantly more Republicans than Democrats say cities are under siege, 83% to 48%, respectively," and "those who live in rural areas (71%) are more likely to agree with that sentiment than those in urban areas (59%)."

Cuccinelli: Authorities Should Establish "Peace Through Strength."

Acting Deputy DHS Secretary Ken Cuccinelli said on [WILS 1320](#) (9/22) that "we respect people's differing opinions and participate with our law enforcement partners to clear space so people can hold demonstrations and rallies, all those kinds of First Amendment activities, but

there are a lot of people who now are using those gatherings to mask violence." Cuccinelli said, "If you don't actually step up and apply enough force...bringing enough officers to handle the situation without ever having to engage in physical contact, that's what I mean – peace through strength, if you will – for the localities that take that approach, it works. They establish peace, we saw it in Kenosha."

EPA Chief Threatens To Relocate New York Office Over Protests Against Police.

The [New York Times](#) (9/22, Rubinstein, Feuer, 18.61M) reports, "President Trump's politicized campaign to label New York City an 'anarchist jurisdiction' broadened on Tuesday, with the head of the Environmental Protection Agency threatening to move its regional headquarters out of Lower Manhattan." EPA Administrator Wheeler "suggested that local agency officials had become so fearful of New York streets that they are now considering moving offices." Wheeler "cited three-month old protests against police brutality, and a small, recent protest against another federal agency, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, at a nearby building."

Investigation Opened After Salt Lake City Officer Shoots Child With Autism.

[ABC World News Tonight](#)^{Vi} (9/22, story 6, 0:30, Muir, 6.19M) reported that a police shooting is under investigation in Salt Lake City. New body camera footage shows "an officer firing nearly a dozen shots at a 13-year-old with autism after he tried to run from police." The family of the boy is "calling for reforms and that the officer involved to be fired."

Officer In Taylor Case Defends Actions, Slams Officials In Email To Louisville Cops.

[USA Today](#) (9/22, Bullington, 10.31M) reports from Louisville, Kentucky, "One of the officers at the center of the Breonna Taylor shooting sent an email Tuesday to more than 1,000 of his colleagues criticizing Louisville Mayor Greg Fischer and others while defending his actions that March night." USA Today adds, "In the six-paragraph email, Sgt. Jonathan Mattingly apologized to his fellow officers and their families and blamed the mayor as well as Public Safety Chief Amy Hess and former LMPD Chief Steve Conrad for failing 'all of us in epic proportions for their own gain.'" Mattingly "also warned that the department and the FBI, which he said 'aren't cops,' would open civil rights investigations against officers for making a mistake during a stressful time. 'Your civil rights mean nothing,' he wrote, 'but the criminal has total autonomy.'"

Louisville Remains Under State Of Emergency Ahead Of Announcement In Taylor Case. [ABC World News Tonight](#)^{Vi} (9/22, story 8, 0:20, Muir, 6.19M) reported that there was "a new message from the mayor of Louisville" indicating that "there's no word now from the AG as of yet in the Breonna Taylor case," and "a state of emergency" remains in place. The [CBS Evening News](#)^{Vi} (9/22, story 6, 1:20, O'Donnell, 4.31M) recounted that Taylor "was shot and killed by police in her home in March," and "Kentucky's attorney general is expected to announce whether criminal charges will be brought against three officers." [NBC Nightly News](#)^{Vi} (9/22, story 5, 1:40, Gutierrez, 5.78M) reported "protesters...have demanded the arrest of three officers involved in" that "botched raid," and that "police confirm there are a total of six officers under internal investigation."

The [Louisville \(KY\) Courier-Journal](#) (9/22, Tobin, Ghabour, 368K) reports "plywood and concrete barricades permeated downtown Louisville Tuesday morning. And they weren't part of a major new construction project" but "businesses are boarding up their shops and police...redirecting traffic as the city...waits in anticipation." The [Fox News](#) (9/22, Wallace, 27.59M) website quotes from a statement by the Louisville Metro Police Department, which said, "Due to increased attention and activity in anticipation of an announcement from Attorney General Daniel Cameron regarding the Breonna Taylor case, a decision was made to accelerate plans to physically restrict access to the downtown area." [Reuters](#) (9/22, Woolston), the [AP](#) (9/22, Lovan, Reynolds Yonker), and the [Wall Street Journal](#) (9/22, Campo-Flores, Subscription Publication, 7.57M), among other news outlets, also reports the story.

Police Searching For Two Suspects Who Defaced Pittsburgh BLM Mural.

The [Washington Post](#) (9/22, Sands, 14.2M) reports, "Pittsburgh police say they are searching for two men who were captured on video shooting paint balls at a Black Lives Matter mural in downtown Pittsburgh late Monday evening." One of the suspects was "wearing a Confederate flag sweatshirt and a Trump cap, while the other was wearing a mask, authorities said." According to police, "it's the second known case of vandalism involving the mural."

OPERATION LEGEND

Barr Announces Takedown Of Drug Trafficking Ring Under Operation LeGend.

The [Milwaukee Journal Sentinel](#) (9/22, Vielmetti, 632K) reports, "U.S. Attorney General William Barr returned to Wisconsin Tuesday, three weeks after a visit to Kenosha to see the aftermath of arson, looting and vandalism that followed protests over the police shooting of a Black man in the back. This time, he was announcing the arrests of 26 people in Milwaukee and California, charged in a sprawling drug trafficking and money laundering conspiracy, as the latest victory in Operation Legend, launched in July to target violent street crime in a few major cities." According to the Journal Sentinel, US Attorney Matthew Krueger "said the roundup included seizures pursuant to 24 search warrants of at least 33 firearms – including one stolen from the Milwaukee Police Department recovered in California – at least \$170,000 in cash and drugs, including 700 grams of heroin at a single location."

The [AP](#) (9/22) reports, "Krueger said during a news conference that federal, state and local law enforcement officers arrested 21 of 26 suspects connected to the ring Tuesday morning. Officers executed search warrants in both California and Milwaukee. They seized about 33 firearms, \$170,000, marijuana, cocaine and more than 700 grams of heroin." Barr "said the investigation into the ring was part of Operation Legend, a project the U.S. Department of Justice launched this summer pairing federal agents and investigators with local and state police in nine U.S. cities, including Milwaukee, to address homicides and other violent crime."

[WITI-TV](#) Milwaukee (9/22, Peterson, 159K) reports, "Officials say since Operation Legend's launch in July 2020, more than 3,500 arrests – including approximately 200 for homicide – have been made; more than 1,000 firearms have been seized; and nearly 19 kilos of heroin, more than 11 kilos of fentanyl (enough to deliver more than five million fatal doses), more than 94 kilos of methamphetamine, nearly 14 kilos of cocaine, and more than \$6.5 million in drug proceeds have been seized. Of the more than 3,500 individuals arrested, approximately 815 have been charged with federal offenses. More than 440 of those defendants have been charged with firearms offenses, while more than 300 have been charged with drug-related crimes. The remaining defendants have been charged with various offenses."

[Fox News](#) (9/22, Betz, 27.59M) reports that Krueger "said state and local law enforcement officers arrested 21 of 26 suspects connected to the ring Tuesday morning. Officers in California and Milwaukee and seized about 33 firearms, \$170,000 in cash, marijuana, cocaine, and more than 700 grams of heroin during searches."

[WMC-TV](#) Memphis, TN (9/22, Luther, 33K) reports that Operation LeGend "has made 302 arrests in Memphis, and now 27 defendants have been charged with federal offenses." Barr "announced Tuesday that 10 defendants have been charged with narcotics-related offenses, 13 charged with firearms-related offenses, and 4 charged with other violent crimes."

Kansas City Authorities Identify One-Year-Old Killed In Triple Shooting.

The [AP](#) (9/22) reports from Kansas City, Missouri, "Authorities have identified a child killed in a triple shooting in Kansas City as a 1-year-old boy, making him the city's youngest homicide victim this year, police said." Tyron Payton "was in the back seat of a car with three adults when someone opened fire on their vehicle Monday afternoon, police said." The AP adds, "The child's death is the 148th homicide this year in Kansas City. At this time last year, 114 homicides had

been recorded. The Kansas City Star, which keeps data on homicides in the city, reported that 13 people who were 18 or younger have died in homicides this year, with Tyron being the youngest. All 13 died in shootings. Federal agents have been sent to Kansas City and a handful of other cities this summer to help fight gun violence, part of a program called Operation Legend."

COUNTER-TERRORISM

Woman Accused Of Sending Ricin Letter Wanted Trump To Drop Reelection Campaign.

The [CBS Evening News](#)^{Vi} (9/22, story 9, 0:25, O'Donnell, 4.31M) reported on new details "about a Canadian woman accused of trying to mail an extremely toxic poison to President Trump." Pascale Ferrier on Tuesday appeared in federal court in Buffalo after she "allegedly sending Ricin in an envelope that was intercepted at a screening facility." The FBI "says the letter contained threats and demand that Mr. Trump abandon his reelection bid."

The [New York Times](#) (9/22, 18.61M) reports the woman "wanted President Trump to drop out of the presidential race and pledged to find other ways to assassinate him if her poisoning plot failed, according to court documents unsealed on Tuesday." Ferrier had "a knife with her and a loaded gun holstered on her waist when she was arrested on Sunday." She "wrote in a threatening and scornful letter sent with the ricin that she believed Mr. Trump was a dictator who was hurting the United States."

[USA Today](#) (9/22, 10.31M) reports that Ferrier, 53, "has been charged with threatening President Donald Trump for allegedly mailing a letter laced with the poison ricin along with a message that referred to Trump as an 'Ugly Tyrant Clown,' and called on him to 'remove your application for this election,' according to court documents. 'I made a special gift for you to make a decision,' Pascale Cecile Veronique Ferrier allegedly wrote, referring to the potentially lethal powdery substance inside. 'If it doesn't work, I'll find a better recipe for another poison or I might use my gun when I'll be able to come. Enjoy!'"

The [Washington Post](#) (9/22, Hsu, 14.2M) reports that Ferrier "pleaded not guilty in federal court in New York to sending a threatening, ricin-laced letter to President Trump." Ferrier "was charged by complaint with one felony count of making a threat against the U.S. president. The FBI in charging papers also alleged that she was linked to similar letters sent to employees at detention facilities in Texas, where she was incarcerated last year." Ferrier, "a computer programmer from Quebec, was arrested Sunday in Buffalo upon reentering the United States from Canada. She made an initial court appearance Tuesday before U.S. Magistrate H. Kenneth Schroeder Jr. of Buffalo, who entered the not guilty plea."

[The Hill](#) (9/22, Budryk, 2.98M) reports that FBI officials "said they had discovered six letters with similar language sent from Canada in September that appeared to have been received in Texas. Officials said the targets were people associated with places where Ferrier was incarcerated last year and that they had matched her fingerprints to four of the letters." The Hill adds, "Ferrier was jailed last March in Hidalgo County on weapons charges and a charge of tampering with government records. Jail records indicate the charges were eventually dismissed."

[Reuters](#) (9/22) reports, "The envelope addressed to Trump was intercepted on Friday at the White House mail sorting facility in Washington, D.C., where U.S. Postal Service personnel flagged it as suspicious and contacted the FBI, according to an FBI affidavit filed with the charging documents."

The [Globe and Mail \(CAN\)](#) (9/22, Freeze, 1.04M) reports, "In a brief court hearing in Buffalo on Tuesday afternoon, a not-guilty plea was entered for Ms. Ferrier, who will remain detained. She said she would use a court-appointed lawyer because she cannot afford to hire one. A hearing is scheduled for Sept. 28."

UK Sends Evidence Against Accused ISIS Executioners To US.

[Reuters](#) (9/22, Hosenball) reports the British government "has forwarded to U.S. authorities evidence in its possession regarding two accused Islamic State militants known as the 'Beatles' being held by the U.S. military and suspected of involvement in beheadings of Western hostages." On Tuesday, "two British High Court judges rejected a request from the family of one of the accused which sought to block the transfer of evidence to the United States." On [Twitter](#), British Interior Minister Priti Patel "confirmed the transfer of the evidence regarding alleged militants Alexandra Kotey and El Shafee Elsheikh to US authorities."

The [New York Times](#) (9/22, Savage, 18.61M) reports a DOJ spokesman, Marc Raimondi, responded to the British announcement, "We are pleased with the U.K. High Court's decision and we are grateful that the British government has passed its evidence to us and confirmed its commitment to cooperate with our efforts to investigate and prosecute the two ISIS terrorists currently being held in U.S. military custody."

Florida Man Arrested On Charges Linked To Terrorism, ISIS.

The [Fort Myers \(FL\) News-Press](#) (9/22, 173K) reports, "A 23-year-old Lehigh Acres man is facing charges linked to terrorism and ISIS, according to documents from the U.S. District Court." Jonathan Guerra Blanco, "also known as Abu Zahraal-Andalusi, attempted to provide material support and resources to the foreign terrorist organization, according to a sworn report from Special Agent Bryan D. Hughes, of the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Joint Terrorism Task Force." Guerra, "a Cuban-born naturalized U.S. citizen," "had his first appearance on Sept. 14 before Magistrate Judge Jacqueline Becerra in Miami, where he was held without bond. He was arrested Sept. 11." Hughes' report, "said he created numerous accounts to disguise his identity to participate in terrorist plots, and, once he identified others sympathetic to the cause, taught them how to hide their identities."

Explosion Destroys "Hezbollah-linked Site" In Southern Lebanon.

The [Washington Post](#) (9/22, Loveluck, Sly, 14.2M) reports an explosion Tuesday at a "Hezbollah-linked facility in southern Lebanon sent black smoke billowing from a leveled building, footage from the area showed." Hezbollah members cordoned off "the area around the blast site in the village of Ayn Qana, according to a source linked to the armed group." A Lebanese security source "and Lebanon's al-Jadeed television channel, reported that the blast had resulted in a small number of injuries." Lebanon's state National News Agency "said that the blast had coincided with 'intensive' traffic from Israeli aircraft but that the cause was unknown." The Post says there are "echoes in this incident of a string of initially unexplained explosions at weapons storage facilities across the region, including earlier this year at Iranian power plants and military sites, which intelligence officials have attributed in part to Israeli sabotage."

Violent Far-Right Extremism Accounts For 40% Of Australian Counterterrorism Cases.

[The Guardian \(UK\)](#) (9/22, Karp, 4.19M) reports far-right violent extremism constitutes "up to 40% of the Australian domestic spy agency's counter-terrorism caseload, up from 10-15% before 2016, a senior official has said." The Australian Security Intelligence Organisation's (ASIO) "extraordinary increase in focus on the far right in Australia was revealed by its deputy director general of intelligence service delivery, Heather Cook, at a parliamentary inquiry on Tuesday." Cook called it an "enduring threat" that is "real and growing," and while she would not detail specific numbers of people under investigation, said "rightwing violent extremism... occupies approximately between 30 and 40% of ASIO's current caseload in counter-terrorism work...an increase from 10 to 15% prior to 2016." Cook also "warned the Covid-19 pandemic had created both a greater opportunity for far-right extremists to recruit online and a powerful anti-government message for those that resent lockdowns to combat the pandemic."

China Calls Spying Allegations Against NYPD Officer "Pure Fabrication."

The [AP](#) (9/22) reports, "China on Tuesday said allegations against a New York City police officer charged with being an 'intelligence asset' for the Chinese government are a 'pure fabrication' and part of a U.S. plot to smear Chinese diplomats in the United States." Baimadajie Angwang, "a naturalized U.S. citizen from Tibet, allegedly agreed to spy on U.S. supporters of the Tibetan independence movement since 2018 as an agent for China in its effort to suppress the movement, according to a criminal complaint filed in Brooklyn federal court. It says he secretly worked for unnamed handlers from the Chinese Consulate in New York." The AP adds, "Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson Wang Wenbin on Tuesday said the indictment against Angwang was full of hedging terms such as 'seems' and 'possibly,' giving the appearance that prosecutors were straining to make their case."

The [New York Post](#) (9/22, Fonrouge, 4.57M) reports that Wang Wenbin told reporters, "The relevant accusations made by the US side are pure fabrication," adding that "the US plot to discredit the Chinese consulate and personnel in the United States will not succeed."

NYPD Officer Accused Of Spying For China Raised Suspicions At Party Attended By AOC. The [New York Post](#) (9/22, Celona, Fonrouge, Golding, 4.57M) reports the NYPD officer charged this week with spying for China "raised alarms at a Tibetan New Year party that he attended in uniform — and during which he was photographed sitting next to US Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez." Sonam Gyephel, a former president of the Tibetan Community of NY & NJ, "said the group became suspicious" of Officer Baimadajie Angwang, and "cut off the relationship" with him following the event last year. Gyephel "declined to say precisely what alerted members" to the officer.

The [New York Post](#) (9/22, Fonrouge, Golding, 4.57M) reports that Angwang "exaggerated his military service record to his brothers in blue, The Post has learned." Angwang, "a suspended community affairs officer with the NYPD's 111th Precinct in Queens, was honored by the Police Benevolent Association at a November event last year to celebrate veterans, according to a since-deleted Facebook post on the union's page. 'The PBA honored its veterans at today's delegates meeting with PO Baimadajie Angwang presenting the colors. PO Angwang is a Sgt. in the USMC and served 1 tour in Iraq and 2 tours in Afghanistan,' the post reads alongside photos of Angwang posing with the union brass." The USMC "confirmed in a statement that Angwang, 33, was in fact a sergeant with the Devil Dogs but said he only served one tour in Afghanistan for Operation Enduring Freedom between July 2013 and February 2014. There were no records of a second Afghanistan tour or a tour in Iraq, according to the USMC."

CIA Finds Putin Most Likely Directing Election Influence Efforts To Support Trump.

The [New York Times](#) (9/22, Barnes, Sanger, 18.61M) reports Russian President Vladimir Putin is "most likely continuing to approve and direct interference operations aimed at raising President Trump's re-election chances, a recent CIA analysis concluded, a signal that intelligence agencies continue to back their assessment of Russian activities despite the president's attacks." The assessment is "consistent with intelligence officials' warning to lawmakers in January that Russia was interfering on Mr. Trump's behalf." The CIA has "moderate confidence in its analysis," in part because the intelligence community "appears to lack intercepted communications or other direct evidence confirming his direction" of Derkach's efforts. According to people "familiar with the matter, the new analysis was published ahead of the sanctions in the CIA Worldwide Intelligence Review, a classified document that circulates to members of Congress and the Trump administration."

The [Washington Post](#) (9/22, 14.2M) reports CIA analysts "compiled the assessment with input from the National Security Agency and the FBI, based on several dozen pieces of information gleaned from public, unclassified and classified intelligence sources." The

assessment includes details "of the CIA's analysis of the activities of Ukrainian lawmaker Andriy Derkach to disseminate disparaging information about Biden inside the United States through lobbyists, Congress, the media and contacts with figures close to the president." ODNI and the Treasury Department have "identified Derkach as a Russian agent, but it has not been publicly reported that the CIA, NSA and FBI believed Putin may be personally directing the campaign." The CIA assessment described "Derkach's efforts in detail and said that his activities have included working through lobbyists, members of Congress and U.S. media organizations to disseminate and amplify his anti-Biden information." It also refers to "Derkach's interactions with a 'prominent' person connected to the Trump campaign, the analysis does not identify the person."

[CNN](#) (9/22, Stracqualursi, Cohen, Cohen, 83.16M) reports the assessment reads, "We assess that President Vladimir Putin and the senior most Russian officials are aware of and probably directing Russia's influence operations aimed at denigrating the former U.S. Vice President, supporting the U.S. president and fueling public discord ahead of the U.S. election in November." Former CIA officer Douglas London "told CNN that the agency's use of the word 'probably' when concerning an issue of such importance means its 'analysts are sufficiently confident based on their deep expertise to put their reputations on the line in making such a call.'"

The [New York Times](#) (9/22, Sanger, Kanno-Youngs, 18.61M) reports separately that "four years ago, when Russian intelligence agencies engaged in a systematic attempt to influence the American presidential election, the disinformation they fed American voters required some real imagination at the troll farms producing the ads." This year, however, they are "largely amplifying misleading statements from President Trump, mostly about the dangers of mail-in ballots." In interviews, "a range of officials and private analysts said that Mr. Trump was feeding many of the disinformation campaigns they were struggling to halt." Intelligence officials are also described as "battling an effort by Mr. Trump and his top advisers to cast China and Iran as equal threats to the election, which runs counter to their intelligence."

[The Hill](#) (9/22, Mastrangelo, 2.98M) reports, and [CNN](#) (9/22, 83.16M) also reports in a video.

US Warns "Foreign Actors" May Introduce Disinformation On Delayed Election Results.

[Reuters](#) (9/22, Lange) reports US federal law enforcement and "cybersecurity agencies on Tuesday warned that 'foreign actors' will likely try to discredit the November presidential election by taking advantage of the slow counting of mail-in ballots." In a joint public statement, the CISA and FBI said that the additional time needed to count a higher volume of mail-in ballots "could leave officials with incomplete results on election night," the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency said in a joint public service announcement. The agencies said, "Foreign actors and cybercriminals could exploit the time required to certify and announce elections' results by disseminating disinformation that includes reports of voter suppression, cyber attacks targeting election infrastructure, voter or ballot fraud." Through new websites or social media content, they say these actors would seek to "discredit the electoral process and undermine confidence in US democratic institutions."

[Bloomberg](#) (9/22, Sebenius, 4.73M) reports the agencies "urged the American public to 'critically evaluate' their sources of information and to 'seek out reliable and verified information from trusted sources, such as state and local election officials.'"

[CyberScoop](#) (9/22, Lyngaas) reports they warned, "the public should also be aware that if foreign actors or cyber criminals were able to successfully change an election-related website, the underlying data and internal systems would remain uncompromised." The agencies urged voters to "rely on state and local government election officials" for official election results.

[NBC News](#) (9/22, Collier, 6.14M) reports one potential scenario the agencies “warned of is hackers defacing websites to indicate false election results, causing chaos and confusion without affecting vote tallying systems.”

[The Hill](#) (9/22, 2.98M) reports the agencies did not mention “any specific countries in warning of the election disinformation threat.”

[CNN](#) (9/22, Cohen, Kelly, 83.16M), [Forbes](#) (9/22, Reimann, 9.71M) and [WXYZ-TV](#) Detroit (9/22, Boggs, 236K) also report.

Cybersecurity Experts Tell Ohio Court “Requesting Ballots By Email Is Safe.”

The [AP](#) (9/22, Smyth) reports a group of leading cybersecurity experts “told an Ohio court that absentee ballot applications can be safely transmitted using email, countering the secretary of state’s assertions that the practice would open up voting in the presidential battleground to outside interference.” In a filing late Monday, “eight experts in computer information and engineering from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Georgetown, Princeton and other universities joined the American Civil Liberties Union and the Brennan Center for Justice in asking a state appellate court to allow the ballot applications to be accepted by electronic means.” In the filing, they say, “Election officials can easily facilitate electronic submission of applications at little cost while minimizing associated security risks,” and that while “ideally this should be done by a secure online portal, but it is also feasible to do so using email.”

FinCEN Files Show Treasury Received Over 86 Warnings About Suspected Russian Spy.

[BuzzFeed News](#) (9/22, Pham) reports that the FinCEN Files, a collaboration “between BuzzFeed News and more than 100 newsrooms associated with the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists, shows that the US Treasury Department received at least 86 warnings from 2007 to 2016 discussing” Russian bank VEB, its clients, and Evgeny Buryakov, who was suspected of working as a Russian agent. In 2014, an undercover FBI agent “posing as an energy analyst leaked binders with fake commercial secrets to two Russian spies operating in New York.” In “free-flowing conversations,” two SVR officers “discussed an SVR agent working for them under deep cover in New York: Evgeny Buryakov.” FBI transcripts “show the two spymasters discussed how Buryakov had traveled the world as a bank employee, spying while he went, and how they wanted him to take on an important task: find out how the US planned to bar Russian firms from its financial system.” In 2016, he pleaded “guilty to covertly working as a Russian agent and was sentenced to 30 months in prison.” He was granted “early release after a year” and then turned over to Russian authorities.

ODNI’s Worldwide Threat Assessment “More Than 7 Months Overdue.”

[WRC-TV](#) Washington (9/22, Fleischer, 303K) reports the ODNI’s Worldwide Threat Assessment has yet to be delivered, and “was expected in February.” The report is one of the few “the public gets directly from our intelligence community” on a regular basis, and Georgetown Law professor and former NSC senior counterterrorism director Joshua Geltzer explains, “I do hope that folks will realize that this is a window, an important window that has been slammed shut.” During Director of National Intelligence John Ratcliffe’s May confirmation hearings, he had “promised to provide the report within months.” A spokesperson for Ratcliffe “told the I-Team ‘he followed through with this commitment in good faith’ by sending letters in July to the House and Senate committees offering to present the report in open and closed sessions.” But that “has not happened, and the report has not been released publicly.” Sen. Mark Warner (D-VA) “says DNI wanted only to present a public statement, with the report and the questioning session to be held in private.”

Expert Says Assange A “Very High” Suicide Risk If Extradited.

The [AP](#) (9/22, Lawless) reports WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange is "very likely to attempt to kill himself if he is sent to the United States to face espionage charges, a psychiatric expert said Tuesday at an extradition hearing in London." King's College London emeritus professor of neuropsychiatry Michael Kopelman "said Assange has a history of depression and there is a 'very high' risk of suicide if the US extradition attempt succeeds." During testimony at London's Old Bailey court, Kopelman said, "It's the imminence of extradition and/or an actual extradition that will trigger the attempt, in my opinion." He also said Assange had an "intense suicidal preoccupation."

[CBS News](#) (9/22, 3.68M) reports Kopelman cited as evidence Assange's "severe depression" and "psychotic symptoms," which included "auditory hallucinations while in solitary confinement in his cell at the high-security Belmarsh Prison in southwest London."

[The Hill](#) (9/22, Coleman, 2.98M) reports Assange's extradition hearing "began in September and is expected to last until October." The judge may take "weeks or months to make a decision, according to the AP." [The Times \(UK\)](#) (9/23, Brown, Subscription Publication, 50K) also reports.

Declassified CIA Documents Detail Proposed Lightning Weapon.

[Popular Mechanics](#) (9/22, Mizokami, 7.77M) reports the CIA considered the concept "using lightning as a weapon system" in the late 1960s, as the weapon would leave behind "little or no evidence," but never developed the idea. The pitch, which Forbes "discovered in declassified CIA files, involved using 'artificial leaders' of thin metal wires to 'cause discharges to occur where and when we desire them.'" The wires, a few "thousands of an inch in diameter, would unfurl from aircraft or rockets launched into the atmosphere." Popular Mechanics says the concept is "fascinating proof that the nation's intelligence agency entertained some pretty unusual ideas."

Turkey Accuses EU Of "Rewarding The Aggressor" In Libya.

The [AP](#) (9/22, Asimov) reports Turkey on Tuesday accused the EU of "rewarding the aggressor" after it sanctioned "three transport companies for violating the UN arms embargo on Libya, including the Turkish shipping firm which operates a vessel that was at the center of a naval standoff in the Mediterranean Sea between Turkey and France." A Turkish Foreign Ministry statement dismissed the decision as "of no value." Turkey insisted the ship "was providing aid to Libya's UN-recognized government based in the capital, Tripoli, and accused the EU of ignoring countries and companies sending arms to the rival Libyan National Army, led by Gen. Khalifa Hifter, which controls the east." The statement also "said it is 'extremely unfortunate' that the decision came as efforts are underway to reduce tensions between Greece and Turkey over energy exploration rights in the eastern Mediterranean."

Europe's Data Standoff With US "Points To Deeper Division."

[Bloomberg](#) (9/22, 4.73M) reports that while "thanks to US national security warnings," the EU "has at times taken a harsher stance toward Chinese technology than it otherwise would have," EU officials are "also treading cautiously around the tech policy" of the US. Facebook is "currently embroiled in a high-stakes dispute with the Irish Data Protection Commission over privacy rules surrounding international data transfers." The commission's decision "could impact transfers of vast amounts of commercial data across the Atlantic," and if those transfers "are halted, Facebook says, companies large and small would be threatened and the EU economy could suffer." Bloomberg traces these tensions "to 2013, when National Security Agency contractor Edward Snowden revealed the massive scope of American surveillance programs," described as a "severe breach of trust between Europe and the US."

Russia Detains Leader Of Siberian Religious Sect Over Health Concerns.

[Reuters](#) (9/22, Balmforth, Osborn) reports Russian security forces detained a "prominent mystic and other leaders of the 'Church of the Last Testament' sect in a remote part of Siberia on

Tuesday over allegations they had damaged followers' health, police said." The Investigative Committee, Russia's "equivalent of the U.S. FBI, said in a statement that the religious group had used psychological pressure to extract money from its followers and caused serious harm to their health." Sergei Torop, a former traffic policeman "known to his followers as Vissarion, set up the Church of the Last Testament sect in a remote part of Siberia's Krasnoyarsk region in 1991, the year the Soviet Union broke up." The operation to detain "him, as well as group leaders Vadim Redkin and Vladimir Vedernikov, involved the police as well as members of the Federal Security Service."

CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIONS

Decade-Old Allegation Holds Up California Sex Trafficking Case.

The [San Jose \(CA\) Mercury News](#) (9/22, Gartrell, 456K) reports from Oakland, California, "Federal prosecutors are holding up the resolution of a Bay Area human trafficking case while they and the FBI investigate a decade-old allegation involving sex trafficking of a then-underage girl, they revealed in court records." The Mercury News adds, "The case centers on Richmond resident Chase McMillon, 37, who was charged with sex trafficking and other offenses after he was implicated in an assault on a woman who he was allegedly trafficking around the Bay Area. The FBI began investigating McMillon after the alleged victim accused McMillon and a woman of assaulting her in Salinas after she refused to perform sex work due to back pain." The "decade-old allegations came up while authorities were investigating McMillon for the Salinas incident, and may result in new charges."

Ex-Xerox Employee Sentenced To Life For Murder, Robbery.

The [AP](#) (9/22) reports from Rochester, New York, "A former Xerox employee was sentenced to life in prison for a robbery of a credit union in Webster in 2003 where he killed a man and injured another person." Richard Leon Wilbern, 60, "was convicted of murder and the robbery of the Xerox Federal Credit Union in a five-week trial in November. He was sentenced to life in prison at the U.S. District Court in Rochester on Tuesday." Wilbern "was accused of shooting and killing Raymond Batzel, 51, who refused to lie down on the floor with other customers and employees. He made off with more than \$10,000 cash. Wilbern evaded a manhunt and for years, was not the primary suspect in the case."

The [Rochester \(NY\) Democrat & Chronicle](#) (9/22, Cleveland, 360K) reports, "On Tuesday, Rowena Bennett stood across the federal courtroom from the man who 17 years ago gunned down her son in a credit union robbery, and she displayed neither bitterness nor anger. Instead, the 93-year-old wondered just how the two lives of Richard Leon Wilbern and her son, Raymond Batzel, had diverged so greatly." In November, "the jury convicted Wilbern of the 2003 robbery of about \$10,000 from the Xerox Federal Credit Union and the murder of Batzel during the robbery. Wilbern also shot and wounded another man, who survived."

New Hampshire White Nationalist On Trial For Alleged Rape Threats.

The [AP](#) (9/22) reports from Concord, New Hampshire, "A white nationalist who rose to prominence during a deadly 2017 rally in Charlottesville, Virginia, went on trial Tuesday on federal charges of threatening to rape the wife of a man who was part of a racist group he had been feuding with for months." Christopher Cantwell, "a New Hampshire resident, has remained in federal custody since he pleaded not guilty in January to using the Telegram messaging app to convey the threat last year." Cantwell "also threatened to expose the identify of the Missouri man if he didn't provide personal details of the leader of the Bowl Patrol, a white supremacist group of which the man was a member. 'This is an extortion case,' Assistant U.S. Attorney John Davis told the jury, adding that Cantwell's intention was to dox or publicize the victim's true identify, a process which 'can wreck a person's reputation.'"

Seventeen Arrested In Bust Of South Carolina Drug Trafficking Ring.

The [Rock Hill \(SC\) Herald](#) (9/22, Feit, 89K) reports, "A years-long investigation into a drug trafficking operation in the Midlands resulted in more than a dozen arrests and the seizure of more than a hundred guns, the U.S. Attorney's Office said Tuesday." The Herald adds, "For more than two years, federal, state, and local law enforcement officers have been investigating drug traffickers in the Lexington County area, U.S. Attorney Peter McCoy said in a news release. Seventeen people were charged in federal court for their roles in the methamphetamine distribution ring, according to the release. Along with the arrests, about 35 kilograms of meth, 116 guns, and various quantities of heroin and fentanyl were seized by law enforcement, the U.S. Attorney's office said."

[WCSC-TV](#) Charleston, SC (9/22, Mallory, 44K) reports, "The case was investigated by the ATF, FBI, LCSD, Lexington County Multi-Agency Narcotics Enforcement Team, Eleventh Circuit Solicitor's Office, Greenville County Sheriff's Office, Anderson County Sheriff's Office, and South Carolina Department of Corrections."

Pennsylvania Hotel Sweep Turns Up 16 Suspected Drug Dealers, Human Traffickers.

The [Pittsburgh Tribune-Review](#) (9/22, Tierney, 380K) reports, "Law enforcement agencies teamed up to arrest suspected drug dealers and human traffickers in Beaver County hotels, according to Beaver County District Attorney David Lozier." The Tribune-Review adds, "The district attorney's office, Center Township Police Department, the FBI Human Trafficking Task Force and the Pittsburgh Bureau of Police conducted the sweep at numerous Center Township hotels Friday and Saturday. There are 16 arrests pending, but officials have not identified the suspects." According to the Tribune-Review, "Several potential victims of human trafficking were identified and referred to support services. 'The trauma caused by traffickers to their victims is inexcusable,' FBI Pittsburgh special agent Michael Christman said in a statement. 'We are proud to team up with our state and local partners and the Beaver County District Attorney to help make our communities safer and get these victims the help they need.'"

Continuing Coverage: FBI Investigating Actor Jerry Harris Over Child Pornography.

The [Chicago Sun-Times](#) (9/22, 875K) reports that the FBI Chicago Field Office "announced it is seeking the public's help in finding possible victims in the investigation of accused 'Cheer' actor Jerry Harris," who "was arrested and faces child pornography charges." Harris "admitted to having sex with a 15-year-old, soliciting sex from minors and seeking and receiving child pornography over Snapchat from multiple individuals."

The [Chicago Daily Herald](#) (9/22, Smith, 358K) reports that the FBI "said Tuesday possible victims can report contact with Harris through a confidential online questionnaire and find resources at Fbi.gov/jerryharris."

New Jersey Woman Pleads Guilty To Attempting To Hire Hitman.

The [Burlington County \(NJ\) Times](#) (9/22, 64K) reports mental health counselor Diane Sylvia "has pleaded guilty" to "ask[ing] a patient to find a hitman for her." She "told a judge she paid \$4,000 to a man she believed would assault her former boyfriend." The would-be hitman was actually an undercover FBI agent.

Drug Probe Leads To Indictment Of Two Marines.

The [Los Angeles Times](#) (9/22, Winton, 4.64M) reports Anthony Ruben Whisenant and Ryan Douglas, both lance corporals in the US Marine Corps, have been arrested and indicted in connection with an investigation of an alleged "drug-dealing conspiracy." The DEA was one of several organizations that conducted the investigation, according to the Time article and an online [KTLA-TV](#) Los Angeles (9/22, Von Quednow, 766K) report. The [AP](#) (9/22, Watson) and the [Orange County \(CA\) Register](#) (9/22, Cain, 546K) do not mention the DEA in their coverage of this story.

Court Postpones Sentencing Of Convicted South Carolina Police Chief.

[Columbia \(SC\) State](#) (9/22, 390K) reports that the sentencing of former Manning police chief Gary Shaffer, who was convicted over "stealing \$80,000 in seized drug money and then lying to the FBI about the theft," has been postponed. The court said the delay was connected to issues with the video conferences software.

Colorado Doctor Sentenced For Child Pornography Possession.

The [Miami Herald](#) (9/22, 1.09M) reports Dr. Justin Neisler, who was "found with thousands of images and videos of child pornography" and "made his own by discretely recording young boys during medical examinations," was sentenced Tuesday to 23 years in prison. The FBI "began investigating the Denver doctor in 2018 after being alerted by social media site Tumblr that a user was sharing child pornography, and provided investigators with Neisler's IP address."

[Colorado Springs \(CO\) Gazette](#) (9/22, Isaac, 223K) also reports.

Continuing Coverage: North Carolina Man Jailed For Child Sex Crimes.

The [AP](#) (9/22) reports Joshua Taylor Bradshaw "has been apprehended and charged with more than 300 counts of sex crimes involving children" after his arrest by the FBI in Mississippi. Sheriff Hubert Peterkin "said Bradshaw is charged with 332 counts including statutory sexual offense with a child and crimes against nature," and the victims "are as young as 5 years old, and more than 133 alleged victims have been identified."

FBI Investigating Stabbing Of Arizona Border Patrol Agent.

The [Arizona Republic](#) (9/22, 869K) reports that the FBI is leading the investigation into the stabbing of an unidentified Border Patrol agent, who "was stabbed Monday while trying to arrest a group of people who were suspected of being in the United States illegally." The agent "shot and killed the suspect" after the attack.

Rhode Island Bank Robber Facing Additional Charges.

[WCVB-TV](#) Boston (9/22, 402K) reports convicted bank robber Michael Moller "is facing federal charges after applying for millions of dollars worth of COVID-19 stimulus loans for businesses in Massachusetts that did not exist." He "asserted the money would be used to pay employees of a business in Fall River, but no such business is incorporated in Massachusetts and the government could not find any tax records."

FBI Investigating Mall Shooting In Pennsylvania.

The [Lehigh Valley \(PA\) Times News](#) (9/22, 33K) reports that the FBI is supporting the investigation into the shooting at the Lehigh Valley Mall on Saturday. Whitehall Township Police "said Monday they still have no suspects in the shooting incident."

North Carolina Man Sentenced For Drug, Firearm Offenses.

[WXII-TV](#) Winston-Salem, NC (9/22, 109K) reports Tyler Grantz "has been sentenced for his role in federal drug and gun crimes." The FBI said Grantz "fired .40 and AK-style pistols at a trooper with the North Carolina State Highway Patrol during a high speed chase at around 2 a.m. on March 5, 2019." He later "fled the vehicle with an assault rifle and drugs," and he "was arrested three miles from the crash site after a manhunt."

California Man Charged With Murder Over 2013 Killing.

The [Tahoe \(CA\) Daily Tribune](#) (9/22, Rozak, 26K) reports Sean Donohue will "face murder charges for the 2013 killing of a gas station attendant at Lake Tahoe." The El Dorado County Grand Jury "handed down an indictment on Sept. 3 for Sean Donohue who allegedly walked

into the US Gasoline Station on Lake Tahoe Blvd., fired a single shot and killed store clerk 27-year-old Manpreet Singh."

[KTVN-TV Reno \(NV\)](#) Reno, NV (9/22, 1K) also reports.

FBI, Delaware Police Seize Record Amount Of Fentanyl.

The [Milford \(DE\) Beacon](#) (9/21, 18K) reports that a joint FBI-Delaware State Police operation "led to the largest fentanyl seizure in the history of the First State." Operation No Mas "took down a Delaware-based drug trafficking organization headed by Delaware native Luis Renteria." They "seized 7.5 kilograms of fentanyl, 4.2 kilograms of powder cocaine, 1.1 kilograms of crack cocaine, a half-kilogram of heroin, 45.3 pounds of marijuana, nearly 300 pills and 14 doses of LSD."

Nevada Man Arrested Following Escape.

The [Las Vegas Review-Journal](#) (9/22, 345K) reports Carlos Figueroa, who "was able to escape from federal custody last week," was arrested again on Friday. He has "been charged with murder in the death of 29-year-old Natelie Carbajal, whose burnt body was found near the Seven Magic Mountains art installation on July 4, 2019."

Colorado Police Searching For Bank Robbers.

[KCNC-TV](#) Denver (9/22, 91K) reports that Colorado police are searching for Paul Hernandez and Mary Bannigan, who are suspected as the culprits behind a string of bank robberies throughout Denver. Hernandez "is a federal ex-convict who served time for bank robberies where he was known as the Bleach Blonde Bandit."

FBI Raids Home In New York.

[Daily Voice](#) (9/22, 98K) reports that FBI agents "carted off boxes and bags of apparent evidence during a raid Tuesday on the Ridgewood home of a former Manhattan art gallery owner."

Montana Resident Pleads Guilty To Meth Distribution.

The [Great Falls \(MT\) Tribune](#) (9/22, 114K) reports Montana resident Chance Justin Redstone, who was "accused of selling meth in a casino on the Fort Peck Indian Reservation," has "pleaded guilty to distribution of meth." The article says the DEA, the FBI, the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Fort Peck Tribes Department of Law and Justice investigated the Redstone case, which "is part of Project Safe Neighborhoods, a US Department of Justice initiative to reduce violent crime."

FINANCIAL CRIME & CORPORATE SCANDALS

US Charges Two Antiquities Dealers With Fraud.

The [AP](#) (9/22) reports from New York, "Two dealers of ancient art were indicted Tuesday for allegedly creating fake ownership histories for the antiquities they sold through auction houses in New York." Erdal Dere and Faisal Khan "used the identities of deceased collectors to create the fake histories for antiquities they sold through Dere's New York company, Fortuna Fine Arts Ltd, according to the indictment unsealed Tuesday." Federal prosecutors "alleged that beginning in 2015, Dere drafted fake documents to show ownership history for items his company possessed and for new items Khan bought, primarily in Asia. Khan, Dere's associate in the business, located buyers for the items in the U.S. and overseas. The FBI's art crime team and the New York City police department's major theft task force collaborated on the investigation, along with authorities in Germany, Italy, the United Kingdom, Spain, and France."

Mossimo Giannulli Sentenced To Five Months Imprisonment Over College Bribery.

The [Santa Maria \(CA\) Times](#) (9/22, Minsky, 39K) reports Mossimo Giannulli will “serve prison time in Lompoc after he pleaded guilty to a felony charge related to the college admissions bribery scandal.” U.S. District Court Judge Nathaniel Gorton “ordered Giannulli, 57, to serve five months in Lompoc Federal Correctional Institution.” He “pleaded guilty on May 22 in Boston federal court to conspiracy to commit wire and mail fraud, and honest services wire and mail fraud.”

CYBER DIVISION

Shopify Says Customer Data Was Likely Exposed As Employees Accessed Records.

[Reuters](#) (9/22) reports, “Shopify Inc said on Tuesday data of customers who shopped at fewer than 200 merchants listed on the company’s e-commerce platform was likely exposed after two employees tried to steal transaction records.” Reuters adds, “The data exposed includes email, name, and address, as well as order details, but does not involve complete payment card numbers or financial information, the Canadian company said.” Shopify “said it immediately terminated the access of the individuals, who were part of its support team, to its network and was working with the Federal Bureau of Investigation and other international agencies in the investigation.”

The [Globe and Mail \(CAN\)](#) (9/22, 1.04M) reports, “Shopify Inc. is working with the FBI after two ‘rogue members’ of its support team engaged in a scheme to illegitimately obtain customer transactional records of some merchants. The Ottawa-based tech firm says it terminated the employees’ access to its network and referred the data breach to law enforcement. Shopify says it doesn’t have evidence at this point in the investigation that the data was used.”

Trump’s WeChat Restrictions “Could Hit Americans Instead.”

[Politico](#) (9/22, Wertime, 4.29M) reports that if a proposed US ban on WeChat introduced Friday passes judicial review, “there would be virtually no new users in the U.S. after that, while for existing ones, the app would quickly start to “degrade” and would get more hobbled over time.” Politico says that the Trump Administration’s move is “driven by serious concerns about the uses and abuses of data by an authoritarian government,” but has “nonetheless caused deep consternation among technologists, China watchers and the Chinese diaspora because it not only bans WeChat from America; it also effectively bans Americans from WeChat.” In the process, Politico says, “it begins to revoke the digital passport that the Internet has implicitly conferred on U.S. citizens for decades – effacing the freedom baked into the moral and technical architecture of their country’s grandest modern invention.”

WPost: US Ban On WeChat Will Make Whole World Less Free. The [Washington Post](#) (9/22, 14.2M) editorializes that a “careless” US ban on WeChat “will make the whole world less free by depriving millions of people of the ability to communicate with their loved ones, not to mention US businesses of the ability to communicate with clients.” Instead, it says the US “ought to ensure that any restrictions on freedom in the short run are part of a strategy to promote more freedom in the longer term.”

Kudlow: Administration Wants Security And US Ownership In TikTok Deal.

Asked on [CNBCVi](#) (9/22, 270K) about the Administration’s goal regarding the TikTok deal, NEC Director Kudlow said, “The two key points...number one: security. That is absolutely essential and this is being discussed, and it’s being looked at intensely by review processes inside the government, but security is essential. We do not want the Chinese government or the Communist Party or the Chinese military to have access to very significant and important personal information, which might open the door to even more information.” Kudlow said, “The

other point is ownership. The President wants US ownership of the new company, if there is a new company.”

WPost: US Ban On WeChat Will Make Whole World Less Free.

The [Washington Post](#) (9/22, 14.2M) editorializes that a “careless” US ban on WeChat “will make the whole world less free by depriving millions of people of the ability to communicate with their loved ones, not to mention US businesses of the ability to communicate with clients.” Instead, it says the US “ought to ensure that any restrictions on freedom in the short run are part of a strategy to promote more freedom in the longer term.”

LAW ENFORCEMENT SERVICES

FBI Teams With Huntsville, Alabama Police On Newly Opened Training Facility.

[WZDX-TV](#) Huntsville, AL (9/22, Kennedy) reports from Huntsville, Alabama, “As people call for more extensive training for police, the Huntsville Police Department now has a new joint Firearms Training Facility with the FBI.” WZDX-TV adds, “Every Huntsville police officer will go through training at the facility and work to become certified in national standards. Both Huntsville Police and the FBI will train in the building.” The FBI “contributed \$5 million to this joint partnership with the Huntsville Police Department. FBI Birmingham Special Agent in Charge Johnnie Sharp said, ‘That’s how the FBI and the Huntsville Police Department interact. We act as one team engaged in one fight to protect and serve the citizens of North Alabama.’”

[WAAY-TV](#) Huntsville, AL (9/22, Phillips, 3K) reports, “The 14,000-square-foot facility will have a 40-lane outdoor range, fitness center, 600-yard rifle range and a 7,500-square-foot tactical training building. An FBI representative at the ceremony explained what this new facility could mean for the public’s safety. ‘For years, thousands of agents will come here from the FBI, from state and local law enforcement, and they will hone their skills. They will advance their skills so they may go out in the streets when they are responding to your calls and they will be best prepared to protect themselves, their fellow officers, but also the citizenry of Alabama,’ said Associate Executive Assistant Director David Schlendorf.” [WHNT-TV](#) Huntsville, AL (9/22, 192K) also reports.

OTHER FBI NEWS

FBI Warns Of Phone Scammers.

The [Jefferson City \(MO\) News Tribune](#) (9/22, 48K) reports, “The FBI is warning the public about a phone scam that spoofs, or fraudulently displays, the FBI’s real telephone number on the victim’s caller ID.” According to the News Tribune, “A St. Louis County victim was scammed out of more than \$100,000, according to an FBI news release. The scammers posed as special agents from an FBI satellite office of the FBI Kansas City Division. In this latest iteration of the scam, the perpetrators said the victim’s Social Security number had been stolen and used to purchase property and stocks and open bank accounts in the victim’s name. Special Agent in Charge Timothy Langan of the FBI Kansas City Division said, ‘These are old scams that keep evolving with a new twist. Because there are endless versions of these scams, please remember this the FBI will never ask/demand money for any reason.’”

Judge Keeps Alive Effort To Unseal FBI Files On Jeffrey Epstein.

[McClatchy](#) (9/22, Hall, 19K) reports, “A federal judge on Tuesday kept alive a citizen muckraker’s quest to pry loose for the public’s benefit tens of thousands of FBI documents about disgraced financier Jeffrey Epstein, including his time as a government informant.” According to McClatchy, “Self-styled public information crusader Angela Clemente sued in May, seeking to force the FBI to release the documents on the grounds that Epstein is now dead,

albeit under mysterious circumstances, and that there is an overarching public interest in releasing documents. The Justice Department, representing the FBI, is fighting the effort." In a status hearing on Tuesday morning, Judge Trevor N. McFadden, "who sits on the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia, allowed Clemente's public-records lawsuit to continue. But he also put both sides on notice that he expected some agreement when they come before him again on Oct. 23."

OTHER WASHINGTON NEWS

Media Analyses: GOP Has Votes To Replace Ginsburg; "Momentum" Favors Lagoa.

Following Tuesday's announcement by Sen. Mitt Romney (R-UT), media reports are indicating Republicans seem poised to proceed with replacing the late Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg. In its lead story, for example, [NBC Nightly News](#)^{Vi} (9/22, lead story, 3:15, Holt, 5.78M) reported "Republicans appear to have the votes they need," and that while Democrats are "calling foul," they have "no path to stop it." NBC's Peter Alexander added that "consensus is forming that the White House will push the Senate to confirm a nominee before the election." [ABC World News Tonight](#)^{Vi} (9/22, story 3, 3:15, Muir, 6.19M) also reported "Senate Republicans [are] now signaling that they have the votes," and the [CBS Evening News](#)^{Vi} (9/22, story 4, 2:00, Cordes, 4.31M) that "the GOP drumbeat to act fast grew louder" Tuesday. President Trump, added CBS, "will meet with one of his top contenders, Judge Barbara Lagoa, in Florida on Friday."

The [Washington Post](#) (9/22, Gearan, Kim, Dawsey, Costa, 14.2M) reports "Democrats are largely powerless to stop the GOP from confirming whomever Trump picks," and [USA Today](#) (9/22, Wu, Fritze, 10.31M) that "Democrats acknowledged they can do little to delay the vote," with Senate Minority Whip Durbin telling reporters, "You can slow things down but you can't stop them."

Reporting on the "two women who top the President's short list," the [CBS Evening News](#)^{Vi} (9/22, story 5, 1:35, Crawford, 4.31M) said "they are both federal appeals court judges, solid conservatives. They're both mothers and Catholics but different demographics. Amy Coney Barrett has been the front-runner." She "worked for Justice Antonin Scalia as a law clerk and religious conservatives support her because they believe she would be a vote to overturn Roe V. Wade, and that made her appeals court hearing pretty contentious." CBS added that "there's growing momentum behind...Lagoa."

[Bloomberg](#) (9/22, Dennis, Litvan, 4.73M) quotes Romney as saying, "The historical precedent of election year nominations is that the Senate generally does not confirm an opposing party's nominee but does confirm a nominee of its own. ... I intend to follow the Constitution and precedent in considering the President's nominee. If the nominee reaches the Senate floor, I intend to vote based upon their qualifications." The [Los Angeles Times](#) (9/22, 4.64M) reports Romney also said, "My liberal friends have over many decades gotten very used to the idea of having a liberal court. And that's not written in the stars." To the [Washington Times](#) (9/22, Swoyer, 492K), "Romney's support for moving the confirmation process forward so close to the Nov. 3 elections was a surprise."

[Reuters](#) (9/22, Sullivan) reports "Romney's decision left Democrats with few hopes of blocking Senate confirmation of the Republican president's third appointment to the high court," [Politico](#) (9/22, Everett, 4.29M) that Senate Majority Leader McConnell "now has the votes he needs to move forward with a nominee," and [The Hill](#) (9/22, Carney, 2.98M) that McConnell "has essentially locked down support within his 53-member caucus to move a Supreme Court nominee this year." That is the likely outcome, says [CQ Roll Call](#) (9/22, Lesniewski, 154K), "barring a monumental surprise." [The Federalist](#) (9/22, Justice, 126K) also says "the GOP-controlled Senate has enough votes to confirm," with [Townhall](#) (9/22, McCarthy, 177K), the [Daily Caller](#) (9/22, Rodgers, 716K), and [Breitbart](#) (9/22, Bleau, 673K), among other conservative news outlets, running similar analyses.

To the [New York Times](#) (9/22, Fandos, 18.61M), "Romney's decision capped off an extraordinarily swift and enthusiastic rally by Republicans around Mr. Trump's position that underscored his iron grip on the party four years into his presidency. But it also reflected the political bargain that has been driving Republicans for much of the past four years," with "Republican senators...loyally" standing "behind the president at every turn, even as he trampled party principles, shattered institutional norms and made crass statements." Now, adds the Times, "with the biggest prize of all in reach – a third seat further tipping the Supreme Court to the right – they are rushing to collect on their bet, even if it is the last thing they do before they lose their Senate majority, Mr. Trump loses the presidency, or both." The [Wall Street Journal](#) (9/22, Subscription Publication, 7.57M), among other news outlets, also covers the story.

Vice President Pence said on [WRKO-AMVi](#) Boston (9/22, 9K) that "the President is going to announce a strong, principled woman as our nominee to the Supreme Court. We welcome the fact that now a majority of members of the Senate, Republicans all, are willing to vote, and the President and I really believe that in the event that there are issues and controversies in this election that rise to the level of the Supreme Court, the American people deserve to have nine Justices on the court. ... We're going to be working around the clock with Republicans in the Senate to move that nomination forward and fill that seat before Election Day." Asked whether he expects to cast a vote in the event of a tie, Pence said, "As they see the caliber, quality, qualifications, and background of that extraordinary nominee, we have every confidence that we can secure a majority of votes in the Senate."

Pence said on [WABC-AMVi](#) New York (9/22, 18K) that "it's outrageous that the Democrats in the Senate say that if the President does his duty under the Constitution of the United States to appoint a new Justice to the Supreme Court that they'll pack the court if they win the White House and win the Senate on November 3."

Asked about the Democratic response on [Fox Business' Lou Dobbs Tonight](#) (9/22, 49K), Pence said, "The American people are tired of it, they know this is a time when we all ought to be focused on honoring the life and service of Justice Ginsburg, and I think the vast majority of the American people outside the radical left understand the responsibility the President has."

White House Director of Strategic Communications Alyssa Farah said on [Fox News' America's Newsroom](#) (9/22, 896K), "We're moving forward. It looks like we have the support, but the big thing I would emphasize...is this isn't going to be a rushed process. These are going to be thoroughly vetted, highly qualified individuals, many of whom have appeared before the Senate beforehand and been confirmed for previous roles." Asked about the timeline for confirmation, she said, "While the Election Day is an important day, it's kind of an artificial deadline. Our priority is filling the seat with a highly qualified judge that meets the President's intent for what we'd like to see on the Supreme Court."

In an appearance on [Fox Business' Mornings With Maria](#) (9/22), Chief of Staff Meadows said, "I think the vast majority of Americans overwhelmingly believe that it is this President's pick, and the vast majority that I talk to want someone confirmed before the election." Meadows added, "I want to applaud all those Senate Republicans that are actually, some of them in very tough battles, willing to engage, willing to understand this President has a constitutional responsibility, and yet, to make this pick, and that they are willing to stand by him. So I am encouraged."

GOP Senators Moving Toward Holding Final Vote Before Election. The [AP](#) (9/22, Mascaro, Miller, Lemire) reports, "Votes in hand, Senate Republicans are charging ahead with plans to confirm...Trump's pick...before the Nov. 3 election, launching a divisive fight over Democratic objections before a nominee is even announced." [CNN](#) (9/22, Foran, Raju, 83.16M) reports on its website that "with momentum from their conference behind a quick vote, GOP leaders are now making clear they are pressing ahead to get the nomination confirmed before Election Day, which would amount to one of the quickest proceedings in modern times."

The [AP](#) (9/22, Mascaro, Miller, Lemire) recounts that that “during a private lunch meeting Tuesday at Senate GOP campaign headquarters, several Republican senators spoke up in favor of voting before the election. None advocated a delay.” In fact, [Politico](#) (9/22, Everett, 4.29M) reports, Senate Judiciary Chairman Lindsey Graham “predicted Tuesday that Trump’s nominee would be confirmed before the election and said he would ‘keep the process like we had it before’ when asked about the length of the confirmation hearing.”

The [Washington Post](#) (9/22, Gearan, Kim, Dawsey, Costa, 14.2M) reports Graham “said he will announce how the process will work once Trump announces his pick on Saturday.” Said Graham, “I’m confident we can have a hearing that would allow the nominee to be submitted before Election Day. ... Following the precedents of the Senate I think we can do that.” White House Press Secretary Kayleigh McEnany also “said Trump is confident that the confirmation can be completed before the election.”

[Politico](#) (9/22, Everett, Desiderio, 4.29M) reports, “Senate Republicans are set to reprise their 2016 election strategy: Make it all about the courts.” To Politico, “Senate Republicans’ focus on the courts may harm the chances of GOP senators in blue states,” but “a polarizing fight over Trump’s nominee could boost the incumbents in red-leaning states that will ultimately determine control of the Senate.”

The [New York Times](#) (9/22, Baker, 18.61M) reports, “Whether it will ultimately change the outcome of the campaign is up for debate given that Democratic voters may be equally energized.” However, for Trump, “nothing else has been working and so he has propelled himself, his Republican allies and the country into a breakneck race to confirm a successor to...Ginsburg before the Nov. 3 election, bulldozing past the precedent his own party set four years ago.”

McEnany: Precedent On GOP Side. The [Washington Examiner](#) (9/22, Soellner, 448K) reports McEnany “defended the Republican push to confirm a new Supreme Court Justice to the bench before the Nov. 3 election.” McEnany told reporters, “Twenty-nine times, there has there been an appointment during an election year. ... And when you break down those numbers, 19 times when the nominations were made, the Senate and the president were of the same party. Seventeen of those 19 times, that nominee went on to be confirmed. The 10 times when it was a difference in party between Republicans and Democrats in the Senate and the presidency, only two went on to be confirmed, so precedent is on our side.”

Trump To Announce His Pick Saturday. [USA Today](#) (9/22, 10.31M) reports “Trump said Tuesday he will disclose his new nominee for the Supreme Court on Saturday, triggering an historic battle for the high court’s future in the last six weeks of a presidential election.” The President told reporters, “I’ve spoken to many (people) and we’re getting close to a decision.” USA Today adds “the announcement is tentatively set for 5 p.m. EST on Saturday.” Trump also [tweeted](#), “I will be announcing my Supreme Court Nominee on Saturday, at the White House! Exact time TBA.”

Barrett’s Reported Membership Draws Attention To Conservative Christian Group. [Reuters](#) (9/22, Trotta) reports on People of Praise, “a self-described charismatic Christian community” of which Supreme Court contender Judge Amy Coney Barrett is a “purported member.” Some critics have compared the group “to the totalitarian, male-dominated society of Margaret Atwood’s novel ‘The Handmaid’s Tale,’” while others “call it an ultraconservative group with an unusual mix of Roman Catholic and Pentecostal traditions.” People of Praise “has about 1,700 members in 22 cities in the United States, Canada and the Caribbean, according to its website.”

[Townhall](#) (9/22, Rosas, 177K) reports Newsweek published a story on Monday claiming that the group was the inspiration for the Atwood novel, which is not true. Newsweek “has since changed the headline” to “How Charismatic Catholic Groups Like Amy Coney Barrett’s People of Praise Inspired ‘The Handmaid’s Tale’” since Atwood “has never specified which group was the inspiration for her book.” [Breitbart](#) (9/22, Nolte, 673K) writes, “The far-left Newsweek just fired

off around a thousand words falsely accusing Amy Coney Barrett of inspiring the dystopian feminist thriller *The Handmaid's Tale*, and has been forced to retract it."

Schumer Moves To Block "Business As Usual" In Senate. [The Hill](#) (9/22, Carney, 2.98M) reports, "Senate Democrats are limiting the ability to hold committee hearings in retaliation for Republicans decision to try to fill a Supreme Court seat in the middle of an election year, the first action in what is likely to be an increasingly combative battle over procedure in the Senate." Senate Minority Leader Schumer this week "invoked the so-called 'two hour rule,' which can be used to limit the ability to hold committee hearings," which led to the cancellation of a Senate Intelligence Committee hearing Tuesday. Schumer said from the Senate floor, "Because the Senate Republicans have no respect for the institution, we won't have business as usual here in the Senate."

New Justice Could "Make Or Break" ACA Challenge. [NBC Nightly News](#) (9/22, story 2, 2:00, Holt, 5.78M) reported, "The Supreme Court's new term begins in less than two weeks with several high profile cases. A justice appointed by President Trump will have a profound effect on how they are decided." NBC's Pete Williams added, "A make-or-break challenge to the Affordable Care Act could affect the most Americans. ... Justice Ginsburg twice before voted to uphold the law, and her absence will embolden the law's opponents. Even if a more conservative court finds part of it unconstitutional, it's possible the court will say Congress did not intend the entire law to be tossed out. If the court is leaning that way, it might be especially reluctant to strike down the health care law in the middle of a pandemic with record unemployment."

GOP To Ask Supreme Court To Limit Mail Voting In Pennsylvania.

[The Hill](#) (9/22, 2.98M) reports, "Republicans plan to ask the Supreme Court to review a major Pennsylvania state court ruling that extended the due date for mail ballots in the key battleground state." The move comes after the Pennsylvania Supreme Court "dealt Republicans a major blow last week in a bitterly partisan election lawsuit." The expected petition to the Supreme Court comes just days after Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg's death.

Trump Uses UN Address To Blast China's Handling Of Pandemic Outbreak.

The President's address to the UN General Assembly Tuesday, which was pre-recorded, garnered little media attention. None of the networks covered the address in their broadcasts Tuesday night. Trump, [Reuters](#) (9/22, Nichols, Holland) reports, "facing a November re-election battle with the United States dealing with the world's highest official number of deaths and infections from the coronavirus, focused his speech on attacking China." The President told the General Assembly "that China must be held accountable for having 'unleashed' COVID-19 on the world."

Along similar lines, the [AP](#) (9/22, Riechmann) reports, "Under fire for his own handling of the coronavirus, Trump cast blame on China, noting the virus began there and accusing the Chinese government of acting irresponsibly in failing to contain it." Said the President, "The United Nations must hold China accountable for their actions," without "elaborating on what punishment he thought was warranted."

Trump, [USA Today](#) (9/22, Subramanian, 10.31M) reports, "used his speech...to level a withering series of attacks against China," the [Washington Times](#) (9/22, Boyer, 492K) says he "accus[ed] Beijing of deceiving the world about the danger," and to [Breitbart](#) (9/22, 673K) he "berated China."

The [New York Times](#) (9/22, Gladstone, 18.61M) says Trump "assailed China as the coronavirus villain Tuesday in a strongly worded United Nations speech, extolling his own actions in the pandemic and demanding that the global organization hold accountable 'the nation which unleashed this plague onto the world.'"

The [CNBC](#) (9/22, Macias, 3.62M) website quotes Trump as saying, "The Chinese government and the World Health Organization, which is virtually controlled by China, falsely

declared that there was no evidence of human-to-human transmission. Later, they falsely said people without symptoms would not spread the disease."

[Politico](#) (9/22, Forgey, 4.29M) reports that Trump "accused China of allowing flights of infected people to leave the country in the early days of the Covid-19 outbreak, as well as of spreading false information with the help of the World Health Organization." He "also criticized China's environmental policies, accusing its government of allowing overfishing of foreign waters, dumping trash into the oceans and producing unacceptable levels of carbon emissions." Trump said, "Those who attack America's exceptional environmental record while ignoring China's rampant pollution are not interested in the environment. They only want to punish America, and I will not stand for it."

The [Los Angeles Times](#) (9/22, Wilkinson, 4.64M) says Trump's "unusually harsh speech in a forum that typically sticks to diplomatic niceties had two audiences." He "not only was speaking to the global community, but also to American voters: Anti-China rhetoric has been central to his campaign efforts to deflect blame for his failings in handling the pandemic, as well as criticism about his responses to trade deficits, climate change and China's abysmal human rights record."

Chinese President Xi Jinping addressed the General Assembly later Tuesday. [Reuters](#) (9/22, Nichols, Holland) says the Chinese leader "struck a conciliatory tone...calling for enhanced cooperation over the pandemic and stressing that China had no intention of fighting 'either a Cold War or a hot war with any country.'"

[Bloomberg](#) (9/22, Sink, Liu, 4.73M) reports Xi "rebutted Trump's claims without mentioning the US president by name," saying "the global fight against the virus 'should not be politicized' and warned that 'no country can gain from others' difficulties.'" The [AP](#) (9/22, Anthony, Klug) similarly says Xi "took oblique potshots at the United States and its foreign policies...cautioning...that the world must 'not fall into the trap of a clash of civilizations.'" Xi is quoted as saying, "Major countries should act like major countries." Xi also "cast the fight against the virus as an important exercise in international cooperation, an opportunity to 'join hands and be prepared to meet even more global challenges.'" The [New York Post](#) (9/22, Feis, 4.57M) says Xi "shrugged off responsibility for his country's disastrous handling of the coronavirus."

The [New York Times](#) (9/22, Gladstone, 18.61M) says, "Taken together, the speeches by the American and Chinese presidents...punctuated the growing schism between the two superpowers during Mr. Trump's first term."

Pompeo: US Pushing Back Against Chinese Military Activities In South China Sea.

In an interview with the [Washington Times](#) (9/22, Gertz, 492K), Secretary of State Pompeo says the US is "pushing back against stepped-up Chinese military activities near Taiwan and in the South China Sea as a means of deterring a conflict with Beijing." Asked about China's large-scale military exercises near Taiwan in recent days, Pompeo said, "What we have done for decades is we have permitted the Chinese Communist Party to engage in threatening or disruptive behavior, whether that is predatory economic practices and the like, and they have continued to expand their capacity and their footprint." Pompeo added, "The biggest risk with regard to the Chinese Communist Party is appeasement," and President Trump is "not going to let that happen anymore."

Facebook Takes Down Chinese Campaign Aimed At US Election. [Axios](#) (9/22, Gold, Fischer, 521K) reports Facebook said Tuesday it "took down the first-ever coordinated inauthentic campaign engaged in US politics that originated from China." Facebook said it removed two separate networks "for violating its policies against coordinated inauthentic behavior: One from China and the other from the Philippines." The Chinese campaign was "primarily aimed at Southeast Asia," but "a small number of posts that targeted the US."

The [New York Times](#) (9/22, Goldman, Frenkel, Barnes, 18.61M) reports the "Chinese activity, while modest and not directly attributed to the government in Beijing, could undercut Trump's repeated contention that China is intervening in the election to support" Joe Biden.

NYTimes Analysis: Biden Might Be More Problematic For China Than Trump. In an article titled "In Biden, China Sees An 'Old Friend' And Possible Foe," the [New York Times](#) (9/22, Myers, Hernández, 18.61M) says President Trump "has brought China's relations with the United States to their lowest point in years," but Joe Biden "could prove, from the Chinese vantage point, to be a tougher and more complex challenge." Biden, "according to analysts in China, could do more damage than Mr. Trump by pursuing a more coherent strategy to counter China's global agenda." The former Vice President "has vowed that if elected, he would take a harder line on climate change and China's crackdowns on ethnic minorities and Hong Kong. To China's leadership, he is the candidate more likely to restore strong ties with American allies and mobilize other nations to pressure China more effectively."

Cuccinelli Touts WROs On Products Made In Xinjiang. Acting Deputy DHS Secretary Ken Cuccinelli said on [WILS 1320](#) (9/22) that "the President has told us to be very forward-leaning in this area and we have responded, and last Monday's withhold release orders affect computer parts, cotton and textiles, hair products, more hair products, and a concentration camp directly that the Communist Chinese call a vocational education school. It's over \$200 million in trade a year." Cuccinelli said, "Our goal here isn't to beat them into the ground, it's to get them to act in a humanitarian manner and to do it using the almighty dollar."

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (9/22, Subscription Publication, 7.57M) editorializes that China is now using some of the same oppressive tactics employed against Uighur Muslims in Xinjiang in Tibet. The Journal calls on China to allow international journalists and observers into Xinjiang and Tibet.

Study: Chinese Economic Policies Directly Harmed US Industries. [Axios](#) (9/22, Allen-Ebrahimian, 521K) reports China's "economic planning and targeted subsidies have increased the competitiveness of Chinese firms in the global economy to the direct detriment of US industry, an academic [study](#) has found." Researchers at Columbia University and Boston College found "for every 100 factories opened in China, 12.5 US factories in the same industry closed."

Director of Trade and Manufacturing Policy Navarro said on [Fox Business' Evening Edit](#) (9/22) that "we're probably going to lose a full year of gross domestic product to the Chinese Communist Party after you take into account the value of the lives lost, the amount of economic stimulus that we're having to pour into the economy, and the lost jobs and GDP growth. It's enormous." Navarro said, "What the President was sending a very clear signal today is simply that we need to find out more about the origins of the CCP virus and we need to calculate those costs and essentially give China a bill."

USTR Lighthizer said on [KDKA-AMVi](#) Pittsburgh (9/22), "We had an extremely unfair, an extremely unbalanced, relationship with China" prior to the Phase 1 trade deal "where our trade deficit with one country went from \$25 to \$50 to \$100 billion to \$200 billion to \$440 billion, literally millions of jobs, 60,000 plants wiped out between that and NAFTA." Lighthizer said, "This President, for the first time, basically took it on," with tariffs "in order to change the relationship, in order to get them to change their practices," and the Phase 1, "which they're doing a pretty good job of keeping."

Meanwhile, former Australian prime minister Kevin Rudd and Daniel Rosen, a founding partner of Rhodium Group, argue in the [Wall Street Journal](#) (9/22, Subscription Publication, 7.57M) that despite repeated commitments from China to reform its economy, the nation has delayed, and in some cases, backtracked on its pledges.

Xi Vows China Will Achieve "Carbon Neutrality" Before 2060. The [New York Times](#) (9/22, Sengupta, 18.61M) reports in during his UN General Assembly address Tuesday, Chinese President Xi Jinping pledged that his country, "the world's top producer of greenhouse gases, would adopt much stronger climate targets" and achieve what he called "carbon neutrality before 2060." If realized, the Time says, the pledges "would be crucial in the global fight against climate change."

Chinese Tycoon Who Criticized Xi Sentenced To 18 Years In Prison. The [New York Times](#) (9/22, 18.61M) reports Ren Zhiqiang, "the property tycoon...notorious for his blunt criticisms of the Communist Party," was sentenced Tuesday in Beijing to 18 years in prison after a court found him "guilty of graft, taking bribes, misusing public funds and abusing his power during and after his time as an executive at a property development company." Ren's "supporters and sympathizers said that his real crime was criticizing the Communist Party and calling the country's hard-line leader, Xi Jinping, a 'clown.'" The [Washington Post](#) (9/22, Dou, 14.2M) reports "scholars say the harsh punishment indicates the growing dissent Xi is facing from his own Chinese Communist Party elite, as he takes the country down a more authoritarian path."

Pence: "Reckless" For Biden To Undermine Vaccine.

Vice President Pence said on [WABC-AM](#) Vi New York (9/22, 18K) that "when it comes to the vaccine issue, I just think it is, it really is reckless and irresponsible that Joe Biden and Kamala Harris are undermining confidence in a vaccine." He said, "They need to stop playing politics with American lives. We know that the day that the FDA approves a safe and effective vaccine because of Operation Warp Speed, we're going to have tens of millions of doses available for the American people, and the last thing we need is people like Joe Biden and Kamala Harris undermining the confidence of the American people."

Pfizer's COVID Vaccine Trial On Track To Beat Rivals.

[Bloomberg](#) (9/22, Langreth, 4.73M) reports, "The Covid-19 vaccine trial designed by Pfizer Inc. and its German partner BioNTech SE may allow them to find whether their shot works before their fastest-moving rivals." The firms "plan a first look after a mere 32 coronavirus infections have accumulated in their massive 44,000-person trial," which could happen as early as Sept. 27. Pfizer has also "given itself four chances to get a preliminary result, before reaching the final goal of 164." Moderna won't "dive in until 53 cases have occurred; its ultimate goal is to make a judgment at 151 diagnoses." AstraZeneca will "take its first look at 75 cases, and not again until the trial is complete with 150."

Federal Advisory Committee Postpones Vote On Vaccine Rollout.

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (9/22, Loftus, Subscription Publication, 7.57M) reports the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices, which advises the CDC, will delay a vote on who should get the first doses of potential coronavirus vaccines. The committee was initially expected to vote on Tuesday, but it may wait until government officials approve a specific vaccine or vaccines.

FDA Expected To Announce New Standard For Emergency Authorization Of Vaccine.

The [Washington Post](#) (9/22, A1, McGinley, Johnson, 14.2M) reports the FDA "is expected to spell out a tough, new standard for an emergency authorization of a coronavirus vaccine as soon as this week that will make it exceedingly difficult for any vaccine to be cleared before Election Day." The agency is releasing "the guidance to boost transparency and public trust as it approaches the momentous decision of whether a prospective vaccine is safe and effective." The Post adds, "Public health experts are increasingly worried that President Trump's repeated predictions of a coronavirus vaccine by Nov. 3, coupled with the Administration's interference in federal science agencies, may prompt Americans to reject any vaccine as rushed and potentially tainted."

On [ABC World News Tonight](#) Vi (9/22, story 2, 2:00, Muir, 6.19M), Steve Osunsami reported that under the new rules, "volunteers who test these vaccines would now need to be monitored for roughly two months after their second dose."

Reports Put 200,000 US Pandemic Deaths In Context Of Presidential Campaign.

The [AP](#) (9/22, Johnson) reports, "The U.S. death toll from the coronavirus topped 200,000 Tuesday, by far the highest in the world, hitting the once-unimaginable threshold six weeks before an election that is certain to be a referendum in part on President Donald Trump's handling of the crisis." The AP adds that the death toll "is still climbing. Deaths are running at close to 770 a day on average, and a widely cited model from the University of Washington predicts the U.S. toll will double to 400,000 by the end of the year as schools and colleges reopen and cold weather sets in." NIAID Director Fauci is quoted as saying, "The idea of 200,000 deaths is really very sobering, in some respects stunning."

[Politico](#) (9/22, Wanneh, 4.29M) reports that the US "continues to lead the world in deaths and confirmed cases, with about 6.9 million infections since the coronavirus emerged in January, according to a Johns Hopkins University tracker. Despite accounting for 4 percent of the global population, the U.S. has recorded about 20 percent of the world's coronavirus deaths." Politico adds, "While President Donald Trump insists against evidence the pandemic is nearing an end, health experts have urged the country to stay on guard, as more schools and businesses reopen and people spend more time indoors." According to Politico, Trump "continues to downplay those measures and the virus' risk as he holds packed rallies with mostly maskless crowds and urges states to swiftly lift restrictions."

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (9/22, Calfas, Subscription Publication, 7.57M) reports Trump called the milestone "a shame." He then blamed China and touted measures taken by the Administration to counter the virus. Trump said, "It's a horrible thing. China let this happen. Just remember that."

[USA Today](#) (9/22, Rodriguez, 10.31M) reports that in March, Trump "said keeping the death toll between 100,000 to 200,000 people would have indicated that his administration had 'done a very good job.'" But "with models predicting that number to be eclipsed by the end of the year, Trump has sought to reshape the significance of the death tally." Trump said Friday, "If we didn't do our job, it would be three and half, two and half, maybe three million people." However, Weijia Jiang of the [CBS Evening News](#)^{Vi} (9/22, story 2, 1:50, O'Donnell, 4.31M) reported Joe Biden "tweeted about the milestone several times writing, 'It didn't have to be this bad.'"

On [ABC World News Tonight](#)^{Vi} (9/22, lead story, 5:25, Muir, 6.19M), Jonathan Karl reported that on Tuesday, "the American Medical Association, the American Hospital Association, and the American Nurses Association issued an extraordinary joint statement, saying COVID-19 is 'affecting Americans at a rate that represents a nearly worst-case scenario.'" However, "the President is speaking as if the pandemic is a thing of the past."

The [New York Times](#) (9/22, 18.61M) reports that Fauci "said he worries about the country entering the cooler months without having a handle on the virus." The Times adds that "the persistently high death numbers in the United States stand in stark contrast to mortalities in other high-income countries." According to the Times, "Italy, once the center of the pandemic, reported 17 deaths on Monday; Germany reported 10 deaths the same day. In the United States that day, 428 people were reported to have died of the virus."

[Reuters](#) (9/22, S) reports, "Six out of every 10,000 residents in the United States has died of the virus, according to Reuters data, one of the highest rates among developed nations."

The [CBS Evening News](#)^{Vi} (9/22, lead story, 3:55, O'Donnell, 4.31M) reported, "One of the leading models used by the White House now projects that by the end of the year, the death toll nationwide may nearly double to 378,000." Meanwhile, "confirmed cases in the US are also increasing, now growing at the fastest rate they have in two months." CBS' Mola Lenghi added, "Twenty states plus DC and Puerto Rico are reporting increases from new cases from two weeks ago."

Tom Costello of [NBC Nightly News](#)^{Vi} (9/22, story 3, 2:55, Holt, 5.78M) reported that "17 states plus Puerto Rico report a disturbing increase in coronavirus cases over the past two weeks, 25% or more in Wyoming, Connecticut, Wisconsin, Rhode Island, Utah, Colorado, New Hampshire, Nebraska, Oklahoma, and New Jersey. Nationwide, 421 deaths yesterday alone."

Pence: Trump's Early Action Saved "Hundreds Of Thousands" Of Lives. Vice President Pence said on [WABC-AMVi](#) New York (9/22, 18K) that "we just cleared 100 million tests having been performed, we saw to the creation, the manufacture, the distribution of hundreds of millions of supplies, medicines developed, and we are literally on track to have the first coronavirus vaccine in the world before the end of this year. I'm absolutely convinced that because of the President's leadership, because of healthcare workers all across this country, and the cooperation of the American people, that we literally saved hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of American lives over the last eight months."

Pence said on [Fox Business' Lou Dobbs Tonight](#) (9/22, 49K) that, "I'm absolutely convinced as the leader of the White House coronavirus task force that because of President Trump's early action, suspending all travel from China, launching the greatest national mobilization since World War II, reinventing testing, seeing to the delivery and the manufacture of hundreds of millions of supplies, and driving toward developing medicines and vaccines, I'm absolutely convinced that despite the heartbreaking losses that we've experienced that we, as Americans, with this President, have literally saved hundreds of thousands of American lives."

Woodward "Embarrassed For" Trump Giving Himself An "A+" For Coronavirus Response. [USA Today](#) (9/22, Behrmann, 10.31M) reports, "Veteran Washington Post journalist Bob Woodward reportedly said Tuesday that he was 'quite frankly embarrassed' for President Donald Trump that he had given himself an A+ grade for his coronavirus response, as 200,000 U.S. citizens are now dead." Woodward was asked at a conference "about Trump repeating Monday his administration would 'take an A-plus' regarding the response to COVID-19." Woodward "said he is 'quite frankly embarrassed for him that he would say that, because all Americans know that 200,000 were killed.'"

Some Experts Say Recent Uptick In Coronavirus Cases Could Be Harbinger Of Deadly Fall. The [Washington Post](#) (9/22, Achenbach, Brulliard, 14.2M) reports the coronavirus "is spreading at dangerous rates in many states as autumn arrives and colder weather – traditionally congenial to viruses – begins to settle across the nation, public health data shows." According to an analysis from the Post, 27 states "have shown an increase in the seven-day average of new confirmed cases since the final week of August." In addition, "Minnesota, Montana, Oklahoma, Puerto Rico, Wisconsin, Wyoming and Utah set record highs Monday for seven-day averages." Michael Osterholm, an epidemiologist at the University of Minnesota, said, "I think we're just in the beginning of what's going to be a marked increase in cases in the fall. And it won't be just a testing artifact, either. This is real."

WPost Urges Americans To Remember The 200,000 Who Have Died By Voting. The [Washington Post](#) (9/22, 14.2M) editorializes that Americans should be "very angry" about the "country's grim total to 200,000 deaths" from the coronavirus. The Post blames President Trump, who "knew early on (by Jan. 28, to be exact) how dangerous the virus is," but "chose to minimize the threat and mislead the American public." The Post pushes back against Trump's claim that "nothing more could have been done," and urges Americans to remember the victims, adhere to health and safety guidelines, and vote.

Administration Sending Rapid Coronavirus Tests To Historically Black Colleges.

[McClatchy](#) (9/22, Chambers, 19K) reports, "In an effort to prevent potential COVID-19 outbreaks in high-risk communities, the Trump administration said it has started shipping rapid coronavirus tests to more than three dozen historically Black colleges and universities." According to federal officials, "in the first shipment, more than 250,000 rapid tests were distributed to 41 public colleges and Howard University that identify as HBCUs." Each university is being sent "enough kits to test every member of its student body, staff and faculty, although the administration does not believe that will be necessary." HHS Assistant Secretary for Health Adm. Brett Giroir said, "We know they've been underserved historically, and we just want to support them."

Supply Shortages Forcing Health Systems To Ration COVID Tests.

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (9/22, Frosch, Subscription Publication, 7.57M) reports supply shortages are compelling health systems across the US to ration COVID-19 tests, holding back work to increase testing. A shortage of reagents, the ingredients necessary to process the tests, is behind the latest testing issue.

NIH Official Exits After It Is Revealed He Published COVID Misinformation Online.

The [New York Times](#) (9/22, Montague, 18.61M) reports that the former public affairs officer at the National Institutes of Health who "abruptly retired" as The Daily Beast "prepared to expose his clandestine role as purveyor of misinformation," posted online "a slew of incorrect claims about this virus this year, some even directly attacking his boss," NIAID Director Fauci. According to the Times, William B. Crews was "especially focused on undermining efforts to persuade the public to wear masks, saying that 'math tells you the diameter of the virus is orders of magnitude smaller than the smallest opening between mask fibers.'" The Times says that "combating misinformation has been a challenge for social media companies and public health officials."

White House Officials Blast Former Coronavirus Task Force Member.

[Politico](#) (9/22, Niedzwiedek, 4.29M) reports, "Vice President Mike Pence's national security adviser on Tuesday assailed the former White House coronavirus task force adviser who recently lambasted the administration's pandemic response and announced that she'd vote for Joe Biden this November." Retired Gen. Keith Kellogg "took to the podium during a press briefing at the White House to say he was 'not proud of Olivia Troye,' and pushed back on her claims that President Donald Trump was callous in the face of the public health crisis, which has now killed more than 200,000 Americans." Troye, "who worked as an adviser to Pence on counterterrorism and homeland security issues before leaving the administration in August, appeared in an ad released on Thursday for the group Republican Voters Against Trump in which she recounted her experience on the taskforce."

The [New York Post](#) (9/22, Nelson, 4.57M) reports White House Press Secretary Kayleigh McEnany also "denounced Troye and another member of the pro-Joe Biden group, former Department of Homeland Security Chief of Staff Miles Taylor, who now works at Google and appears on CNN." McEnany said, "These are not profiles in courage, but these are profiles in cowardice." She added, "Troye failed to speak up and she struggled to keep up because she was constantly complaining about how exhausted and overwhelmed she was coordinating conference calls and scheduling meetings. Troye's detail was cut short and now she's cutting commercials for a fringe club of 'never Trumpers' who are desperate for relevancy, and the price of admission to this club is fabricated smears and flat-out lies against President Trump."

In an interview with [NBC Nightly News](#)^{Vi} (9/22, story 7, 2:35, Holt, 5.78M), Troye said, "It was the hardest decision I've ever had to make, and I just felt that at the end of the day, I need to finally be able to sleep at night and knowing that I did the right thing for the American people." Troye also recalled Trump suggesting that the coronavirus wasn't so bad. Troye recounted, "I was sitting to the right of him in the room when he said it. He said and you know when you're a politician, you have to shake a lot of hands, and these people are disgusting. It's gross. So maybe COVID is probably a good thing, right?"

McEnany Rebukes CNN's Acosta Over Coronavirus Question Taking Trump Out Of Context.

[Fox News](#) (9/22, Flood, 27.59M) reports on its website that White House Press Secretary Kayleigh McEnany "accused CNN's Jim Acosta of taking President Trump out of context during Tuesday's White House press briefing." Acosta "asked McEnany about a partial quote President Trump said during an Ohio campaign rally on Monday." Acosta said, "I think he was talking about younger Americans, He said it 'affects virtually nobody. But he said to Bob Woodward

that 'it's not just older people, it's young people, too,' at 200,000 deaths shouldn't be telling people the truth about this virus at his rallies?" McEnany said, "You are taking it out of context because you're making an assertion that he's not giving critical information when, in fact, he is and I will underscore exactly what he said. He said this, 'You know, in some states thousands of people, and they've had nobody young, below the age of 18 like nobody. They have a strong immune system.' That is factually true."

NYTimes Report Scrutinizes Trump's DPA Claims.

The [New York Times](#) (9/22, Jacobs, 18.61M) reports that President Trump "has sweeping powers to compel companies to produce protective gear and to guarantee that the federal government will pay them for it – and as his election campaign intensifies, he has been boasting about aggressively using them." However, according to the Times, "in fact, most of his administration's use of that authority, granted under the Cold-War Defense Production Act, has had nothing to do with the pandemic." The Times says a White House report released in August "claimed that Mr. Trump has wielded the act nearly 80 times to alleviate shortages of masks and other medical supplies." But the Times says "all but six of the examples cited in the report were either executive orders unrelated to the production of medical equipment or Defense Department expenditures that do not address the nation's supply shortages."

Pentagon Reportedly Spent PPE Funds On Unrelated Items.

The [Washington Post](#) (9/22, A1, Gregg, Torbati, 14.2M) reports that "a \$1 billion fund Congress gave the Pentagon in March to build up the country's supplies of medical equipment has instead been mostly funneled to defense contractors and used to make things such as jet engine parts, body armor and dress uniforms." The Post says the CARES Act, "which Congress passed earlier this year, gave the Pentagon money to 'prevent, prepare for, and respond to coronavirus.' But a few weeks later, the Defense Department began reshaping how it would award the money in a way that represented a major departure from Congress's intent."

In a separate article, the [Washington Post](#) (9/22, Gregg, Torbati, 14.2M) reports congressional Democrats "sharply criticized" the Defense Department's decision, "a change the lawmakers say violated congressional intent." Reps. Barbara Lee (D-CA) and Mark Pocan (D-WI) "called for a formal investigation reviewing the legality of the Defense Department's decision to use any of the coronavirus funding for defense industry stimulus." In a letter to House Majority Whip Clyburn, House Oversight and Reform Chairwoman Carolyn Maloney, and House Armed Services Chairman Adam Smith, Lee and Pocan wrote, "For the Administration to choose to use funds Congress made available to fight COVID-19 on the wish lists of defense contractors, instead of first protecting troops and the general public from the spread of the coronavirus, is unconscionable and should be investigated fully and prosecuted if warranted."

NFL Head Coaches Fined For Not Wearing Masks.

[ABC World News Tonight](#)^{Vi} (9/22, story 9, 0:15, Muir, 6.19M) reported the NFL is "handing out more than \$1 million in fines to three head coaches and their teams" for "not wearing masks during Sunday's games."

Notre Dame Game Postponed Due To Player Infections.

[ABC World News Tonight](#)^{Vi} (9/22, story 10, 0:05, Muir, 6.19M) reported that Notre Dame has "postponed Saturday's game after seven players tested positive for the virus."

CDC Releases Guidelines On Celebrating Halloween Amid Pandemic.

The [CBS Evening News](#)^{Vi} (9/22, story 10, 0:30, O'Donnell, 4.31M) reported the CDC has released "new guidance to protect against the spread of COVID...this Halloween." The CDC

"recommends avoiding high-risk activities like traditional trick-or-treating where treats are handed out, and indoor haunted houses, where people are together and screaming."

New York AG: Eric Trump Gave "False" Reason For Delaying Deposition.

[Bloomberg](#) (9/22, 4.73M) reports Eric Trump "gave a judge a 'false' explanation for why he backed out of a July deposition in a civil probe of the family business," New York Attorney General Letitia James said in a court filing Tuesday. After New York took legal action in August to enforce a subpoena, "Trump's lawyer said his client had simply adjourned the deposition to get 'certain assurances first.'" James, however, asserted in her filing, "This assertion is false," citing "his own public statements after she took legal action to enforce the subpoena." She cited a Fox News Radio interview in which Trump said, "Why would you possibly comply" with such demands.

Wold: Border Wall "Making A Difference."

Deputy Assistant to the President for Domestic Policy Theo Wold said on the [Sandy Rios Show](#) (9/22) that "we're about at 400 miles of total construction and we're now at a pace where we're putting up a new mile of border wall every day. ... Every single...guy or gal in our law enforcement along the southern border will tell you, the wall is making a difference and we can see it in real time as the trafficking networks, as the drug cartels, all have to realign their positions, find new routes, and that's increasing our ability to interdict and stop them." Wold made similar comments on [KNST-AM](#) Tucson, AZ (9/22, 4K).

Wold Touts Second Term Immigration Ambitions. Asked on [KNST-AM](#) Tucson, AZ (9/22, 4K) about the President's second term ambitions regarding immigration policy, Wold said, "We're going to be working to make our solutions durable for the long haul," including "ending the benefits scheme that illegal aliens have profited from for decades" and "disrupting these criminal syndicates that have been taking advantage of the non-enforcement for decades. ... We've got some pretty creative ideas that we're going to open up...so that we can end sanctuary cities once and for all." Wold said the President is also "very wedded to a vision of merit-based immigration."

Hospital Rebutts Claims That Many Hysterectomies Were Performed On Detainees.

The [Washington Post](#) (9/22, Miroff, 14.2M) reports, "A hospital in rural Georgia where a physician has been accused of performing a large number of hysterectomies on immigrant detainees said its records show that just two women in immigration custody were referred to the hospital for the procedure since 2017." Heath Clark, a lawyer for ERH Healthcare, "which operates the Irwin County Hospital, said both of the procedures were performed by Mahendra Amin, the physician who activists have accused of carrying out forced sterilizations on immigrant women in U.S. Customs and Immigration Enforcement custody." Clark said, "These allegations are disturbing and sensational, but they are not supported by reality."

DHS Reinstates "Public Charge" Rule After Court Victory.

[Axios](#) (9/22, Kight, 521K) reports the Administration "will reimpose a new wealth and health 'public charge' test for green card applicants in the US, after the rule was previously blocked by a court injunction in July because of the coronavirus, according to the US Citizenship and Immigration Services website." On its website, [CBS News](#) (9/22, Montoya-Galvez, 3.68M) says the "move likely [is] to alarm advocates, who have warned about the policy's impact on immigrant communities ravaged by the coronavirus."

[The Hill](#) (9/22, Weixel, 2.98M) reports that "under the rule, any immigrant who receives at least one designated public benefit – including Medicaid, food stamps, welfare or public housing vouchers – for more than 12 months within any three-year period will be considered a 'public charge' and will be more likely to be denied a green card."

House Approves Stopgap Spending Bill Including Farm Aid Sought By GOP.

[Politico](#) (9/22, Ferris, Emma, Caygle, 4.29M) reports "the House on Tuesday overwhelmingly voted to extend federal funding through Dec. 11, while punting the threat of a government shutdown until after the presidential election." Last night's "bipartisan vote comes hours after" House Speaker Pelosi and Treasury Secretary Mnuchin "clinched a last-minute deal to include billions in nutrition assistance and trade relief payments for farmers, capping weeks of contentious negotiations." [Reuters](#) (9/22, Cornwell) recalls that "the measure, which now heads to the Senate, appeared in danger on Monday when Democrats left out key farm aid that President Donald Trump had promised last week during a political rally in Wisconsin, a key battleground state in his bid for re-election."

The [New York Times](#) (9/22, Cochrane, 18.61M) reports "House Democratic leaders had initially sought to advance the bill without the" farm aid, but "moderate Democrats who count farmers and agriculture businesses as significant constituencies within their districts lobbied Ms. Pelosi to reconsider." [Axios](#) (9/22, Treene, 521K) reports Pelosi "said Tuesday that...Mnuchin had agreed to 'increase accountability' in the farmer bailout fund in order to prevent it from being 'misused for a Big Oil bailout'" and that "Republicans had agreed to add nearly \$8 billion in 'desperately needed nutrition assistance for hungry schoolchildren and families.'"

The [Washington Times](#) (9/22, Muñoz, 492K) indicates the tally in the House was [359-57](#). The Senate, says the [Washington Post](#) (9/22, Werner, 14.2M), "could take" the measure "up later this week and send it to...Trump. White House officials say they don't want a shutdown, and Trump is expected to sign the bill, though he's wavered at the last minute in such scenarios in the past."

Meadows Memo: Administration To Replace White House Liaisons At Many Agencies.

[Axios](#) (9/22, Swan, 521K) reports Chief of Staff Meadows "told administration officials Monday to expect senior aides to be replaced at many government agencies, according to an internal email obtained by Axios." Meadows asked Director of the White House Presidential Personnel Office John McEntee "to look at replacing the White House Liaisons (WHLs) at many of your agencies," according to the email. Meadows wrote, "Please welcome incoming liaisons as they begin their new roles. I ask that you encourage your teams to equip the WHLs with everything they need to support your agency and the President's agenda. It is important that WHLs have direct access to principals and senior staff regarding all political hiring decisions."

DeVos Reportedly Under Investigation For Possibly Violating Hatch Act.

The [Daily Caller](#) (9/22, Corkery, 716K) reports Education Secretary DeVos is "reportedly under investigation for possibly violating the Hatch Act during an interview with Fox News, Politico reported Monday." The Office of Special Counsel "reportedly started the investigation after DeVos criticized former Vice President Joe Biden during the interview, according to Politico." Her criticism "came in response to a question about his commitment to undo her school choice policies." DeVos said during the interview, "Today he's turned his back on the kids that we're talking about and he's turned his face in favor of the teachers union and what they have to say and what they have to demand and it's really shameful."

Trump To Announce Executive Orders On Healthcare.

[Politico](#) (9/22, Luthi, Lippman, Diamond, 4.29M) reports President Trump "is planning to announce a series of executive actions on health care as soon as Thursday, as he tries to shore up his record on an issue that's been a drag on his reelection effort." One of them "could include a promised order meant to safeguard insurance protections for pre-existing conditions should the Supreme Court undercut Obamacare, according to seven people familiar with the discussions, including three administration sources. Other executive actions under consideration include efforts to prevent patients from receiving 'surprise' medical bills and an effort to address mental health."

Pence: Trump To Lay Out "Ongoing Vision" For Healthcare. Vice President Pence said on [WRKO-AM](#)^{Vi} Boston (9/22, 9K) that "the President is preparing to take additional executive action, because we want to lay out a framework to do two things. Number one, we want to make sure that Americans with preexisting conditions know that this President, this Administration, and Republicans in Congress are going to defend those with preexisting conditions to maintain their coverage and not be denied coverage. And the second piece is, we want to lay out the President's ongoing vision for healthcare reform that lowers the cost of health insurance without growing the size of government."

Tropical Storm Beta Lashes Texas With Heavy Rain.

[NBC Nightly News](#)^{Vi} (9/22, story 4, 0:40, Holt, 5.78M) reported that nine million people are "under flash flood advisories after Tropical Storm Beta made landfall overnight." NBC's Al Roker added that Beta is "the ninth named storm to make landfall, tying the record at 1916."

Janet Shamlian of the [CBS Evening News](#)^{Vi} (9/22, story 7, 1:30, O'Donnell, 4.31M) reported, "It has been raining none stop like this since late last night, and Houston, which floods even during a moderate rain, cannot absorb all this water." She added that there have been "more than 100 high-water rescues in Houston as a now-tropical depression barely budges."

On [ABC World News Tonight](#)^{Vi} (9/22, story 5, 1:15, Muir, 6.19M), Matt Gutman said, "And there's still eight more inches of rain forecast for Houston through to Louisiana. Areas that got battered by Hurricane Laura. There are still more than 40,000 people without power in Louisiana."

The [AP](#) (9/22, Lozano) reports, "Beta weakened to a tropical depression Tuesday as it parked itself over the Texas coast, raising concerns of extensive flooding in Houston and areas farther inland." On Tuesday, Beta had made it "40 miles (64 kilometers) north of Port O'Connor, Texas, with maximum sustained winds of 30 mph (48 kph), the U.S. National Hurricane Center said." Beta was "moving east-northeast at 5 mph (8 kilometers) and was expected to crawl inland along the coast over Texas through Wednesday."

Trump Trademark Registered In Cuba In 2008 For Hotels, Casinos And Golf Courses.

[McClatchy](#) (9/22, Gámez Torres, 19K) reports that "despite earlier promises in Miami that he would not do business in Cuba until the island was 'free,' Donald Trump applied in 2008 to register his Trump trademark in the Caribbean nation for a variety of commercial activities, including investing in real estate, hotels, casinos and golf courses." A search of the Cuban Industrial Property Office database "shows that Donald J. Trump hired a Cuban lawyer, Leticia Laura Bermúdez Benítez, to submit the application in October 2008." The trademark was in March 2010, and expired in 2018.

Trump Signs Executive Order Barring Critical-Race Theory Training By Federal Contractors.

The [Washington Times](#) (9/22, Boyer, 492K) reports President Trump signed an executive order Tuesday "barring federal funds from any contractors who conduct critical-race theory diversity training," saying it promotes a "destructive ideology." The President said the Administration won't allow "race or sex stereotyping or scapegoating in the federal workforce" and won't permit contractors "to inculcate such views in their employees." Such ideas, Trump said, "may be fashionable in the academy, but they have no place in programs and activities supported by federal taxpayer dollars."

WTimes Analysis: Trump-Pelosi Relationship At "All-Time Low."

The [Washington Times](#) (9/22, Dinan, 492K) reports President Trump hasn't spoken to House Speaker Pelosi "in nearly a year, though they have exchanged insults." To the Times, "rarely

have relations between a president and a speaker been this toxic." Darrell West of the Brookings Institution says their relations are at an "all-time low." Adds West, "There have been other presidents and speakers who didn't see eye-to-eye, yet they maintained a cordial relationship and talked from time-to-time. Trump and Pelosi have not talked in a year and their lack of a relationship has ruined legislative policymaking and oversight."

In Leaked Tapes, Mine Executives Detail Influence Over Politicians.

The [Washington Post](#) (9/22, Eilperin, 14.2M) reports, "A direct line to the White House, but routed through a third party to hide it from public view. Easy access to Alaska's governor, as well as the state's two US senators. ... Those were some of the boasts made by two top executives of a company trying to build the Pebble Mine in videotapes secretly recorded by an environmental group and made public Monday." The Post calls the recordings "a rare glimpse into the private discussions surrounding the company's heated campaign to win federal permits for the project, which environmentalists say will destroy a pristine part of Alaska and decimate its world-famous sockeye salmon fishery." The conversations were "secretly recorded over the past month and a half by the nonprofit Environmental Investigation Agency."

Air Force Two Returns To Airport After Hitting Bird.

[USA Today](#) (9/22, Behrmann, Fritze, 10.31M) reports Air Force Two was "struck by a bird as it took off from a New Hampshire airport Tuesday evening, forcing it to return safely to the nearby airport, according to two senior administration officials." The bird "hit one of the engines of the aircraft, which was carrying Vice President Mike Pence and some staff." It then returned to Manchester Airport "out of an abundance of caution, an official said."

Lawsuit: DEA's Interim Final Hemp Rule Exceeds Limits Of 2018 Farm Bill.

[Modern Farmer](#) (9/22, Nosowitz, 4K) reports the "Hemp Industries Association and RE Botanicals, a hemp company based in South Carolina," are suing the DEA. The lawsuit, which "asks the US Court of Appeals to carefully look into the DEA's" interim final hemp rule, argues that the rule exceeds the "limits of the 2018 Farm Bill."

Bill Clinton Dined With Ghislaine Maxwell In 2014.

The [Daily Beast](#) (9/22, Briquet, 1.39M) reports that after a gala in Los Angeles in 2014, Bill Clinton attended "an intimate dinner with friends" that included Ghislaine Maxwell, who is "accused of procuring underage girls for sex-trafficker Jeffrey Epstein," and "tech CEO Scott Borgerson, now rumored to be her husband." According to information obtained by The Daily Beast, "Clinton's advance team secured seating for the invitees and specifically noted Maxwell and someone named 'Scott' had RSVP'd" for the gathering. Multiple sources "say aides had squabbled over Maxwell's invitation beforehand due to her links to Epstein."

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

UK Reintroduces Restrictions Meant To Curb Virus Spread.

The [New York Times](#) (9/22, Castle, 18.61M) reports British Prime Minister Boris Johnson on Tuesday "announced plans to impose new restrictions on nightlife, including the forced early closure of pubs and restaurants in England, as he ramps up efforts to curb a rising tide of coronavirus infections." Johnson "also announced on Tuesday that the government was encouraging people to work from home if they can, reversing course from an earlier effort to push workers in Britain to return to their offices."

The [Washington Post](#) (9/22, Adam, 14.2M) reports that "face masks will be mandatory for retail workers, taxi drivers, and bar and restaurant staff, as well as customers when they are not seated at a table, the prime minister said." The Post observes that the new measures were

"more modest than many that reportedly had been under discussion, including a two-week mini-lockdown."

The [AP](#) (9/22) reports Johnson "also said stiff fines will be imposed on anyone breaking quarantine rules or gathering in groups of more than six." The Prime Minister "said the change of tack was necessary in light of a recent uptick in cases and implored people to follow the new rules to avert a further total lockdown."

The [CBS Evening News](#)^{Vi} (9/22, story 8, 1:30, O'Donnell, 4.31M) said "the Prime Minister told the country the restrictions could last for six months. ... Schools will stay open for now, but the Prime Minister did not rule out another lockdown if the numbers don't improve."

Britain's hospitality industry, [Bloomberg](#) (9/22, Seal, 4.73M) reports, is warning that the new measures risk "widespread failures and deeper job losses without more government help."

Experts Warn Restriction Fatigue Fueling Increase In Cases In Europe.

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (9/22, Sylvers, Stancati, Subscription Publication, 7.57M) reports that the number of COVID-19 infections in Europe is increasing in part because many people become tired of social distancing rules, mask-wearing and hand-sanitizing, according to health experts, who say that the desire to return to normalcy and public fatigue for such policies are the biggest challenges facing governments.

Peace Talks Eyed As Path To End Fighting In Somalia.

The [Washington Times](#) (9/22, Wolfgang, 492K) reports, "Unprecedented diplomacy gave the Trump administration a path out of Afghanistan, and questions have been raised about whether a similar playbook could work for the seemingly endless US military mission in Somalia." According to the Times, "debate is growing in foreign policy circles about whether the US should shift its focus to negotiations rather than a war with no end date and murky metrics for progress" in its campaign against Al-Shabab. The question is said to have "grown more urgent with serious setbacks in recent years for al Qaeda and the Islamic State group," but it is "unclear whether the administration has seriously considered putting its own diplomatic weight behind negotiations with al-Shabab in the same way it did with the Taliban."

Pompeo Predicts "Excellent Cooperation" From Europe On Iran Arms Embargo.

In an interview with the [Washington Examiner](#) (9/22, Gehrke, 448K), Secretary of State Pompeo predicted "European intelligence agencies will partner with the United States to enforce an arms embargo on Iran...despite disputes within the alliance about the legal basis for that ban." Said Pompeo, "We think the network will cooperate. We think there is a shared understanding about the risk from the Islamic Republic of Iran." Addressing European objections to US efforts to reimpose UN sanctions, Pompeo said, "The Europeans have taken truly a middle position on this. That is, 'We like the outcome; we don't like the process,' and they'll adhere to the provisions of the outcome."

Macron: Trump's Pressure On Iran Has Been Fruitless.

[Reuters](#) (9/22) reports French President Emmanuel Macron maintained that in a speech to the UN General Assembly on Tuesday that the Trump Administration's "maximum pressure campaign on Iran has so far failed...and he dismissed U.S. efforts to restore U.N. sanctions against Tehran because Washington had left the 2015 nuclear deal." Macron is quoted as saying, "The maximum pressure strategy, which has been under way for several years, has not at this stage made it possible to end Iran's destabilizing activities or to ensure that it will not be able to acquire nuclear weapons."

Rouhani: Iran "Not A Bargaining Chip In US Elections."

The [AP](#) (9/22, Batrawy) reports Iranian President Hassan Rouhani "delivered a defiant and fiery speech Tuesday to the U.N. General Assembly," and "insisted that it is the US that will surrender

to the resilience of Iran." Rouhani "spoke in a pre-recorded speech to the virtual summit just days after Iran's currency plunged to its lowest levels ever to the U.S. dollar due to crippling US sanctions."

Rouhani, [Reuters](#) (9/22, Hafezi) reports, told the General Assembly the US could impose "neither negotiations nor war" on Tehran. Iran, he said, "is not a bargaining chip in US elections and domestic policy ... Any US administration after the upcoming (US) elections will have no choice but to surrender to the resilience of the Iranian nation."

US Navy Deploys Carrier Strike Group To Strait Of Hormuz.

The [Washington Free Beacon](#) (9/22, 78K) reports US Navy officials have "announced the deployment of a powerful carrier strike group to the Strait of Hormuz in an effort to protect freedom of navigation and remind Iran of America's naval presence." The deployment consists of aircraft carrier USS Nimitz, two guided-missile cruisers, and a destroyer.

Khalilzad: Afghan Fighting Remains "Too High" Despite Peace Talks.

[Reuters](#) (9/22, Ali, Zengerle) reports Zalmay Khalilzad, the US the Special Representative for Afghanistan, testified at a House hearing Tuesday that "the level of violence in Afghanistan is unacceptably high and the United States expects further setbacks during talks...as the Afghan government and Taliban remained far apart on even basic issues 10 days into talks meant to end two decades of war." Khalilzad is quoted as saying, "By any measure, current levels of violence are too high. ... We know that reductions are possible." Reuters says the Taliban "has refused to agree to a ceasefire and the war grinds on."

Dispute Over Six Prisoners Nearly Derailed Peace Talks. The [New York Times](#) (9/22, Gibbons-Neff, Rahim, 18.61M) reports that "when a young Afghan police officer killed two American Marines in southern Afghanistan in 2011, he was acting out of his own outrage rather than taking orders from the Taliban, according to his family and closest friends." Nevertheless, the Taliban "lobbied hard to secure the release of the former officer...even as American officials were privately digging in to keep him detained." He became "one of just six prisoners – out of 5,000 released by the Afghan government in total – over whom a bitter disagreement almost derailed historic peace talks." According to the Times, "Only a last-minute deal to remand the six to a kind of house arrest in Qatar allowed the opening of peace talks on Sept. 12."

Pompeo Seeking UN Support To Redefine Human Rights.

The [New York Times](#) (9/22, Verma, 18.61M) reports Secretary of State Pompeo is "trying to drum up support at the United Nations for a new vision of human rights that prioritizes religious liberty and property rights, but European allies are concerned and showing little support for his doctrine, UN diplomats and human rights experts familiar with the matter said." In response to European skepticism, "diplomats said State Department representatives had rebranded their outreach efforts and would instead ask UN members on Wednesday to affirm their commitment to a human rights document passed by the body in 1948 – a core tenet of Mr. Pompeo's commission." Still, "UN diplomats and human rights experts said that effort was equally worrisome, believing it was a cryptic way to ignore decades' worth of treaties since 1948 that enshrined protections for racial minorities, same-sex couples and women."

US Reportedly Near Agreement To Sell F-35s To UAE.

Citing "sources close to the negotiations," [Reuters](#) (9/22) reports the US and United Arab Emirates "hope to have an initial agreement on the sale of F-35 stealth fighter jets to the Gulf state in place by December, as the Trump administration studies how to structure a deal without running afoul of Israel." According to Reuters, "Sources close to the negotiations said the goal is to have a letter of agreement in place in time for UAE National Day celebrated on Dec. 2." However, "any deal must satisfy decades of agreement with Israel that states any U.S.

weapons sold to the region must not impair Israel's 'qualitative military edge,' guaranteeing U.S. weapons furnished to Israel are 'superior in capability' to those sold to its neighbors."

AP Analysis: Saudi King, Crown Prince Signal Divide On Ties With Israel.

The [AP](#) (9/22, Batrawy) reports Saudi Arabia "has made its official position on the region's longest-running conflict clear: Full ties between the kingdom and Israel can only happen when peace is reached with the Palestinians." However, "state-backed Saudi media and clerics are signaling change is already underway with Israel – something that can only happen under the directives" of Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman. The AP suggests that the "divergent messages" on the subject "reflect what analysts and insiders say is a schism between" the Crown Prince and his father, King Salman.

Erdoğan Breaks With Trump Over Israel Accords. The [Washington Examiner](#) (9/22, Gehrke, 448K) reports Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan "accused Israel of abusing the Palestinian people and lashed President Trump and Persian Gulf nations as 'collaborators' during his speech to the United Nations General Assembly Tuesday." The Turkish leader said, "The Palestinian people have stood up against Israel's policies of oppression, violence, and intimidation for more than half a century," condemning Trump's peace deal between Israel, UAE and Bahrain as a "document of surrender" for the Palestinians.

McMaster Touts Trump's "Good Decisions" On Russia.

President Trump [tweeted](#) Tuesday, "Our wonderful General blew up Scarborough's FAKE two year narrative. Thank you General H.R. McMaster. Look forward to reading your book, 'Battlegrounds: The Fight to Defend the Free World.'" The tweet included a clip from McMaster's interview with MSNBC's Joe Scarborough in which he touted Trump's "good decisions on Russia."

Administration Seeks To Secure Nuclear Deal With Russia Before Election. The [Washington Post](#) (9/22, Sonne, Hudson, 14.2M) reports that "frustration is mounting inside the Trump administration as Russia gives little indication of whether it will agree to an arms control deal before President Trump faces reelection, according to senior US administration officials." US officials presented a proposal to the Russians "two weeks ago in Vienna as part of negotiations that began in June," but Moscow "has given the US negotiators little direct feedback outside public commentary...according to US officials." The result is "US frustration, which boiled over into comments in a Russian media outlet by Trump's top nuclear negotiator, Marshall Billingslea, and a response from his Russian counterpart." Billingslea said the US would insist on "a number of new conditions" if Russia waits until after the election and Trump wins. In response, Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov, Russia's main arms control negotiator, "warned that such ultimatums wouldn't result in a deal."

CIA Reasserts Putin Likely Directing Election Influence Efforts To Aid Trump. The [New York Times](#) (9/22, Barnes, Sanger, 18.61M) reports Russian President Vladimir Putin is "most likely continuing to approve and direct interference operations aimed at raising President Trump's re-election chances, a recent C.I.A. analysis concluded, a signal that intelligence agencies continue to back their assessment of Russian activities despite the president's attacks." The assessment is "consistent with intelligence officials' warning to lawmakers in January that Russia was interfering on Mr. Trump's behalf, a briefing that outraged Republicans and eventually helped oust Joseph Maguire from his post as acting director of national intelligence."

The [New York Times](#) (9/22, Sanger, Kanno-Youngs, 18.61M) reports separately that "four years ago, when Russian intelligence agencies engaged in a systematic attempt to influence the American presidential election, the disinformation they fed American voters required some real imagination at the troll farms producing the ads." This year, however, they are "largely amplifying misleading statements from President Trump, mostly about the dangers of mail-in ballots."

Cuccinelli: "No Meaningful Effort" On Election Interference. Acting Deputy DHS Secretary Ken Cuccinelli said on [WILS 1320](#) (9/22) that "we've been very well-positioned. You compare where we are now in this presidential election with four years ago, we are working with all 50 Secretaries of State, regardless of party. Four years ago, they were working with about a third of them." Cuccinelli said, "It's a totally transformed environment, we have much better surveillance, and on the cyber side, in particular, which is where the federal responsibility lies, we have a high degree of confidence that up to this point, there has been no meaningful effort to penetrate election systems."

NYTimes: Putin Must Be Held Accountable For Navalny Poisoning. The [New York Times](#) (9/22, 18.61M) editorializes, "It is now an established fact...that Alexei Navalny was poisoned with Novichok, a nerve agent developed by the Soviet Union." But in "the face of Kremlin stonewalling, many questions remain unanswered and are likely to remain so." Still, the Times argues that as President Vladimir Putin "looks intent on spending the rest of his life at Russia's helm and displays ever less concern for human rights or the rule of law, it is incumbent on the West to hold him accountable for murdering or trying to murder anyone he finds troublesome."

India Cites Progress Made In Military Talks With China.

The [AP](#) (9/22, Hussain) reports, "Senior Indian and Chinese military commanders have agreed to stop the further buildup of troops along their fast-militarizing disputed border in the mountainous Ladakh region where the two Asian giants have for months been locked in a bitter standoff, the Indian military said late Tuesday." In a statement, India's defense ministry said the two sides have also agreed to "strengthen communication on the ground" and "avoid misunderstandings and misjudgments" along the contested border.

US Ambassador To Netherlands Draws Controversy Over Partisan Event.

[Politico Europe](#) (9/22, 8K) reports that Pete Hoekstra, the US Ambassador to the Netherlands, "has been accused of interfering in national politics after hosting an event for the far-right Forum for Democracy party." The event, held at the American Embassy in Wassenaar on September 10, "featured between 30 and 40 'party officials and wealthy entrepreneurs.'" According to Politico, "other political parties, including Prime Minister Mark Rutte's VVD, have raised questions about the event and whether it should have been allowed." However, Dutch Trade Minister Sigrid Kaag "said the government had contacted the US Embassy and was told that invitations had been sent to all political parties."

The [Washington Post](#) (9/22, Taylor, 14.2M) reports Dutch officials "demanded answers" from Hoekstra. The State Department "did not immediately respond to a request for comment," but "US officials told the Dutch media that the proceeding was nothing out of the ordinary."

THE BIG PICTURE

Headlines From Today's Front Pages.

Wall Street Journal:

[GOP Senators Push To Confirm Trump's Supreme Court Nominee By Election Day](#)

[United Wholesale Mortgage To Go Public Via Merger With Gores SPAC](#)

[Oil Market Flies Blind As Covid-19 Clouds Demand Outlook](#)

[Amazon Restricts How Rival Device Makers Buy Ads On Its Site](#)

[Is There Life After A TikTok Ban? A Nation Goes Into Withdrawal](#)

New York Times:

[With Court Prize In Sight, Republicans Unite Behind Trump Once Again](#)

[Climate Disruption Is Now Locked In. The Next Moves Will Be Crucial.](#)
[How New Yorkers Found Resolve After 6 Months Of Pandemic Hardship](#)
[As Schools Go Remote, Finding 'Lost' Students Gets Harder](#)
[He Killed 2 Marines In 2011. It Almost Derailed Peace Talks This Month.](#)
[How Republicans Are Trying To Use The Green Party To Their Advantage](#)

Washington Post:

[Still Too Few N95s Where The Need Is Greatest](#)
[Republicans Coalesce To Vote On High Court Pick](#)
[NC Voters See 2 Very Different Campaigns](#)
[FDA Set To Back Higher Standard For Vaccine](#)
[DOD Diverted Funds Meant For Battling Coronavirus](#)
[Battle Could Bruise Justices' Apolitical Image](#)

Financial Times:

[Powell Warns Recovery Will Suffer Without Stimulus](#)
[Drug Dealers Turn To Home Delivery As Social Distancing Bites](#)
[Facebook Vows To Restrict Users If US Election Descends Into Chaos](#)

Washington Times:

['All-Time Low': Trump-Pelosi Toxicity Trickles Down, Contaminates Capitol Hill](#)
[EXCLUSIVE: Pompeo Rejects 'Appeasement' As US Counters Chinese Military Activities](#)
[Senate GOP Moves Ahead With Upper Hand As Trump Readies SCOTUS Nomination](#)
[Al-Shabab Negotiations Eyed As Path To End Fighting In Somalia](#)
[Trump Slams Beijing At UN For Spread Of 'China Virus'](#)
[Biden Mum On Expanding Supreme Court: 'It Will Shift The Focus'](#)

Story Lineup From Last Night's Network News:

ABC: Trump-Pandemic; Coronavirus-Vaccine; Senate-SCOTUS Seat; Cindy McCain-Biden Endorsement; Tropical Storm Beta; Salt Lake City-Officer Shoots Child With Autism; Online Learning-Digital Inequalities; Louisville-Breonna Taylor Case; NFL-Head Coaches Fined For Not Wearing Masks; Notre Dame-Game Postponed Due To Coronavirus; Singer Tommy DeVito Death; Ohio-Local Artists Refurbish Desks For Online Learning.

CBS: Coronavirus-Deaths Milestone; Trump-Pandemic; Cindy McCain-Biden Endorsement; Senate-SCOTUS Seat; Trump-SCOTUS Picks; Louisville-Breonna Taylor Case; Tropical Storm Beta; Coronavirus-UK; Canada-Woman Arrested For Sending Ricin Letter; Coronavirus-CDC Halloween Guidelines; Voter Registration.

NBC: Senate-SCOTUS Seat; SCOTUS-Impact of Upcoming Cases; Coronavirus-Deaths Milestone; Tropical Storm Beta; Louisville-Breonna Taylor Case; Pennsylvania-Mail In Voting Ruling; Olivia Troye Interview; Hollywood-New Productions; Honoring RBG.

Network TV At A Glance:

Coronavirus – 10 minutes, 50 seconds
Senate-SCOTUS Seat – 8 minutes, 30 seconds
Tropical Storm Beta – 3 minutes, 25 seconds
Louisville-Breonna Taylor Case – 3 minutes, 20 seconds

Story Lineup From This Morning's Radio News Broadcasts:

ABC: Coronavirus-Deaths Milestone; Trump-Mail-In Voting; Seattle-Police Cuts Veto; Louisville-Breonna Taylor Case

CBS: Trump-SCOTUS Seat; Trump-Campaign Trail; Pence-Air Force Two Strikes A Bird; Coronavirus-Deaths Milestone; Coronavirus-UK; Wildfires.

FOX: Trump-Pandemic; Kamala Harris-Roundtable Event; California-Easing Coronavirus Restrictions; House-Short Term Spending Bill.

NPR: Senate-SCOTUS Seat; Trump-Pandemic; Trump-Racial Sensitivity Training Ban; Wildfires.

WASHINGTON'S SCHEDULE

Today's Events In Washington.

White House:

- President Trump — Delivers remarks in honor of Bay of Pigs Veterans; participates in a discussion with State Attorneys General on Protecting Consumers from Social Media Abuses
- Vice President Pence — No public schedule released

US Senate:

- Health agency chiefs testify to Senate HELP Committee hearing on federal coronavirus response – Hearing on 'COVID-19: An Update on the Federal Response', with testimony from NIH National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases Director Anthony Fauci; CDC Director Robert Redfield; Assistant Secretary of Health and Human Services for Health Adm. Brett Giroir; and Food and Drug Administration Commissioner Stephen Hahn
Location: Rm G50, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Washington, DC; 10:00 AM
- Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee considers DHS secretary nominee – Hybrid nominations hearing considers Chad Wolf to be Secretary of Homeland Security * Held via videoconference and in Rm 342, Dirksen Senate Office Building * Government Accountability Office report released last month said that Wolf had assumed his role as acting secretary illegally, violating the Federal Vacancies Reform Act, noting that the appointment of Kevin McAleenan as acting secretary following the resignation of Secretary Kirstjen Nielsen in 2019 was not designated in the order of succession, and therefore that subsequent amendments to the order made by then-Acting Secretary McAleenan are invalid; 10:00 AM
- Senate Committee on the Judiciary nominations hearing
Location: Rm 226, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Washington, DC; 10:00 AM
- Senate Environment Committee hearing on Endangered Species Act Amendments of 2020 – 'Modernizing the Endangered Species Act: Legislative Hearing on S.4589, the Endangered Species Act Amendments of 2020', with testimony from Wyoming Governor Mark Gordon; JB Ranch owner and operator Liesa Priddy; and Defenders of Wildlife President and CEO Jamie Rappaport Clark
Location: Rm 106, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Washington, DC; 10:00 AM
- Former FTC officials testify to Senate Commerce Committee on 'need for federal data privacy legislation' – Hearing on 'Revisiting the Need for Federal Data Privacy Legislation', with testimony from former Federal Trade Commission Commissioner Julie Brill, former Chairmen and Commissioners William Kovacic and Jon Leibowitz, and former Acting Chairman and Commissioner Maureen Ohlhausen; and California Attorney General Xavier Becerra
Location: Rm 253, Russell Senate Office Building, Washington, DC; 10:00 AM
- First Nail Ceremony marks start of construction of the 2021 Inaugural platform – Traditional First Nail Ceremony, hosted by the Joint Congressional Committee on Inaugural Ceremonies in conjunction with the Office of the Architect of the Capitol, marking the official launch of construction on the Inaugural platform where the president-elect will take the oath of office 20 Jan. During the ceremony, JCCIC Chairman Republican Sen. Roy Blunt and members Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, Democratic Sen. Amy Klobuchar, and House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, Majority Leader Steny Hoyer, and Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy,

plus Architect of the Capitol J. Brett Blanton, hammer nails into a plank at the site of the future platform

Location: West Front Lower Terrace, U.S. Capitol, Washington, DC; 11:00 AM

- NASA Administrator Bridenstine testifies to Senate Appropriations subcommittee – Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies Subcommittee hearing on 'Oversight of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's Budget and Activities', with testimony from NASA Administrator James Bridenstine

Location: Rm 325, Russell Senate Office Building, Washington, DC; 2:00 PM

- Closed Briefing: Intelligence Matters

Location: Rm 219, Hart Senate Office Building, Washington, DC; 2:00 PM

- Senate Budget Committee hearing on CBO's updated Budget Outlook – Hearing on 'CBO's Updated Budget Outlook', with testimony from Congressional Budget Office Director Dr Phillip Swagel

Location: Rm 608, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Washington, DC; 2:30 PM

- Senate Armed Services Committee closed briefing on protecting U.S. elections from 'malign actors' – Closed briefing on 'Department of Defense Cyber Operations in Support of Efforts to Protect the Integrity of U.S. National Elections from Malign Actors', given by Assistant Secretary of Defense for Homeland Defense and Global Security Kenneth Rapuano; and U.S. Cyber Command Commander / National Security Agency Director / Central Security Service Chief Gen. Paul Nakasone

Location: SVC-217, U.S. Capitol Visitor Center, Washington, DC; 2:30 PM

- Senate Indian Affairs Committee legislative hearing – Legislative hearing on 'S. 3126, A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to authorize a special behavioral health program for Indians', 'S. 3264, A bill to expedite and streamline the deployment of affordable broadband service on Tribal land, and for other purposes', 'S. 3937, A bill to amend section 330C of the Public Health Service Act to reauthorize special programs for Indians for providing services for the prevention and treatment of diabetes, and for other purposes', 'S. 4079, A bill to authorize the Seminole Tribe of Florida to lease or transfer certain land, and for other purposes', and 'S. 4556, A bill to authorize the Secretary of Health and Human Services, acting through the Director of the Indian Health Service, to acquire private land to facilitate access to the Desert Sage Youth Wellness Center in Hemet, California, and for other purposes'

Location: Rm 628, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Washington, DC; 2:30 PM

- Senate Veterans Affairs Committee Business Meeting – Business Meeting, to consider committee prints of 'S. 4393, Toxic Exposure in the American Military Act of 2020' and 'S. 4511, Veteran Benefits Enhancement and Expansion Act of 2020'

US House:

- House Veterans Affairs subcommittee oversight hearing on toxic exposures – Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs Subcommittee oversight hearing on 'Toxic Exposures: Examining Airborne Hazards in the Southwest Asia Theater of Military Operations'; 10:00 AM
- House Foreign Affairs subcommittee virtual hearing on 'green recovery plans for coronavirus' – Europe, Eurasia, Energy, and the Environment Subcommittee virtual hearing on 'Green Recovery Plans for the COVID-19 Crisis' held via Cisco Webex, with testimony from former United Nations Secretary-General's Special Representative / former World Bank Group Vice President and Special Envoy for Climate Change Rachel Kyte; former National Security Council Senior Director for Energy and Climate Change John Morton; SAIS Assistant Professor of Energy, Resources, and Environment Dr Jonas Nahm; and American Enterprise Institute Resident Scholar Dr Dalibor Rohac; 10:00 AM

- House Commerce subcommittee remote hearing on the ACA and coronavirus – Health Subcommittee remote hearing on 'Health Care Lifeline: The Affordable Care Act and the COVID-19 Pandemic', held via Cisco Webex, with testimony from Center on Budget and Policy Priorities Vice President for Health Policy Dr Aviva Aron-Dine; Idaho Department of Insurance Director Dean Cameron; American Action Forum President Dr Douglas Holtz-Eakin; Covered California Executive Director Peter Lee; and Harvard T. H. Chan School of Public Health Professor Dr Benjamin Sommers; *10:00 AM*
- Fed Chair Powell testifies to House Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Crisis – House Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Crisis hybrid hearing with testimony from Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell * Held via WebEx and in Rm 2154, Rayburn House Office Building; *10:00 AM*
- House Transportation Committee hearing on DoT Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Program – Hearing on 'Driving Equity: The U.S. Department of Transportation's Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Program', with testimony from Airport Minority Advisory Council's Farad Ali; American Council of Engineering Companies' Geri Boyer; Emerald Consulting Services' Mary Lerdahl; Broward County, FL, Office of Economic and Small Business Development's Sandy-Michael McDonald; Virginia Department of Transportation's Sandra Norman; NERA Economic Consulting's Dr Jon Wainwright; and Conference of Minority Transportation Officials' Evalynn Williams; *10:00 AM*
- House meets for legislative business – House of Representatives meets for legislative business, with agenda for the week including 'H.R. 4447 – Clean Economy Jobs and Innovation Act', possible consideration of 'H.R. 6210 – Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act', 'H.R. 6270 – Uyghur Forced Labor Disclosure Act of 2020', and legislation related to FY21 appropriations, and consideration of legislation including 'H.R. 991 – Extension of the Caribbean Basin Economic Recovery Act', 'H.R. 2166 – Global Health Security Act of 2020', as amended, 'H.R. 4864 – Global Child Thrive Act of 2020', as amended, 'H.R. 5664 – Leveraging Information on Foreign Traffickers Act', as amended, 'S. 785 – Commander John Scott Hannon Veterans Mental Health Care Improvement Act of 2019', 'H.R. 4908 – Native American PACT Act', as amended, 'H.R. 3010 – Honoring All Veterans Act', 'H.R. 5245 – SHIELD for Veterans Act', as amended, and 'H.R. 6589 – Department of Veterans Affairs Chief Financial Officer Authority and Collaboration Act of 2020' under suspension of the rules
Location: U.S. Capitol, Washington, DC; 11:00 AM
- House Science subcommittee online hearing on data management during coronavirus – Investigations and Oversight Subcommittee online hearing on 'Data for Decision-Making: Responsible Management of Data during COVID-19 and Beyond', held via Cisco Webex, with testimony from Virginia Tech Associate Vice President for Research and Innovation Dr Lisa Lee; Johns Hopkins Health System Senior Director of Infection Prevention Dr Lisa Maragakis; Foundation for Research on Equal Opportunity President Avik Roy; and Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists Executive Director Janet Hamilton; *11:00 AM*
- First Nail Ceremony marks start of construction of the 2021 Inaugural platform – Traditional First Nail Ceremony, hosted by the Joint Congressional Committee on Inaugural Ceremonies in conjunction with the Office of the Architect of the Capitol, marking the official launch of construction on the Inaugural platform where the president-elect will take the oath of office 20 Jan. During the ceremony, JCCIC Chairman Republican Sen. Roy Blunt and members Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, Democratic Sen. Amy Klobuchar, and House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, Majority Leader Steny Hoyer, and Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy, plus Architect of the Capitol J. Brett Blanton, hammer nails into a plank at the site of the future platform
Location: West Front Lower Terrace, U.S. Capitol, Washington, DC; 11:00 AM
- House Natural Resources Committee online forum on environmental justice and HBCUs – House Committee on Natural Resources online forum on 'Environmental Justice: HBCUs',

featuring Deep South Center for Environmental Justice Executive Director Dr Beverly Wright, Texas Southern University Professor of Urban Planning and Environmental Policy Dr Robert Bullard, Spelman College Assistant Professor of Environmental and Health Sciences Dr N'Taki Osborne Jelks, and Texas A&M University doctoral student Joy Semien; 12:00 PM

- House Armed Services Committee hybrid hearing on 'The Role of Allies and Partners in U.S. Military Strategy and Operations' – Hybrid hearing on 'The Role of Allies and Partners in U.S. Military Strategy and Operations', with testimony from RAND Corporation International Security and Defense Policy Center Director Christine Wormuth; former U.S. Army Europe Commanding General Lt. Gen. (Ret.) Ben Hodges; The Marathon Initiative Principal and co-founder Elbridge Colby * Held via Cisco Webex and in the U.S. Capitol Visitors Center; 12:00 PM
- House Judiciary subcommittee hearing on 'immigrants as essential workers during coronavirus' – Immigration and Citizenship Subcommittee hearing on 'Immigrants as Essential Workers During COVID-19', with testimony from Center for American Progress Vice President for Immigration Policy Tom Jawetz; Dimple Navratil of Racine, WI; Vicente Reyes of Bakersfield, CA; and National Domestic Workers Alliance Senior Policy Director Haeyoung Yoon

Location: Rm 2141, Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC; 2:00 PM

Cabinet Officers:

- Secretary of the Treasury Steven Mnuchin meets Egypt Ambassador to the U.S. Amb. Motaz Zahran
Location: Department of the Treasury, Washington, DC; 11:00 AM
- Secretary of State Pompeo speaks at Wisconsin State Capitol – Secretary of State Mike Pompeo delivers remarks to legislative, business, and military leaders in the Wisconsin State Capitol Senate Chamber
Location: Wisconsin State Capitol, Madison, WI; 11:05 AM
- Secretary of State Pompeo speaks on virtual event on 'continuing importance of Universal Declaration of Human Rights' – U.S. Govt hosts virtual event during the 75th United Nations General Assembly High Level Week on 'the continuing importance of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)', including remarks from Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Amb. Kelly Craft

Visitors:

- No visitors scheduled

This Town:

- Ruth Bader Ginsburg lies in repose at the U.S. Supreme Court – U.S. Supreme Court Associate Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg lies in repose at the Supreme Court, following her 18 Sep death at the age of 87 and after over 27 years on the Court * A private ceremony takes place in the Great Hall attended by Justice Ginsburg's family, close friends and members of the Court, before she lies in repose under the Portico at the top of the front steps of the Building to allow for public viewing. Former law clerks to Justice Ginsburg serve as honorary pallbearers and line the front steps as the casket arrives, and Supreme Court police officers serve as pallbearers. The casket is placed on the Lincoln Catafalque, loaned to the Court by Congress for the ceremony
Location: Supreme Court of the United States, 1 First St NE, Washington, DC; 9:30 AM
- CSIS online discussion on the future of global supply chains – 'Recovery with Resilience – The Future of the Global Supply Chains' Center for Strategic and International Studies Project on Prosperity and Development online discussion, to release and discuss a new CSIS white paper, 'Recovery with Resilience Diversifying Supply Chains to Reduce Risk in the Global Economy'. Speakers include Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Industry and Analysis Nazak Nikakhtar, Japan Bank for International Cooperation Chief Representative for

Strategic Research Shin Oya, and U.S. Chamber of Commerce International Policy Senior Vice President John Murphy; 9:45 AM

- [The Atlantic Festival continues](#) – The Atlantic Festival continues, held virtually, hosted by The Atlantic to explore the events of 2020 with forums on race and justice, education, small business, the future of work, and health equity, and the annual 'Women of Washington' event. Day three speakers include National Black Chamber of Commerce Chairman Larry Ivory, United States Hispanic Chamber of Commerce President and CEO Ramiro Cavazos, Etsy CEO Josh Silverman, American Federation of Teachers President Randi Weingarten, KIPP Foundation President Richard Barth, Khan Academy founder and CEO Sal Khan, University of the State of New York President Betty Rosa, and Chalkbeat Report Reema Amin; 10:00 AM
- [State Department Direct Line for American Businesses conference call on Nigeria](#) – State Department Direct Line for American Businesses teleconference on 'Nigeria's Aviation Sector: Preparing for Take Off', hosted by U.S. Ambassador to Nigeria Amb. Mary Beth Leonard, accompanied by the embassy's economic and commercial teams; 10:30 AM
- [USIP virtual discussion on coronavirus and ceasefires](#) – 'COVID-19 and Cease-fires: What Have We Learned?' U.S. Institute of Peace online event, on United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres' call for a global ceasefire to stop the pandemic's spread and whether international pressure could make a difference in advancing the secretary-general's call. Speakers include International Crisis Group U.N. Advocacy and Research Senior Analyst Ashish Pradhan, USTIP Negotiations and Peace Process Support Senior Expert Tyler Thompson, and University of Edinburgh School of Law's Christine Bell; 11:00 AM
- [NOAA media teleconference on Global Ensemble Forecast System upgrade](#) – NOAA National Weather Service announces a 'significant' upgrade to the Global Ensemble Forecast System (GEFS) to expand its capabilities and improve weather forecasting, via media teleconference with National Weather Service Director Louis Uccellini and Acting Environmental Modeling Center Director Ivanka Stajner; 11:00 AM
- [House Dems discuss 'safeguarding democracy' at CAP event](#) – 'Forum on Safeguarding our Democracy: Preventing Abuses, Restoring Accountability, and Protecting Elections' Center for American Progress online discussion, with Democratic Reps. Carolyn Maloney, Jerry Nadler, Adam Schiff, Madeleine Dean, Hakeem Jeffries, Katie Porter, and Jamie Raskin; 11:00 AM
- [Dem Sen. Tammy Baldwin discusses 'enormous stakes' of 2020' election](#) – Let America Vote holds a press call with Democratic Sen. Tammy Baldwin, Let America Vote President Tiffany Muller, The Collective President and founder Quentin James, and NARAL Pro-Choice America President Ilyse Hogue, to discuss 'the enormous stakes of this year's election' and the 'safety, security, and reliability of voting-by-mail'; 4:00 PM
- [Atlantic Council online discussion on the U.N. General Assembly and economic cooperation](#) – 'UNGA 75: A new era of economic cooperation to secure our shared future' Atlantic Council Adrienne Arsht Latin America Center online discussion, with Pan American Health Organization Director Dr Carissa Etienne; OECD Deputy Secretary-General Masamichi Kono; International Finance Corporation Brazil Country Manager Carlos Pinto; Brazilian Assistant Deputy Minister for Foreign Trade and International Affairs Yana Dumaresq; Panamanian philanthropist Erika Ender; Jamaican Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade Kamina Johnson-Smith; and Adrienne Arsht Latin America Center Director Jason Marczak and Deputy Director for Programs and Outreach Roberta Braga; 4:00 PM
- [In Defense of Christians 2020 Summit](#) – In Defense of Christians 2020 Summit, titled 'Fighting Christian Persecution Through Global Leadership'. Includes official announcement and presentation of IDC's 2020 Congressional Champion Award to Republicans Sens. Cory Gardner, James Lankford, and Rob Portman and Reps. Ken Buck, Joe Wilson, French Hill, Dan Crenshaw, Gus Bilirakis, Brian Fitzpatrick and Ann Wagner; and Democrats Sens. Ed

Markey, Chris Van Hollen, and Jeanne Shaheen and Reps. Ro Khanna, Dan Lipinski, Jamie Raskin, Elliot Engel, Dan Lipinski, Gregory Meeks, and Albio Sires * Held virtually; 7:00 PM

- DoJ / USPTO virtual workshop on the life science sector – Department of Justice Antitrust Division and U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) host virtual public workshop on 'the importance of intellectual property rights and pro-competitive collaborations for life sciences companies, research institutions, and U.S. consumers', with agenda including keynote from former National Institutes of Health Director Dr Elias Zerhouni, and 'fireside chat' with Assistant Attorney General for the Antitrust Division Makan Delrahim and USPTO Director and Under Secretary of Commerce for Intellectual Property Andrei Iancu

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