

JUSTICES DENY BID BY TEXAS TO SUBVERT VOTE

Pfizer Vaccine Gets Clearance By the F.D.A.

About 3 Million Doses Ready for Shipping

This article is by Katie Thomas, Sharon LaFraniere, Noah Weiland, Abby Goodnough and Maggie Haberman.

The Food and Drug Administration authorized Pfizer's Covid-19 vaccine for emergency use on Friday, clearing the way for millions of highly vulnerable people to begin receiving the vaccine within days.

The authorization is a historic turning point in a pandemic that has taken more than 290,000 lives in the United States. With the decision, the United States becomes the sixth country — in addition to Britain, Bahrain, Canada, Saudi Arabia and Mexico — to clear the vaccine.

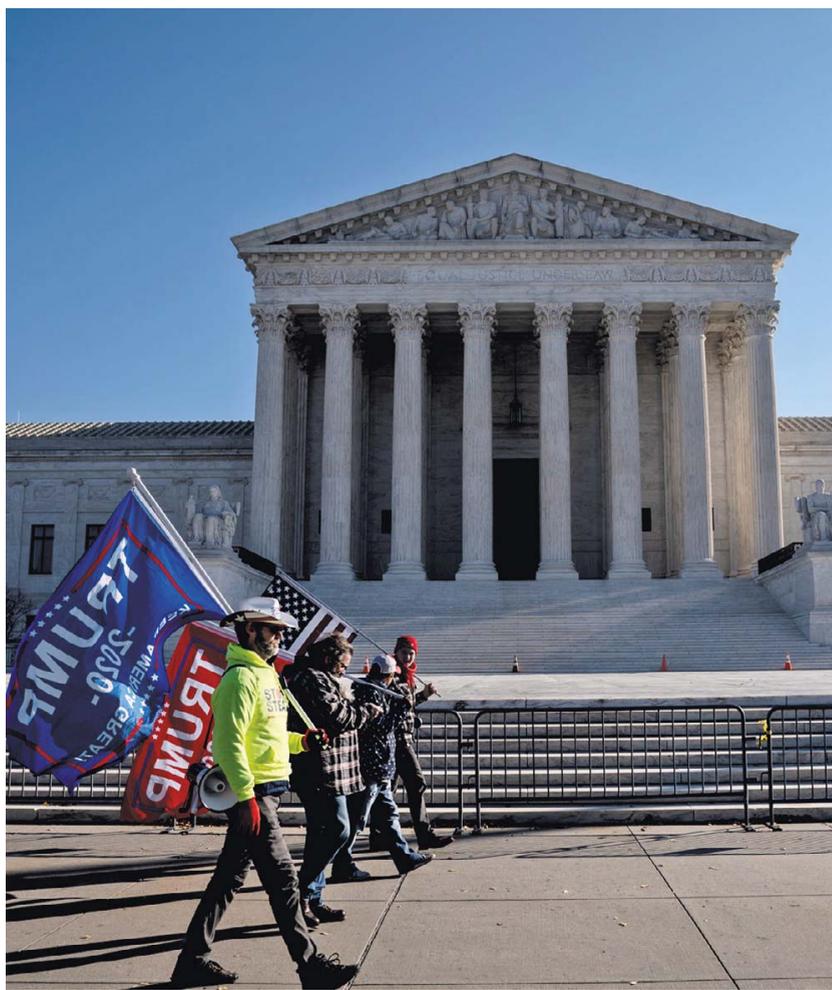
The authorization set off a complicated coordination effort from Pfizer, private shipping companies, state and local health officials, the military, hospitals and pharmacy chains to get the first week's batch of about three million doses to health care workers and nursing home residents as quickly as possible, all while keeping the vaccine at ultracold temperatures.

Pfizer has a deal with the U.S. government to supply 100 million doses. The authorization set off a complicated coordination effort from Pfizer, private shipping companies, state and local health officials, the military, hospitals and pharmacy chains to get the first week's batch of about three million doses to health care workers and nursing home residents as quickly as possible, all while keeping the vaccine at ultracold temperatures.

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DISTRIBUTION A breakdown of how many doses each state is expecting. PAGE A9

AN AIR RESCUE Airlines prepared for months for their role in the vaccine supply chain. PAGE B1



In a brief unsigned order Friday, the Supreme Court said Texas lacked standing to pursue the case.

Refusal to Nullify Biden Victories in 4 States Blocks Trump's Search for Relief in Courts

By ADAM LIPTAK

WASHINGTON — The Supreme Court on Friday rejected a lawsuit by Texas that had asked the court to throw out the election results in four battleground states that President Trump lost in November, ending any prospect that a brazen attempt to use the courts to reverse his defeat at the polls would succeed.

The court, in a brief unsigned order, said Texas lacked standing to pursue the case, saying it "has not demonstrated a judicially cognizable interest in the manner in which another state conducts its elections."

The order, coupled with another one on Tuesday turning away a similar request from Pennsylvania Republicans, signaled that a conservative court with three justices appointed by Mr. Trump refused to be drawn into the extraordinary effort by the president and many prominent members of his party to deny his Democratic opponent, former Vice President Joseph R. Biden Jr., his victory.

It was the latest and most significant setback for Mr. Trump in a litigation campaign that was rejected by courts at every turn.

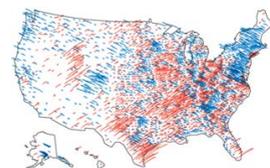
Texas' lawsuit, filed directly in the Supreme Court, challenged election procedures in four states: Georgia, Michigan, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin. It asked the court to bar those states from casting their electoral votes for Mr. Biden and to shift the selection of electors to the states' legislatures. That would have required the justices to throw out millions of votes.

Mr. Trump has said he expected to prevail in the Supreme Court, after rushing the confirmation of Justice Amy Coney Barrett in October in part in the hope that she would vote in Mr. Trump's favor in election disputes.

"I think this will end up in the Supreme Court," Mr. Trump said of the election a few days after Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg's death in September. "And I think it's very important that we have nine justices."

He was right that an election dispute would end up in the Supreme Court. But he was quite wrong to think the court, even after he appointed a third of its members, would do his bidding. And with the Electoral College set to meet on Monday, Mr. Trump's efforts to change the outcome of the election will soon be at an end.

Mr. Trump's campaign did not immediately issue a statement. In an appearance on the conservative news channel Fox News, Mr. Trump said he would continue to fight the case. Continued on Page A18



SHIFTING MAP Suburban voters swung to Democrats and flipped the Blue Wall states. PAGE A14

A Divided and Distrustful U.S. Awaits Vaccines

By SIMON ROMERO and MIRIAM JORDAN

As the Lopez family of Truckee, Calif., gathered to prepare dinner on a recent evening, one subject dominated the conversation: the coronavirus vaccine that will soon be shipped out across the country, giving Americans the first concrete hope that the pandemic will eventually end.

Enrique Lopez, 46, who runs a snow-removal business, explained how he was trying to persuade his skeptical employees that the vaccine was safe. His wife, Brienne, 41, a middle school teacher, said she was desperate for the vaccine after a September

Many Are Eager, but a Push Is On to Win Over the Wary

about with Covid-19 sickened her for weeks. Their two daughters just wanted to know if the vaccine would enable them to return to their pre-pandemic lives.

"I know a lot of people are scared. They don't know what the side effects are going to be," said Mr. Lopez, who had seen half his work force stricken with the virus. "It's a risk we have to take. It's going to make us safer and go back to normal."

After months of anticipation, the first vaccine has arrived. It lands in a country that is both devastated by the virus and deeply divided over almost everything concerning it.

The first Americans will most likely receive shots of the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine in the coming days, and the government is expected to approve other vaccines as well. Health officials are working to ease public doubts about the safety of the injections, emphasizing that large numbers of Americans — perhaps between 60 to 70 percent — must get vaccinated to

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Cuomo Pivots On State Plan To Quell Virus

By J. DAVID GOODMAN and JESSE MCKINLEY

With coronavirus cases surging, Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo of New York has shifted his strategy sharply away from tackling local clusters and toward protecting the state's health system in a bid to avoid a return to the worst days of spring, when hospitals were stretched to the limit.

The virus statistic that had transfixed New Yorkers — the rate of tests that come back positive — is no longer the primary driver of state action, as it was when Mr. Cuomo sought to quash viral outbreaks in designated areas. That effort did not stem a rising tide of infections statewide, and the focus now is on hospital capacity.

Far from hastening a broad new round of business closings, the governor's shift is likely to delay by weeks a potential return of the most stringent restrictions from earlier in the year. A rise in the number of hospitalizations follows an increase in positive cases, and the state has anticipated several steps hospitals can take to expand capacity before a shutdown is needed.

Still, there was one area where Mr. Cuomo was taking no chances. On Friday, he ordered a halt to indoor dining in New York City starting Monday, saying that the ban was necessary to curb the surging outbreak. But the move prompted a backlash from the struggling restaurant industry, one of the city's economic engines, with owners saying the governor had not proved that restaurants were a significant factor in spreading the virus.

After months of low positive test rates, New York is now in the same position as other states amid a worsening national outbreak: watching with increased concern as the virus spreads.

Continued on Page A6

New York D.A. Is Stepping Up Trump Inquiry

This article is by William K. Rashbaum, Ben Prosser and David Enrich.

State prosecutors in Manhattan have interviewed several employees of President Trump's bank and insurance broker in recent weeks, according to people with knowledge of the matter, significantly escalating an investigation into the president that he is powerless to stop.

The interviews with people who work for the lender, Deutsche Bank, and the insurance brokerage, Aon, are the latest indication that once Mr. Trump leaves office, he still faces the potential threat of criminal charges that would be beyond the reach of federal pardons.

It remains unclear whether the office of the Manhattan district attorney, Cyrus R. Vance Jr., will ultimately bring charges. The prosecutors have been fighting in court for more than a year to obtain Mr. Trump's personal and corporate tax returns, which they have called central to their investigation. The issue now rests with the Supreme Court.

But lately, Mr. Vance's office has stepped up its efforts, issuing new subpoenas and questioning witnesses, including some before a grand jury, according to the people with knowledge of the matter, who requested anonymity because of the sensitive nature of the investigation.

The grand jury appears to be serving an investigative function, allowing prosecutors to authenticate documents and pursue other leads, rather than considering any charges.

When Mr. Trump returns to private life in January, he will lose the protection from criminal prosecution that his office has afforded him. While The New York Times has reported that he discussed granting pre-emptive pardons to his eldest children before leaving office — and has claimed that he would do so — he has not said whether he will do so. Continued on Page A20

After Azerbaijan War, a Scarcity of Life, Let Alone Forgiveness

By CARLOTTA GALL and ANTON TROIANOVSKI

FIZULI, Azerbaijan — Crossing into territory that Azerbaijan recently recaptured from Armenia is a journey into a devastated wasteland reminiscent of a World War I battlefield. The road passes miles of abandoned trenches and bunkers, and village after village of ruins, the white stones of homesteads scattered, every movable item — roofs, doors, window frames — picked clean.

The absence of life is eerie. Wrecked Armenian tanks and armor lay beside the road and in hilltop positions, testament to the devastating power of Azerbaijani drones. Abandoned uniforms and equipment signal a panicked retreat by Armenian soldiers as Azerbaijani forces seized control of the district in early November. Decades after the surrounding territory was seized by Armenia, the town of Fizuli, once a prosperous agricultural settlement of some 30,000 people, has become a forest, its ruined public buildings smothered by trees and undergrowth. The fate of the larger town of Aghdam, farther north, is



Aghdam, a devastated town that Azerbaijan reclaimed from Armenia after a six-week offensive.

even more stark, its buildings split open to the skies on a desiccated plain, its main bridge destroyed.

"It's going to be very hard for me to forgive them," Elmaddin Safarov, 47, an army veteran, said of the Armenians, as he gazed at the wreckage of Aghdam, where 17 of

his relatives died. The conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh, an ethnically Armenian enclave within Azerbaijan, has been one of the world's most intractable territorial disputes. A six-year war ended in 1994 with Armenia claiming not just Nagorno-Karabakh but also great swaths of surrounding territory, and driving more than 800,000 Azerbaijanis into exile. Azerbaijan regained control of Fizuli and Aghdam, part of the territory that Armenia had controlled since 1994. Continued on Page A13

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NATIONAL A14-23

Veto-Proof Move by Senate

Lawmakers overwhelmingly passed a military policy bill that strips military bases of Confederate names, defying the president. PAGE A20

The Perils of Crossing Trump

Brian Kemp became governor with the help of the president, but his refusal to try to reverse Georgia's election has drawn his ire. PAGE A19

2 Take Steps for Mayoral Run

Andrew Yang, a former presidential candidate, and Max Rose, who lost re-election to Congress, signal they will enter the New York race. PAGE A23

TRACKING AN OUTBREAK A4-9

Rethinking Routine Care

All this year, patients stayed away from doctors' offices in droves, postponing routine tests and treatments. Maybe there's a silver lining. PAGE A4

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A Climate-Forward Cabinet

Several of President-elect Joseph R. Biden's choices have emphasized clean energy and reduced emissions. PAGE B1

Forced to Pay for States' Errors

A pandemic relief program allows no forgiveness of overpayments, even when recipients are not at fault. PAGE B1



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Virus Cases by the Thousands

A New York Times analysis shows the pandemic's largely unreported toll across college athletics. PAGE B7

Army-Navy Classic at Army

The annual football showdown will not be at a neutral site for the first time in 77 years. PAGE B10

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Black Dancer, White Makeup

Chloé Lopes Gomes says she was told to color her skin for a "Swan Lake" role with the Staatsballett Berlin. PAGE C1

Actor Is Accused of Abuse

The singer FKA twigs has sued Shia LaBeouf, alleging sexual battery, assault and emotional distress. PAGE C1

EDITORIAL, OP-ED A24-25

Jamelle Bouie

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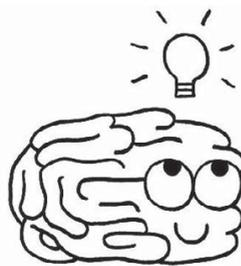
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Inside The Times

THE STORY BEHIND THE STORY



JORDAN AWAN

The Newspaper And Beyond

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OPINION A24-25

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VIDEO

The home of Rebekah D. Jones, a data scientist who had managed Florida's coronavirus dashboard and had filed a whistle-blower complaint against the state after she was fired, was raided by police this week. [nytimes.com/video](https://www.nytimes.com/video)



CALLOUT

Has your budget changed during the pandemic? The Times would like to hear from you to understand what kind of spending people are prioritizing and how they've adjusted. Submit responses at [nytimes.com/readers](https://www.nytimes.com/readers).



AUDIO

On the Opinion podcast "Sway," Kara Swisher speaks with Jason Kilar, the chief executive of WarnerMedia, on its plan for 2021 to release Warner Bros. films simultaneously in theaters and on the company's streaming service, HBO Max. [nytimes.com/sway](https://www.nytimes.com/sway)



INTERACTIVE

Does your N.F.L. team have a chance at making the playoffs? Which teams have the best shot at winning their division? Find out with the Upshot's N.F.L. simulator. [nytimes.com/upshot](https://www.nytimes.com/upshot)

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On This Day in History

A MEMORABLE HEADLINE FROM THE NEW YORK TIMES

MERRY CHRISTMAS FOR WALL STREET

December 12, 1915. "No one is a better spender than the stock and bond broker when the sun of prosperity shines on him," The Times reported. A year after the New York Stock Exchange reopened — it had shuttered on July 31, 1914, following the outbreak of World War I — Wall Street had come back to life. Many brokers and their customers who had purchased stocks found themselves swimming in cash, The Times reported. "Each man's profits were measured by the length of time which he hung on."

Subscribers can browse the complete Times archives through 2002 at timesmachine.nytimes.com.

THE NEW YORK TIMES COMPANY 620 Eighth Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10018-1405

The New York Times (ISSN 0362-4331) is published daily. Periodicals postage paid at New York, N.Y., and at additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send address changes to The New York Times, P.O. Box 8042, Davenport, IA, 52808-8042.
Mail Subscription Rates*
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The News Quiz is published online on Fridays.
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8; C; 9; A; 10; C; 11; D; 12; This quiz is by Will
Solutions: 1; B; 2; B; 3; B; 4; A; 5; D; 6; D; 7; C;

Of Interest

NOTEWORTHY FACTS FROM TODAY'S PAPER

According to a 2018 government assessment, natural disasters and other extreme weather events driven by a warming planet could cost the United States 10.5 percent of its gross domestic product by 2100.

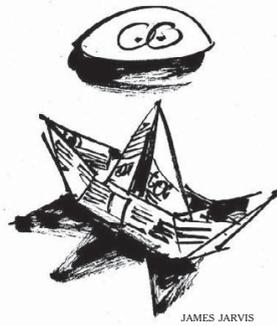
Biden's Picks Show Focus on Climate B1

Pfizer's coronavirus vaccine must be stored at minus-94 degrees Fahrenheit.

An Air Rescue's Goal: Billions of Doses B1

Columbia University's graduate program at its business school costs \$77,000 a year, with total costs over two years estimated at \$235,000.

For M.B.A. Students, Key Disconnections B6



JAMES JARVIS

Between late 2010 and 2017, around 1,200 fighters competed in the Ultimate Fighting Championship.

Fighters Win Ruling in Case That Could Upend U.F.C. B9

More than 43 million people have medical debts on their credit reports, the Federal Trade Commission said.

The Debt Is Fake. The Harm Can Be Real. B6

The Southeastern Conference is home to 10 of the last 14 national champions in college football.

SEC and Disney Reach TV Deal Worth \$3 Billion B9

In a new documentary, Barry Gibb, lead singer of the Bee Gees, confesses that the song "Nights on Broadway" was originally "Lights on Broadway." An executive suggested they change the lyric to make the band seem more adult.

The Bee Gees C4

The Conversation

FOUR OF THE MOST READ, SHARED AND DISCUSSED POSTS FROM ACROSS NYTIMES.COM

FKA twigs Sues Shia LaBeouf, Citing 'Relentless' Abusive Relationship

FKA twigs, born Tahliah Debrett Barnett, filed a lawsuit in Los Angeles accusing the actor Shia LaBeouf of assault. Many readers found this article through social media. This was Friday's most read article.

Manhattan D.A. Intensifies Investigation of Trump

William K. Rashbaum, Ben Protess and David Enrich reported that New York state prosecutors in Manhattan have interviewed employees of President Trump's bank and insurance broker in recent weeks.



DOUG MILLS/THE NEW YORK TIMES

In Blistering Retort, 4 Battleground States Tell Texas To Butt Out of Election

Texas asked the Supreme Court to overturn President-elect Joseph R. Biden Jr.'s victories in battleground states. The lawsuit, according to legal experts, was at odds with federalism. Late on Friday, the court refused to hear the case, saying Texas lacked standing.

What's Fauci Reading? We Take Another Look at Celebrity Bookshelves

Throughout a year of videocalls from home, the Times Books desk has had some fun dissecting the bookshelves in people's backdrops. This latest round zooms in on the reading material behind Dr. Anthony Fauci, Chris Rock, Julia Louis-Dreyfus, Rosie Perez and Gov. Gretchen Whitmer of Michigan.

Sketchbook

UPROOTING HISTORY

A new enthusiasm for backyard gardening in Britain this year has led to an uptick in archaeological discoveries. Layers of the island's past can be found in the good turf.



GENEVIEVE ASHLEY

Quote of the Day

COLLEGE SPORTS HAS REPORTED AT LEAST 6,629 VIRUS CASES. THERE ARE MANY MORE. B7

"We felt there was nothing to hide."

BARRY ALVAREZ, the athletic director at the University of Wisconsin, which recorded at least 112 cases of the coronavirus in athletics, and canceled three football games because the virus spread in its programs.

Here to Help

HOW TO CLEAN UP SPILLS ON A BARE MATTRESS

Use dry paper towels to clean as much of the excess grossness as possible. Add equal parts white vinegar and warm water to a spray bottle. Aqsa Tasleem, a textile expert and product manager for Corsicana Mattress Company, suggested also including a squirt of dishwashing liquid, to cut through the grimy bits and any oils. Be thorough, but go sparingly. "You do not want the solution to soak deep into the foam and make it difficult to dry," Ms. Tasleem said.

Use a washcloth or microfiber sheet, and work the solution through without pressing into the mattress. Continue until any coloring is gone, said William Carroll Jr., adjunct professor of chemistry at Indiana University and owner of Carroll Applied Science. Finish with a spritz of plain water to remove residual cleanser. Dab with a clean cloth or paper towel to dry. (For tough stains like cat pee, consider an enzyme cleaner; enzymes break down molecules that can cause stains, Mr. Carroll said. Follow instructions on the label.)

After dabbing dry your vinegar solution, sprinkle enough baking soda to absorb the wetness, and leave it for a few hours. Ideally, Mr. Carroll said, wait until all of the baking soda is completely dry, and then vacuum it. If you feel you need to disinfect the mattress (for instance, if someone with a stomach bug got sick on



JOANNE CHEN

it), spritz it with store-bought disinfectant or 70 percent pure rubbing alcohol.

Dry the mattress completely before you sleep on it. Open the windows, or use a hair dryer to speed up the process, if necessary. "Whatever you do, avoid turning the mattress over on the frame," said Stuart Carlitz, president and chief executive of Eclipse International. That will leave the mattress damp and invite mildew. **JOANNE CHEN**

Joanne Chen is a staff writer at Wirecutter, a product recommendation site owned by The New York Times Company. A version of this article appears at Wirecutter.com.

Spotlight

ADDITIONAL REPORTAGE AND REPORTEES FROM OUR JOURNALISTS

Friday's episode of "The Daily" podcast featured a discussion with Astead Herndon, a national politics reporter for The Times. With 3 weeks until the Georgia Senate runoff election, Mr. Herndon sat down with the host, Michael Barbaro, to talk about the four candidates. In an edited excerpt, the pair broke down why the Republicans candidates were following President Trump's campaign playbook, despite his loss in the state in November.

Michael Barbaro Republican Senators Kelly Loeffler and David Perdue are mimicking the approach of President Trump in November, characterizing their Democratic rivals as socialists transforming the country in a menacing way. But Donald Trump's strategy didn't work in Georgia, so why do Loeffler and Perdue think running that same strategy is going to win them these Senate races?

Astead Herndon This is the great paradox of the results we saw from the November election. While President Trump's message did not work and Joe Biden made the gains back in necessary states to win, including in Georgia, there was real success of that message down ballot, in terms of winning House seats and kind of fighting off Senate candidates, and there was a surge of new voters for President Trump that most folks didn't expect.

Their decision has been to stick with that motivation and hope that Democrats trail back and fall off, rather than switch up the playbook, because it's not as if that playbook didn't work for other Republicans, even as the president has failed.

It is somewhat a bet that, without the baggage Mr. Trump has from his specific actions in the White House and his own rhetoric, his playbook can work.

Listen to the entire episode at [nytimes.com/thedaily](https://www.nytimes.com/thedaily).

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Tracking an Outbreak

The New York Times

Coronavirus Update

Cases and Deaths Float at Record Levels

Setbacks in Development of Two Vaccines

A County in Hawaii Records Its First Case

By JAMES BARRON

The timing could not be more stark. As the United States moved toward approving a coronavirus vaccine, the numbers were bleaker than ever. More than 3,000 Americans died of the virus on a single day. More than a million new cases were reported in five days. More than 107,000 people were in hospitals.

Thursday — the day a panel of experts recommended that the Food and Drug Administration approve the vaccine developed by Pfizer and its German partner, BioNTech — was the second-worst day since the pandemic began. The death toll was 2,923 in the United States, 234 fewer than on Wednesday, the worst day so far.

But there was little comfort in that slight decrease. “We are in the time frame now that probably for the next 60 to 90 days we’re going to have more deaths per day than we had at 9/11 or we had at Pearl Harbor,” Dr. Robert R. Redfield, the director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, said. (Some 2,977 people were killed in the terrorist attacks in New York, Virginia and Pennsylvania on Sept. 11, 2001. The Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, which destroyed or damaged eight battleships and 11 other Navy vessels on Dec. 7, 1941, killed 2,403 Americans, including 68 civilians.)

Thursday also ranked as the second-highest day for new cases. At least 223,570 were reported, 7,610 below the record posted last Friday. California once again hit a daily case record on Thursday. Arizona has had more cases in the past week than in any other seven-day stretch of the pandemic. And the torrent of new cases continued Friday, with Pennsylvania and South Carolina announcing new single-day records.

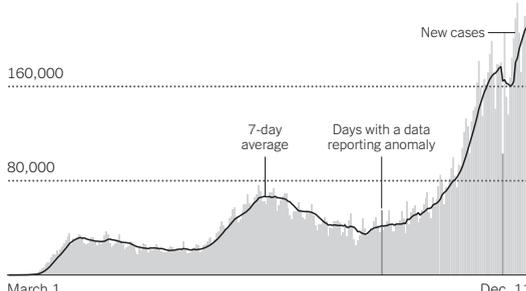
In New York, the epicenter of the outbreak in the spring, total hospitalizations topped 5,000 on Thursday for the first time in months. In contrast to the first wave, New York City has a lower hospitalization rate than seven of the 10 regions that state officials track. Rising case numbers, however, prompted Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo to suspend indoor dining in the city beginning Monday.

But the state that is leading the nation in the spread of the virus is the state with the smallest land area — Rhode Island. As infections have climbed in neighboring states, Rhode Island has gotten much worse much faster, averaging more than 1,200 new cases a day in the past week, or 115 cases for every 100,000 people, well above South Dakota, which led that category as recently as Dec. 4. But as cases have exploded in Rhode Island, South Dakota has dropped to just under 87 cases per 100,000.

Under pressure from the White House, the Food and Drug Administration accelerated the timetable for issuing its authorization for the Pfizer vaccine. The F.D.A. put the Centers for Disease Control and those involved with Operation Warp Speed on notice early on Friday “so they can execute their plans for timely vaccine distribution.” But an angry President Trump complained that the F.D.A. was not moving fast enough. After calling the agency “a big, old, slow turtle” that was weighed down by bureaucracy, he upbraided Dr. Stephen M. Hahn, the agency’s commissioner. “Get the dam vaccines out NOW, Dr. Hahn,” he wrote, misspelling the expletive. “Stop playing games and start saving lives!!!!”

New Coronavirus Cases Announced Daily in U.S.

As of Friday evening, more than **15,867,000** people across every state, plus Washington, D.C., and four U.S. territories, have tested positive for the virus, according to a New York Times database.



Troubled Vaccine Trials

Not all the news about coronavirus vaccines was encouraging. The pharmaceutical companies Sanofi and GlaxoSmithKline delayed plans for a trial after their experimental vaccine did not appear to work well in older people, and Australia scrapped a locally developed Covid-19 vaccine that generated false positives for H.I.V., the virus that causes AIDS.

The announcement from Sanofi and GlaxoSmithKline was a setback to their late-stage clinical trial, which had been expected to start in the United States this month. The two companies said they now planned to test a modified version of their vaccine in a smaller trial beginning in February. They said it might not be tested against a placebo but against a coronavirus vaccine that had received authorization for emergency use by then.

The Australian drug, developed by the University of Queensland and the biotech company CSL, became the first of dozens of experimental coronavirus vaccines to be abandoned. Its developers maintained that it was safe and effective, but the false positives could have diminished public confidence. Prime Minister Scott Morrison said the government would make up for the loss of 51 million doses it had planned to buy by increasing orders of vaccines made by AstraZeneca and Novavax.

A County Untouched No Longer

Of the more than 3,000 counties in the United States, one had escaped the coronavirus — a remote place where people with a highly contagious infectious disease were once banished. But on Thursday, a plane landed, someone onboard tested positive and Kalawao County, Hawaii, had its first case.

After contact tracing by the state health department, the other passengers on the flight went into isolation, as did the person who tested positive, who was not identified but who officials said showed no symptoms. “We believe we can contain the virus here without a stay-at-home order,” said Ken Seamon, the health department’s administrator for the Kalaupapa Settlement on Molokai.

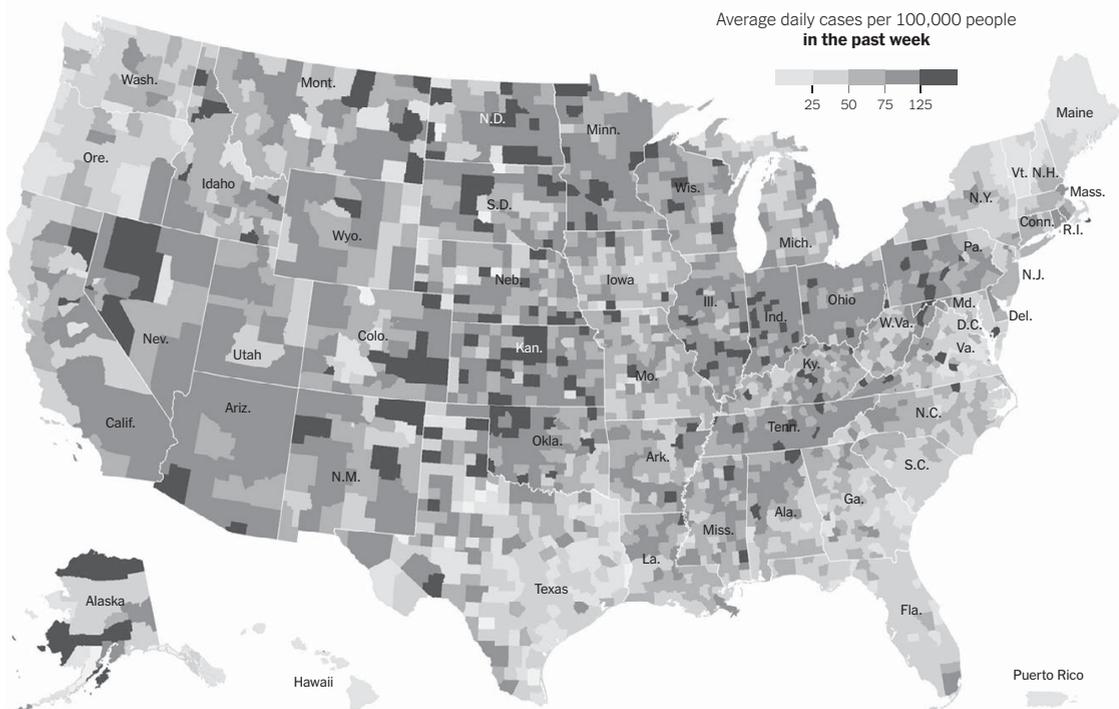
The settlement was where people with leprosy were banished beginning in the 1860s. Drug therapies eventually controlled leprosy, also known as Hansen’s disease, and Hawaii abolished its forced quarantine laws in 1969.

There are still no known cases of the coronavirus in American Samoa, except for three people on a foreign cargo ship that had docked there, or on Rota in the Northern Mariana Islands.

Coronavirus Update wraps up the day’s developments with information from across the virus report.

Hot Spots in the United States

As of Friday evening, more than **15,867,000** people across every state, plus Washington, D.C., and four U.S. territories, have tested positive for the coronavirus, according to a New York Times database. More than **294,900** people with the virus have died in the United States.



Sources: State and local health agencies. The map shows the share of population with a new reported case over the last week. Data for Rhode Island is shown at the state level because county level data is infrequently reported. Data is as of Dec. 11, 2020, at 5 p.m. Eastern.

THE NEW YORK TIMES

‘A NATURAL EXPERIMENT’

Scientists Reassess Routine Medical Care

By GINA KOLATA

For years, health researchers bemoaned what they saw as excessive medical care in America. Too many tests and treatments, they said, are unnecessary or even harmful, and add to the huge cost of health care in this country.

The coronavirus has given them a chance to see if they were right.

“If we can separate signal from noise, maybe we can learn there are a lot of things we don’t need to do,” said Dr. Scott Ramsey, a co-director of the Hutchinson Institute for Cancer Outcomes Research in Seattle. “Maybe patients will do better.”

The stakes are high, both for health and for the economy. Before the pandemic, an estimated 50 million American patients were subjected to one or more instances of health care overuse each year, at a cost of \$106 billion, according to a recent analysis in the journal Health Affairs.

“We see a unique methodological opportunity to evaluate the harms of low-value care,” wrote Allison H. Oakes, a health services researcher at the University of Pennsylvania, and Dr. Jodi B. Segal, a professor of medicine at Johns Hopkins.

As the pandemic took hold, elective surgeries were canceled and radiology equipment stood abandoned as patients and doctors avoided CT scans, M.R.I.s, mammograms and colonoscopies. Even prescriptions for antibiotics plummeted.

“We are in the midst of an unprecedented natural experiment that gives us an opportunity to determine the effect of a substantial decline in medical care utilization,” said Dr. H. Gilbert Welch, a senior investigator at the Center for Surgery and Public Health at Brigham and Women’s Hospital in Boston.

No researcher denies the untoward effects of deferred medical care. Too afraid to go to the emergency room, many patients having heart attacks or strokes, for example, died or experienced life-altering consequences this year.

In March and April, visits to doctors’ offices plunged by 70 to 80 percent compared with pre-Covid levels, according to IQVIA, a health care analytics company. Lab tests from emergency room visits and visits to doctors’ offices fell 90 percent. Mammograms plunged 87 percent, colonoscopies by 90 percent and Pap smears by 87 percent. PSA tests for prostate cancer fell 60 percent.

But was it all bad? Or were there benefits? The answers to those questions won’t be known for some time. Still, scientists are drawing up plans for deciphering what needs to be done in the doctor’s office, and what doesn’t.

One priority will be to examine what has happened to the downstream signs of unnecessary medical care. Dr. Oakes and Dr. Segal described that phenomenon, so familiar to many American patients, as “a cascade of further testing, treatments, office visits, hospitalizations, and new diagnoses.”

If downstream care declines

during the pandemic without a significant impact on hospitalization and death rates, then researchers will have strong evidence that those procedures aren’t worthwhile and should be limited.

Researchers might compare the health of patients scheduled for questionable procedures, like a colonoscopy in a person over 85, before and after those elective procedures were suddenly shut down, Dr. Oakes and Dr. Segal proposed.

President Trump has hailed the rise of telemedicine as a significant unexpected benefit of the pandemic. But some scientists aren’t so sure.

Video patient visits may be accelerating some forms of “low-value” care, like unnecessary antibiotic prescriptions. Yet telemedicine also seems to put patients more in contact with primary care physicians, and in past research that trend has been linked to a decrease in unnecessary health care.

Orthopedics is another area that is ripe for revision following the pandemic, said Dr. Vinay Prasad, associate professor of medicine at the University of California, San Francisco. There have long been questions about steroid injections for aching backs and common surgeries to shore up spines and painful knees.

The question now: Did patients who could not get these treatments during the pandemic recover on their own? How often?

In February, Shelton Mack, a 28-year-old assistant wrestling coach at Columbia University, leaned onto his foot while training for the Olympic wrestling trials. He heard a pop and felt searing pain.

“It felt like the bottom of my foot went almost completely flat,” he said. Dr. Justin Greisberg, an orthopedist at Columbia, diagnosed a Lisfranc fracture — broken bones in the middle of his foot.

The usual treatment is surgery, but then the coronavirus inter-

vened. “Everything was shutting down,” Mr. Mack said.

Unable to get the surgery, he healed on his own and is training again. If he had the procedure, Mr. Mack would have been unable to wrestle for nearly a year. “If it wasn’t for Covid, I would have been completely out,” he said.

The pandemic also provides a unique opportunity to re-examine cancer screenings. Some cancers, like kidney cancer and thyroid cancer, tend to be diagnosed incidentally — a patient gets a scan for another reason and doctors find a mass that turns out to be a tumor.

It is not known whether patients whose cancers are diagnosed inci-

What needs to be done in a doctor’s office, and what doesn’t.

dentally fare better than those whose cancers are not discovered until later, when the patient has symptoms, said Dr. John Gore, a urology professor at the University of Washington in Seattle. But incidentally detected cancers might be easier to treat, in which case these screenings might be justified.

Mammography has long been a special area of concern. Some researchers estimate that as many as one in three cancers that are diagnosed by mammograms could have safely gone undetected and left alone.

Now the Breast Cancer Surveillance Consortium, a federally funded research group, is prospectively collecting data during the pandemic from more than 800,000 women and nearly 100 mammography centers across the country. Millions of women missed their regular mammograms in the first wave of the pandemic.

Before the pandemic, about 100,000 women had screening mammograms each day in the United States. In the spring, nearly all mammogram centers shut down for three months, and even though they began opening again in the summer, it was not until October that nearly all were operating normally. That may change with the surge of new coronavirus infections, but for now, women who want mammograms can get them.

Clinics had to slow the rate at which they do mammograms because of Covid-19 precaution requirements, including physical distancing and cleaning of equipment between exams. But they are making up for the delays by keeping longer hours and opening on weekends.

The situation may be different for women who have worrisome findings, like a lump or a suspicious finding on a mammogram. The wait for diagnostic imaging and biopsies can be long, stretching out for weeks or months, said Dr. Christoph Lee, a professor of radiology and health services researcher at the University of Washington.

Doctors expect that many women who missed their mammograms last spring will not return now that they can have the screening test again, some because they fell out of the habit but others because of the pandemic’s social and economic effects. Women may have to stay home to care for children or may have lost jobs and health insurance.

The breast cancer consortium should have the first results of the effects of the screening shutdown on patient outcomes in six months, Dr. Lee said.

“We’ve never been able to argue to stop screening for a period, because the standard of care is regular screening,” Dr. Lee said. “We are trying to see if less screening leads to more or to less harm.”



BRYAN ANSELM FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Shelton Mack, an assistant wrestling coach, broke his foot in February while training for the Olympic trials. He was unable to get surgery, the usual treatment, but his foot healed on its own.

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Tracking an Outbreak U.S. Fallout

NEW YORK

As Spread Worsens, Cuomo Shifts Focus to Overwhelmed Hospitals

From Page A1

concern as hospital beds fill.

More than 5,300 people were hospitalized across New York as of Thursday, a level not seen since May. The per capita rate of new cases in New York is better than it is in most states, but worse than in others, including Texas and Florida, although testing levels vary.

"If you extrapolate out at this rate of growth, you could be looking at the shutdown of New York City within a month," Mr. Cuomo said in an interview on Friday.

But elected leaders and some public health experts are increasingly worried that Mr. Cuomo has moved too slowly to address the worsening crisis, much as he did in the pandemic's early days.

New York's latest approach stands in contrast to the sweeping actions taken in other hard-hit states. On Tuesday, Massachusetts rolled back its reopening, putting new restrictions in place. California imposed a new lockdown across much of the state after intensive care units filled to worrisome levels.

But New York officials came to believe that any targeted restrictions they adopted would fail if residents did not believe the rules were necessary, and they worried they were running out of options beyond a full shutdown.

"If you look at the other spreaders, they're all closed," Mr. Cuomo said in the interview. "Indoor dining is the only activity that we can influence that could make a real difference in the spread rate."

Many people were getting infected at private gatherings, officials said. Also, many New Yorkers now know people who tested positive but never became ill.

Hospitalization figures, particularly when linked to neighborhoods where patients live, would be more effective than positive test rates at jolting people fatigued by months of pandemic-driven restrictions into changing their personal behavior, officials determined.

It was, they told themselves, a battle for the hearts and minds of New Yorkers.

"It's less about closing the bar and more about convincing the community that there is a problem," said Gareth Rhodes, a top adviser to Mr. Cuomo. Mr. Rhodes emphasized that New York, even without introducing new measures, was restricting business activity more than many of the states that recently rolled back their reopenings.

Last month, in a 5-4 decision, the Supreme Court ruled against Mr. Cuomo in a legal challenge to his earlier restrictions on religious worship in certain hard-hit areas.

Some elected officials said that by focusing on hospitalizations, Mr. Cuomo was pushing off into the future actions that were necessary to stop the coronavirus from spreading now.

"That's a lagging indicator," Mark Levine, the chair of the New York City Council's health committee, said of the hospitalization data. "You're probably building in

Joseph Goldstein contributed reporting.



Patrons eating in plastic igloos outside an East Village restaurant in Manhattan last month. Indoor dining will cease in New York City beginning on Monday.

another week to 10 days of delay." (Mr. Levine welcomed the roll-back of indoor dining in the city.)

Through the fall, Mr. Cuomo tried to allow businesses to stay open as much as possible while also taking steps to mean to hold the virus at bay. He created a color-coded, multitiered plan that limited new closings to narrowly defined, hard-hit neighborhoods.

The governor's aides insist that they are not abandoning the cluster-based approach, but rather are using it in tandem with the new plan tied to hospitalization rates.

And Mr. Cuomo retains the power to close businesses regardless of the plan, as he did by ordering the new halt to indoor dining in New York City. The city has not reached the new hospitalization benchmarks, and Mr. Cuomo explained his decision by citing, broadly, the rise in hospital patients, the city's density and the rate of viral spread.

The state's new approach focuses on maintaining sufficient hospital capacity instead of shutting down economic activity. It also puts off localized school closures, based on positivity rates, seen in New York City and its suburbs this fall.

Mr. Cuomo has largely left it to local authorities to determine policy for schools — such as the closing of New York City schools last month followed by a limited re-

opening this week. Mr. Cuomo has endorsed keeping as many open as possible for in-person learning.

The governor has described his focus on hospitalizations as an adaptation to new circumstances.

At a news conference on Monday, Mr. Cuomo called on Dr. Anthony S. Fauci, the nation's top infectious disease expert, to listen to a presentation of the governor's hospitalization-based approach, which Dr. Fauci said "seemed really sound."

A spokeswoman for Dr. Fauci declined to say how much time he had spent reviewing Mr. Cuomo's

plan — much of which was still in the works and not announced until Friday — before appearing with the governor at the news conference via Zoom. (A spokesman for Mr. Cuomo said the two had spoken several times beforehand.)

Even Mr. Cuomo has called the new plan "a little complicated." The most complex element, which could prompt regionwide shutdowns, involves taking the rate of increase in an area's hospitalization, projecting forward to determine whether it would top 90 percent of capacity in three weeks.

The shift away from the state's neighborhood-based approach left open the question of how effective that tactic had been.

Some epidemiological models have suggested the approach, the "Cluster Action Initiative," had helped to slow the virus's spread in the original zones, including in Brooklyn, early in the fall. But some experts said its exact impact was unclear.

"It's not completely crazy because the risk does vary a great deal by neighborhood," said Dr. William Hanage, an associate professor of epidemiology at Harvard University. "However, as a way of sustainable control, there's not re-



Treating a coronavirus patient in April. More than 5,300 people were hospitalized statewide this week, a level not seen since May.

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ARIZONA

With the Virus Surging, Teachers Hold a Sickout

By DAN LEVIN

In a reflection of debates nationwide over whether to keep classrooms open during the current surge in coronavirus cases, about 100 teachers in Arizona's third-largest school district staged a sickout on Friday, demanding that schools close after winter break and stay remote until the region's infection rate declines.

The protest in the Chandler Unified School District, a sprawling string of suburbs east of Phoenix with 46,000 students, was planned in opposition of the district's recently announced plan to continue with in-person instruction in January despite a steep rise in infections in the region, according to a letter that teachers sent to the district on Thursday.

"When we returned to in-person learning, teachers and parents did so with the understanding that if any ONE metric went into the red, we would return to virtual learning," the letter states. "We were also assured that we would not be expected to teach virtually and in-person at the same time. Both of those promises have now been broken."

The sickout represents a small fraction of the district's 2,000 teachers, and the district said it

Kate Taylor contributed reporting.

had found enough replacement teachers to keep all its schools open. But it underscores the anxiety of many teachers in a county that has reached new peaks in coronavirus infections and deaths in recent weeks.

Both the state and Maricopa County, home to the Chandler school district, set single-day case records within the past week, and Maricopa County added more cases on Thursday than almost any other county in the United States. This month, both parents of a Chandler High School student died hours apart of complications related to Covid-19.

The protest also reflects the contentious debate over the safety of in-person instruction that is playing out in many of the nation's school districts as another wave of the pandemic continues to wash across many states.

Responses have differed widely from state to state and even district to district, as elected officials, teachers' unions, parents and school administrators have debated how to balance health and safety issues with concerns that students are losing out educationally under remote instruction. The nation has about 13,000 school districts, most of which are run by independently elected school boards.

In November, Kentucky or-



ADRIANA ZEBBRAUSKAS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

dered all schools, including private ones, to close temporarily and shift to remote learning, while Michigan ordered all high schools to halt in-person instruction temporarily. But many districts in Georgia, Texas and Florida, where Republican governors have been adamant about keeping schools open, have resisted closing classrooms even as virus cases surged this fall.

Providence, R.I., Los Angeles and Miami-Dade County have all seen cases rise sharply in recent weeks — yet all have responded differently.

Providence has reduced density in its high schools by shifting

10th and 11th graders to remote learning, but has kept ninth and 12th graders attending every other day. Los Angeles Unified School District, the country's second-largest, has only held remote classes this semester and will do so for the foreseeable future. And the Miami-Dade school district continues to have students who opted into in-person instruction visit classrooms five days a week.

The patchwork of approaches is even visible within Arizona. Some of the Chandler school district's neighbors in Maricopa County have shifted to virtual or hybrid instruction during the surge, plan to in the near future, or have post-

poned reopening.

Paradise Valley Unified School District, north of Phoenix, moved to remote instruction just before Thanksgiving because of a rising tide of virus cases. The district's superintendent resigned this week, reportedly because of threats from people who want classrooms reopened.

Chandler Unified School District began the year fully remote, and staggered the return to classrooms by age groups. But it also allowed students to enroll in its "online academy," a separate all-remote curriculum that has attracted between 9,000 and 10,000 students, district officials said.

ally any evidence that it works."

What is clear is that the state for weeks had been moving way from that approach, long before Mr. Cuomo announced in December that hospital capacity would become the main metric for what he was calling a "winter plan."

The state has not altered any of the 29 localized zones or added new ones since Nov. 23, even as the zones themselves, where some restrictions are in place, have continued to experience increases in positivity rates.

Unlike the outbreak last spring, when New York City and its suburbs bore the brunt of the infections and deaths, the autumn surge has crept into almost every corner of the state. Western New York has been hit particularly hard, as has Westchester County.

The increasing focus on New Yorkers' "hearts and minds" contrasted with Mr. Cuomo's earlier emphasis on enforcement, particularly in New York City, as the key to stopping the localized spread.

His advisers said that with the virus so pervasive now, the state did not have the resources to enforce restrictions everywhere, especially given what Mr. Cuomo has called "living room spread" in households and small gatherings.

"You closed theaters, you closed stadiums, you closed mass gatherings," Mr. Cuomo said. "Where do people go? They go home."

Chandler High School in Chandler, Ariz. The sickout held by teachers in the city reflects growing discord over whether classrooms should remain open as virus cases spike.

On Wednesday, when the school board voted to maintain in-person instruction, it also agreed to allow in-person students in seventh through 12th grades to take classes remotely for at least the first two weeks of January, using the same online platform that serves students in quarantine. The district requires social distancing and face coverings in all schools, officials said.

But the teachers who joined the protest want the district to go completely remote in January and stay closed until the virus transmission rate has declined to what they deem a safer level. They have also requested a role in the process of deciding between in-person and remote instruction.

"Our educators are exhausted and stretched to their breaking point," said the Chandler Education Association, a teacher advocacy group.

More than three-quarters of the district's students are attending all of their classes in-person, with the rest receiving all-remote instruction.

"We encourage staff to report to work in the best interest of their students and colleagues," the district said in a statement. "We understand this is a stressful time and invite teachers to work directly with administration as we seek ways to lessen any negative impact on them."

The New York Times

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Tracking an Outbreak U.S. Rollout Begins

ALLAYING FEARS

Health Officials Work To Persuade the Wary To Take the Vaccine

From Page A1

produce a decisively sharp decline in transmission rates. So far, there is work to be done.

Stephanie Bennett, a psychiatric nurse in Tulsa, Okla., said she fully understood the importance of the vaccines and expected to be near the front of the line as they were made available. Still, she is torn.

"I do have risks in being a front-line health worker," Ms. Bennett said. "But just being a mother, I do have this crushing guilt in getting a vaccine that my child would not have access to at the same time."

Even so, Ms. Bennett said she felt doubly responsible as a nurse and a member of the Kiowa Tribe of Oklahoma to get vaccinated, in part to help ease skepticism among her neighbors.

"There's a lot of distrust in our community," Ms. Bennett said. "I want to show people, at least in my family and my community, that this is safe and we've got to do this."

Still, wariness persists, even for some who know the toll the virus can take.

Maria Isabel Ventura, 59, who lives in Blythe, Calif., a rural area near the Arizona border, saw the dangers of the virus up close on Nov. 22. That was the day she rushed her husband, gasping for air, to the emergency room. Her husband, Alfonso Velazquez, a farmworker, spent two weeks being treated for a severe case of Covid-19.

"Why not start with vaccinating the president and the people who developed the vaccine?" asked Ms. Ventura, a Mexican immigrant who makes ends meet by cleaning, waiting tables and cooking. "I am afraid more than anything of this vaccine because we don't know what reaction we will have to it. Maybe in a few months we'll know more."

An Associated Press poll, released this week, found half of all Americans ready to take a vaccine — with a considerable partisan divide. Six in 10 Democrats said they would get vaccinated compared with four in 10 Republicans. A recent Gallup survey showed more acceptance, with 63 percent of Americans now saying they would be willing to get a vaccine approved by the Food and Drug Administration, up from 58 percent in October and 50 percent in September.

The authorities are working to dispel doubt about the vaccines' safety and enduring concerns over unethical examples of medical research in the United States, especially in African-American, Latino and Native American communities that have been hit especially hard by the coronavirus but remain wary because of historical abuses by the medical system.

As virus deaths in the country climb toward 300,000, the toll is influencing how many view the vaccines. Adam Wyatt, the pastor at First Baptist Church in

Leakesville, Miss., decided to enroll in Moderna's vaccine trial after one of his congregants died of the virus in August.

Mr. Wyatt views hospital visits as one of his most important obligations as a pastor, and recalls feeling helpless as he gathered with the congregant's family in a hospital parking lot, barred from entry by pandemic precautions.

But Mr. Wyatt, 38, did not tell many people about his decision afterward to enroll in the trial in Hattiesburg, about an hour's drive west of his small town. "You hear, 'This vaccine is the mark of the beast, don't get this, it's Bill Gates's population control, you'll get the microchips in you,'" he said. "A lot of my folks probably won't get it."

Now that the vaccine is on its way, Mr. Wyatt is preparing to speak publicly about his participation in the trial, hoping to ease his community's concerns. "It's something I can do," he said.

Aesha Mahdi, 42, who lives in Gwinnett County, Ga., also knows how the virus can upend lives. She got infected in April and identifies herself as a Covid-19 "long-hauler," still experiencing symptoms such as a racing heartbeat and shortness of breath going up stairs. Her rheumatoid arthritis has become worse, and sometimes she has trouble walking.

Ms. Mahdi, who is eager to be vaccinated, now works in contact tracing, helping to slow the virus's spread. She said she was alarmed at how family members have fallen victim to misinformation campaigns that vaccinations are harmful, especially on Facebook and YouTube. "They're kind of following a disinformation or misinformation train that is leading them down a whole conspiracy theory," she said.

For others, the first vaccine's arrival creates moral quandaries. Pat McKeage, 85, of Grand Rapids, Mich., said she understood why older people were expected to get the vaccine before others, citing risk factors and how intensive care units around the country are near or above capacity. Still, Ms. McKeage, a published poet, said it struck her as "obscene" that she could get the vaccine before her long-term caregiver, who is 30.

"I told her, 'I have lived my life. You have not,'" she said.

Others who are eager to get the vaccine fret about being low on the priority list. LaMont C. Brown II, a bus driver in Detroit, said the pandemic had exposed just how little his profession was appreciated. While police officers, firefighters and medical workers are treated as heroes, he hears little celebration of drivers who interact with the public, potentially risking their health.

Now he worries that the same dynamic will play out with vaccines.

He has heard that medical workers and other emergency personnel will be first in line. But he has heard nothing about mak-



The Lopez family — Brienne, Enrique, Dominique and Alisa — at home in Truckee, Calif. The family is hopeful about the vaccine.



Aesha Mahdi, 43, outside of her home in Grayson, Ga., is alarmed by those who fall victim to vaccine misinformation efforts.

ing sure that drivers get vaccinated soon — not from his union, from the city's Department of Transportation or from city leaders, he said.

"We're basically second-class citizens," Mr. Brown, 55, said.

The arrival of a vaccine is also nurturing talk of a return to normalcy, or something resembling it. Tani G. Cantil-Sakauye, California's chief justice, said she was imagining how the vaccine could change things for the nation's largest court system, which is grappling with a huge backlog as many crucial proceedings are pushed online.

"If you envision the Supreme Court, every door is open, people are in the hall leaning against doorjamb, talking, chatting, laughing," Chief Justice Cantil-Sakauye told reporters on a Zoom call this week. "That's now completely absent, and the place is silent."

She and her colleagues have debated whether judges and other court officers should be given priority for a vaccine. No one, after all, would deny that the courts were an essential function of society.

But Chief Justice Cantil-Sakauye said she ultimately came to believe that judges could not "stand on title" and be vaccinated before emergency workers and nursing home residents.

"We think that others need to go first," she said.

Bryan Diaz, 15, of Nuevo, Calif., is also yearning for normalcy. Distance learning has been difficult with his 7-year-old brother, Kevin, vying for his attention, and he misses playing video games and kicking a soccer ball with a friend he has not seen since early in the year.

"I feel excited that there's a vaccine so we can go back to the school," he said.

Bryan, whose father is a mechanic and mother is a homemaker, knows several people, including his godfather, who have contracted the virus. But his parents, Mexican immigrants, are suspicious of the vaccine.

"We talked about it, but my parents don't want us to try it until it's 100 percent," he said. "They want to be sure it's safe."

David Leavitt, a novelist and professor of English at the University of Florida, said the prospect of



LaMont C. Brown II is concerned a lack of appreciation for bus drivers as essential workers will affect vaccine distribution.

a vaccine had given him a feeling he had not previously experienced during the pandemic: "Well, this will end. I never really allowed myself to think about how it will end."

When it is over, Mr. Leavitt looks forward to traveling once again to Italian book festivals. But then he reflexively reins himself in. After all, Italy thought it had

conquered the virus after a brutal spring, and that, Mr. Leavitt says, turned out to be "wishful thinking." He does not want to fall prey to delusion.

So as he waits to find out his position in the vaccine line, he lives by a motto he attributes to one of his favorite Mel Brooks movies, "The Twelve Chairs": "Hope for the best. Expect the worst."

SCIENCE

F.D.A. Gives Clearance to Pfizer Vaccine; About 3 Million Doses Ready to Ship

From Page A1

doses of the vaccine by next March. Under that agreement, the shots will be free to the public.

Every state, along with six major cities, has submitted to the federal government a list of locations — mostly hospitals — where the Pfizer vaccine is to ship initially. In populous Florida, the first recipients will be five hospitals, in Jacksonville, Miami, Orlando, Tampa and Hollywood. In tiny, rural Vermont, only the University of Vermont Medical Center and a state warehouse will get supplies.

McKesson Corporation, a giant medical supplier, is sending kits of syringes, alcohol pads, face shields and other supplies to the same sites, where they will meet up with the vaccines that Pfizer is shipping in special boxes, packed with dry ice, designed to keep them at minus 94 degrees Fahrenheit.

The Pfizer packaging will include a device that tracks the location of the box, plus a thermal probe that will make sure the deep freeze is maintained throughout the journey from the company's distribution sites in Michigan and Wisconsin.

The decision is a victory for Pfizer and its German partner BioNTech, which began working on the vaccine 11 months ago. Vaccines

typically take years to develop. The companies' late-stage clinical trial, which enrolled nearly 44,000 people, was found to be 95 percent effective.

An expert panel advising the F.D.A. on Thursday gave its approval of Pfizer's vaccine for people 16 and older, and the agency was planning to release the formal authorization on Saturday. That timeline was accelerated by half a day after President Trump attacked Dr. Hahn for failing to authorize a vaccine more quickly. But the accelerated announcement was not expected to speed up the delivery of vaccines around the country.

Mr. Trump told Dr. Hahn on Twitter on Friday morning to "stop playing games and start saving lives!!!" He called the F.D.A. "a big, old, slow turtle," flush with funds but mired in bureaucracy.

Mr. Trump has repeatedly accused the F.D.A. and the drugmakers themselves of slow-walking the approval process in order to harm him politically. Allies of Dr. Hahn have been on tenterhooks for weeks, expecting him to be fired any day.

The president wrote that with "my pushing," the administration had shaved years off the development of vaccines. "Get the dam vaccines out NOW, Dr. Hahn," he wrote, misspelling the expletive.

The threat to Dr. Hahn's job was first reported by The Washington



Pfizer has said it will be able to supply up to 25 million doses before the end of the year.

Post. In a statement, Dr. Hahn denied that Mr. Meadows told him he should consider seeking another job, calling it "an untrue representation of the phone call." Instead, Dr. Hahn said, his agency was "encouraged to continue working expeditiously."

Even though the F.D.A. was going to approve the Pfizer vaccine in any case, some experts warned that the pressure from the White House could undermine public trust in the agency's decision-making.

"This may actually do more harm than good, because all it will

do is inject more politics into a scientific process," said Dr. Aaron S. Kesselheim, a professor at the Brigham and Women's Hospital and Harvard Medical School.

A similar vaccine, developed by Moderna, is also under review by the F.D.A. and could soon be cleared for emergency use. On Friday, the federal government announced it had ordered another 100 million doses from Moderna, adding to a deal this summer for an initial supply of 100 million doses. Other vaccines, including ones developed by Johnson & Johnson and AstraZeneca, are in late-stage trials and could be authorized in the next few months.

In anticipation of the vaccine arriving across the country, Americans expressed both hope and anxiety.

Dr. Samu Queen, a physician in Portland, Ore., said her geriatric patients are especially eager to receive the vaccine. "They are all very anxious," she said. "Pretty much everyone, at every appointment, is ready to get it."

Dr. Queen said she was watching closely to see how initial subjects in Britain were responding. She described herself as "somewhat apprehensive about how safe it is, versus not."

Joshua Ball, the associate executive director of Shaping Our Appalachian Region, an economic development group in eastern Kentucky, has been a primary caretaker for his father, who had a

stroke earlier this year and has other health issues. During the pandemic, he has had to try and help remotely as much as possible.

A vaccine could change that. It could also allow him to go back to church, and to attend the seasonal festivals that are cultural staples for many small towns in his region.

"I miss the fellowship of shaking hands, and seeing people, and celebrating birthdays and church meals and vacation bible school," he said.

Still, state health officials remain deeply concerned about what they describe as insufficient funding for the biggest immunization campaign the country has ever embarked on. State health officials have asked Congress for at least \$8.4 billion to do the job well. But so far, they have received only about \$350 million from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for vaccine distribution and administration tasks. Those tasks include expanding online systems to track and share information about who has been vaccinated; recruiting and training doctors, nurses and pharmacists to administer the shots; and convincing the public of the importance of getting immunized.

Supplying enough of the vaccine has also proven to be a challenge without a clear resolution. Pfizer had to scale back earlier estimates because of manufacturing

setbacks, and has said it will be able to supply up to 25 million doses before the end of the year, and 100 million total vaccines by March.

This week, federal officials said that rather than using all 6.4 million doses that the government initially ordered from Pfizer to vaccinate people, it is holding back half of the supply for a booster shot to recipients three weeks after their first vaccination. But even though only about three million people will receive a vaccine in the first week, officials have held firm on their estimate that, between the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines, which each require two shots, they hope to give at least 20 million people their first dose of a vaccine by the end of the year.

Questions also persist about how quickly a vaccine will be available to anyone that wants one. Federal officials have said they expect to be able to vaccinate the bulk of the U.S. population by the middle of next year, but recent setbacks have challenged those estimates. Pfizer has told the federal government that it may not be able to provide an additional 100 million doses to the United States before the middle of next year because of agreements it has with other countries. And three other experimental vaccines, developed by Novavax, Sanofi and AstraZeneca, have faced delays in their clinical trials.

Ellen Barry and Will Wright contributed reporting.

Tracking an Outbreak U.S. Rollout Begins

VACCINE DISTRIBUTION

How Many Doses Your State Will Receive, and When

By THE NEW YORK TIMES

With new coronavirus cases and deaths continuing to emerge at record levels, the United States is poised to begin a lengthy vaccination campaign.

The first shipments of Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna vaccine will not be enough to inoculate even just the medical workers and nursing home residents at the top of the waiting list. Now that federal regulators have granted emergency authorization to the Pfizer vaccine, millions of doses will soon be shipped across the country, a small but tangible step toward ending the pandemic.

By design, the vaccine rollout will be a patchwork. Though federal regulators are responsible for deciding when a vaccine can be safely used, it is largely up to the states to determine how to deploy the doses they receive. Recipients of both vaccines will need two doses administered weeks apart. Distribution is meant to be based on adult population estimates.

With no publicly available national data on how much vaccine will be sent to each state, The Times surveyed all 50 state health

departments — plus territorial governments and other agencies that may receive allocations — seeking information on how many doses they expected before the end of the year.

While some states provided detailed information, others would only discuss an initial shipment or refused to provide any information at all. In some cases, state estimates have shifted significantly over the past several days, and some states and agencies indicated that their estimates would continue to change as new information emerges.

Out of deference to states and other jurisdictions receiving vaccine doses, a senior administration official said, the Department of Health and Human Services is not publicly releasing planning numbers, but expects to provide more information in the days ahead.

The numbers provided below offer a lens into a national rollout that could begin in just a few days. But because of the differences in reporting practices between states, and because all the numbers given were tentative, they should not be used to draw comparisons.



POOL PHOTO BY DAN CHART

British regulators urged people with a “history of serious allergies” to discuss the coronavirus vaccine with their doctors.

PFIZER VACCINE

Should You Be Worried About Allergy Problems?

By DENISE GRADY

The decision by British drug regulators to recommend against use of the coronavirus vaccine made by Pfizer and BioNTech in people who have a history of severe allergic reactions has raised a number of concerns.

The regulators issued the warning after two health care workers, both with such a history, had a serious reaction, anaphylaxis, after receiving the vaccine on the first day it became available in Britain. Anaphylaxis can be life-threatening, with impaired breathing and drops in blood pressure that usually occur within minutes or even seconds after exposure to a food or medicine, or even a substance like latex to which the person is allergic.

Both were treated and have recovered, the regulators said.

British authorities have since clarified their concerns, changing the wording from “severe allergic reactions” to specify that the vaccine should not be given to anyone who has ever had an anaphylactic reaction to a food, medicine or vaccine. That type of reaction to a vaccine is “very rare,” they said.

They also said a third patient had a “possible allergic reaction,” but did not describe it.

Officials of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration said on Thursday that because of the British cases they would require Pfizer to increase its monitoring for anaphylaxis and submit data on it once the vaccine comes into use. A panel of expert advisers to the F.D.A. voted on Thursday to recommend authorizing the vaccine for emergency use, but also expressed concerns about the need to track anaphylaxis. The agency usually accepts the experts’ recommendations, and the authorization is expected within days. Vaccinations could start next week in the United States.

The initial report on the British cases touched off alarm and confusion by advising that people who had ever had a “severe allergic reaction” to a food, drug or vaccine should not receive the vaccine. The nature of the reaction was not explained at first, leaving many people with allergies to food or bee stings wondering if the new vaccine would be safe for them.

But the regulators’ subsequent clarification specified their advice applied to people who had ever gone into anaphylaxis, and those with a “history of serious allergies” to discuss it with their doctors “prior to getting the jab.”

The authorities also said the shots should be given only in settings equipped to resuscitate patients if needed, by giving injections of epinephrine, also known as adrenaline.

The two health care workers in Britain had experienced anaphylaxis in the past because of food allergies, a Pfizer official said at the F.D.A. meeting Thursday. Both carried EpiPen-type devices to inject themselves with epinephrine in case of such a reaction.

They needed epinephrine to treat their reactions to the vaccine, and both recovered.

British health authorities said they would continue to investigate. It is not known whether an ingredient in the vaccine caused the workers’ reactions.

People with a history of an anaphylactic reaction to any vaccine were excluded from Pfizer’s studies, company officials said at the meeting on Thursday.

Among those who participated in the Pfizer trials, a very small number of people had allergic reactions. A document published by the F.D.A. on Tuesday said that 0.63 percent of participants who received the vaccine reported potential allergic reactions, compared to 0.51 percent of people who received a placebo.

In Pfizer’s late-stage clinical trial, one of the 18,801 participants who received the vaccine had an anaphylactic reaction, according to safety data published by the F.D.A. on Tuesday. None in the placebo group did.

Dr. Anthony Fauci, the nation’s leading expert on infectious dis-

eases, said on Wednesday that the allergic reactions were concerning but most likely rare, the kind of effects that show up when a vaccine moves out of testing and into broader distribution.

“If I were a person that had an underlying allergic tendency, I might want to be prepared that I might get a reaction, and therefore be ready to treat it,” Dr. Fauci said, in a webcast moderated by Dr. Sanjay Gupta of CNN, sponsored by Harvard and The New England Journal of Medicine.

Dr. Fauci acknowledged that the problem could turn out to affect a lot of people.

“That’s one of the reasons why it’s important to cover the waterfront with different vaccine platforms,” he said, adding, “If in fact we do find out that there is a consistent issue of a certain subset of people like those with allergic reactions, you’ll always have other vaccine platforms that you can use and hopefully you will not see that with those other platforms.”

Dr. Paul Offit, a vaccine expert at Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia, said the broad recommendation in Britain mentioning severe allergic reactions seemed to be an overreaction.

Millions of people in the United States are allergic to foods like eggs or peanuts, as well as medicines or bee stings, and have had reactions that were serious enough to lead doctors to advise them to carry epinephrine injectors. But that does not necessarily mean the vaccine is risky for them, he said. About 5 percent of

Dr. Anthony Fauci said the reactions were most likely rare.

children and 4 percent of adults in the United States have food allergies, according to the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases.

Fewer than one in a million recipients of other vaccines a year in the United States have an anaphylactic reaction, Dr. Offit said.

Those reactions are treatable and easier to control than a severe case of Covid-19, he said.

As a member of the F.D.A. advisory panel that met Thursday, Dr. Offit voted to authorize the Pfizer vaccine. But he said research should be done to find out whether an ingredient can cause allergic reactions, and whether people with other allergies might be sensitive to it.

Dr. Moncef Slaoui, the head of the government’s program to develop vaccines, said Wednesday he thought U.S. experts would also advise people who have had severe allergic reactions to avoid the vaccine until the cases in Britain were fully explained.

Dr. William Schaffner, an infectious disease and vaccine expert at Vanderbilt University, said, “I wish Dr. Slaoui hadn’t gotten ahead of his skis.”

He said recommendations about who should or should not get the vaccine would be made by expert advisory panels to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, which will be meeting on Friday and this weekend.

Next week, the F.D.A.’s advisory panel will vote on whether to recommend authorizing a second coronavirus vaccine that uses mRNA, made by Moderna. The Moderna and Pfizer vaccines are similar but not identical: They use different types of fat particles, for instance, to coat the mRNA.

Dr. Schaffner said he knew of no evidence that people with food allergies were more likely than anyone else to have a severe reaction to a vaccine.

“We’ve dealt with allergies to all kinds of medicines and vaccines in medical practice, and we can do that in this circumstance also,” Dr. Schaffner said. “Everybody needs to be trained to be able to deal with this and deal with it promptly. I think we can manage this.”

ALABAMA

Officials in Alabama said they expected to receive an initial shipment of **40,450 doses** of Pfizer vaccine.

ALASKA

Health officials in Alaska said they could receive initial shipments of **35,100 Pfizer doses** and **17,900 Moderna doses**. Of those, they said, 11,700 Pfizer doses had been assigned to the Alaska Tribal Health System.

AMERICAN SAMOA

An epidemiologist with the American Samoan government said the territory expected to receive **3,900 Pfizer doses** and **25,100 Moderna doses** by July. He said it was not clear when the first shipment would arrive.

ARIZONA

Arizona officials said they expected to receive **383,750 doses** of vaccine by the end of the year. They expected three Pfizer shipments totaling 212,550 doses and two Moderna shipments totaling 171,200 doses.

ARKANSAS

Arkansas health officials said they expected to initially receive approximately **25,000 doses** of the Pfizer vaccine.

CALIFORNIA

A state official said that the federal government was projecting that California would receive about **2 million doses** by the end of December.

COLORADO

Colorado officials said they placed an initial order for **46,800 doses** of Pfizer vaccine. Based on the state’s population, they said they expected to receive 1.69 percent of the federal government’s vaccine allocations.

CONNECTICUT

Officials in Connecticut said they expected about **106,275 doses** of Pfizer vaccine and about **88,300 doses** of Moderna vaccine in December.

DELAWARE

Delaware officials said they expected to receive **56,275 doses** by the end of the year, including initial shipments of around 8,775 Pfizer doses and around 16,700 Moderna doses.

FLORIDA

Gov. Ron DeSantis said Florida would receive **179,400 initial doses** of the Pfizer vaccine.

GEORGIA

Georgia officials declined to provide detailed information. A spokeswoman for the health department said they expected hundreds of thousands of doses in initial shipments.

GUAM

Territorial officials in Guam said they expected **3,900 doses** of Pfizer vaccine in a first shipment, followed by two more shipments of 3,900 doses each. A spokeswoman said that in a best-case scenario, the first shipment would arrive before the end of the month.

HAWAII

A Hawaii official said the state expected to receive **45,825 doses** of the Pfizer vaccine and **36,000 doses** of the Moderna vaccine before the end of the year.

IDAHO

Officials in Idaho said they expected to receive **89,150 doses** of vaccine in three shipments before the end of the year, including 48,750 Pfizer doses and 40,400 Moderna doses.

ILLINOIS

An official in Illinois said the state expected to receive about **109,000 doses** of the Pfizer vaccine in its first shipment.

Reporting by Jasmine Lee, Kenan Davis, Mitch Smith, Danielle Ivory, Jordan Allen, Alex Lemonides, Barbara Harvey, Alex Leeds Matthews, Cierra S. Queen, Natasha Rodriguez and John Yoon.

INDIANA

Indiana officials said they expected to receive a limited supply of vaccines and that details of those shipments were evolving.

IOWA

Iowa officials said they expected three shipments of Pfizer vaccine, totaling about **95,000 doses**, before the end of the year, including an initial batch of roughly 26,000 doses. They also expected two shipments of Moderna vaccine, totaling about 77,000 doses.

KANSAS

Gov. Laura Kelly said the state expected to receive an initial shipment of Pfizer vaccine, totaling **23,750 doses**, as early as mid-December, followed by Pfizer and Moderna vaccine shipments. She said the state expected to receive approximately **150,000 doses** by the end of the month.

KENTUCKY

The Kentucky governor’s office said it expected that the state would receive at least **147,000 doses** of the vaccine before the end of the year, including at least 38,000 Pfizer doses and 109,000 Moderna doses.

LOUISIANA

Gov. John Bel Edwards said that the state expected to receive an initial batch of **39,000 doses** of the Pfizer vaccines, followed closely by an additional **40,000 doses**.

MAINE

A Maine health official said the state expected to receive **74,875 doses** of vaccine before the end of the year, including 39,975 doses of the Pfizer vaccine and 34,900 doses of the Moderna vaccine.

MARYLAND

Maryland officials said the state expected to receive an initial batch of Pfizer and Moderna vaccines, totaling about **155,000 doses**, with the possibility of up to **300,000 doses** before the year’s end.

MASSACHUSETTS

Officials in Massachusetts expected about **120,000 Moderna doses** and about **180,000 Pfizer doses** before the end of the year based on federal projections, including an initial shipment of 59,475 doses.

MICHIGAN

Michigan officials said they were told by the federal government to expect **84,825 doses** of Pfizer vaccine and **173,600** of Moderna vaccine.

MINNESOTA

Officials in Minnesota said they expected **183,400 doses** of vaccine in December, including an initial shipment of 46,800 Pfizer doses and two Moderna shipments amounting to 136,600 doses.

MISSISSIPPI

Mississippi’s state epidemiologist said he expected about **25,000 vaccine doses** in mid-December and a second shipment of **25,000 doses** a couple of weeks later.

MISSOURI

Missouri officials said they expected **375,000 doses** before the end of 2020, including about 151,000 from Moderna and about 224,000 from Pfizer.

MONTANA

A Montana official said the state expected to receive **60,000 doses** of the vaccine before the end of the year.

NEBRASKA

Gov. Pete Ricketts said he expected an initial shipment of **15,600 Pfizer doses**.

NEVADA

The Nevada Department of Health and Human Services said it expected more than **164,000 doses** in December, including 91,650 doses of Pfizer vaccine and 72,500 doses of Moderna vaccine.

NEW HAMPSHIRE

A New Hampshire health official said the state expected to receive **12,675 doses** of Pfizer next week and **24,200 doses** of Moderna in the week of Dec. 21.

NEW JERSEY

Gov. Phil Murphy said that the state expected to quickly receive about **76,000 doses** of the Pfizer vaccine, and that it could receive between **300,000** and **500,000 doses** before the end of the year.

NEW MEXICO

A New Mexico official said that the state expected to receive an initial batch of more than **17,550 doses** of the Pfizer vaccine, followed by more doses later this month.

NEW YORK

A state official said New York expected to receive **170,000 doses** of the Pfizer vaccine before the end of the year, followed by another **170,000 doses** early next year. The state also announced it expected to receive **346,000** Moderna doses.

NORTH CAROLINA

A state spokeswoman said North Carolina expected to receive **171,600 Pfizer doses** and **175,000 Moderna doses** before the end of the year. She said another **175,000 Moderna doses** would follow shortly after.

NORTH DAKOTA

A spokeswoman for the North Dakota Department of Health said the state expected **24,375 Pfizer doses** and **18,700 Moderna doses** by the end of December.

NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

Officials in the Northern Mariana Islands did not provide details about vaccine allocation.

OHIO

Gov. Mike DeWine said he tentatively expected **561,000 doses** of the two vaccines spread over several early shipments.

OKLAHOMA

Oklahoma officials said they expected a first shipment of **30,000 doses**.

OREGON

A spokesman for the Oregon Health Authority said the state expected three Pfizer shipments in December, totaling **94,800 doses**, and two Moderna shipments with **102,700 doses**.

PENNSYLVANIA

Pennsylvania officials declined to answer questions about vaccine allotment.

PUERTO RICO

Puerto Rico officials did not respond to questions about how much vaccine they expected.

RHODE ISLAND

Rhode Island officials said they expected initial shipments with **10,000 Pfizer doses** and **19,000 Moderna doses**.

SOUTH CAROLINA

South Carolina officials said they expected **200,000 to 300,000 doses** in December, but would not be sure of the amount until the shipments arrived.

SOUTH DAKOTA

The South Dakota Department of Health expects about **7,800 doses** of Pfizer vaccine in December, officials there said.

TENNESSEE

Tennessee officials said they expected an initial allotment of **56,550 Pfizer doses** and about **100,000 Moderna doses**.

TEXAS

Texas officials said they expected **1.4 million doses** of vaccine in December.

U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS

Officials in the United States Virgin Islands did not respond to questions about vaccine allotment.

UTAH

Utah officials said they expected to receive **154,400 doses** of vaccine in three December shipments, including an initial batch of 23,400 Pfizer doses.

VERMONT

Officials in Vermont said they had ordered **5,850 doses** of vaccine and expected their initial shipment in mid December.

VIRGINIA

A spokeswoman for the Virginia Department of Health said the state expected to receive about **480,000 doses** of vaccine in 2020, including a first shipment of 72,150 Pfizer doses.

WASHINGTON

Washington State officials said they expected **222,000 doses** of the Pfizer vaccine and **183,000 doses** of the Moderna vaccine before the end of December, including an initial shipment of about 62,000 Pfizer doses.

WASHINGTON, D.C.

Washington, D.C.’s government said it expected to receive an initial allotment of **6,825 doses** of the Pfizer vaccine.

WEST VIRGINIA

Gov. Jim Justice said the state expected about **60,000 doses** of Pfizer vaccine and about **32,600 doses** of Moderna vaccine in December.

WISCONSIN

Wisconsin officials said they expected a shipment of **49,725 doses** of Pfizer vaccine in mid December and **16,000 doses** of Moderna vaccine a week later.

WYOMING

Wyoming officials did not provide information about the number of doses expected.

BUREAU OF PRISONS

The C.D.C. said that the Bureau of Prisons would receive allocations of the vaccine. The prison agency did not respond to inquiries.

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

The C.D.C. said that the Department of Defense would receive allocations of the vaccine. The military agency said it planned to administer its initial batch of **U** of the Pfizer vaccine to service members, dependents, retirees, civilian employees and select contract personnel.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

The C.D.C. said that the State Department would receive allocations of the vaccine. The State Department told The New York Times that it “is not the federal agency charged with Covid vaccine distribution or management.”

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

The C.D.C. said that the Department of Veterans Affairs would receive allocations of the vaccine. The veterans agency did not provide the number of doses it expected to receive, but said it would first provide vaccinations to front-line health care workers and veterans residing in long-term care units at 37 of its medical centers.

INDIAN HEALTH SERVICE

The C.D.C. said that the Indian Health Service would receive allocations of the vaccine. The Indian Health Service said it was expecting to receive **46,000 doses** of the Moderna vaccine and at least **22,400 doses** of the Pfizer vaccine. It expected it could receive those doses before the end of the year.

International

The New York Times

In Push for Women's Rights, Argentina Weighs Bill Legalizing Abortion

By DANIEL POLITI

BUENOS AIRES — Argentine lawmakers took a major step on Friday toward legalizing abortion and fulfilling a promise of President Alberto Fernández, who has made women's rights a central tenet of his government.

The bill's approval in Argentina's lower house of Congress by 131 to 117 votes, after more than 20 hours of debate, was a legislative victory for Mr. Fernández, who has dedicated funding and political capital to improving conditions for women and for gay and transgender people, even as Argentina wrestles with the biggest financial crisis in a generation. The bill would still need to pass through the Senate to officially legalize abortion in the country.

"It's a false dilemma to say it's one thing or the other," said Elizabeth Gómez Alcorta, Argentina's minister of women, gender and diversity. "It isn't as if you stop renegotiating the debt in order to pursue these policies."

Argentina would become only the fourth country — and by far the most populous — to make abortion legal in Latin America, where strict abortion laws are the norm and Catholic teaching has long steered policy.

Thousands of activists on both sides of the issue surrounded Congress from Thursday night into Friday morning, following the debate on giant screens.

They were divided into clearly designated areas depending on their positions. On one side, abortion rights activists turned their area into an open-air party, dancing through much of the hot summer night.

"I have goose bumps," Stefania Gras, a 22-year-old psychology student who stayed through the night, said after the vote. "I feel like we're making history."

Another, notably smaller group opposed to legalization, held open-air prayers all night, though most recognized the bill was likely to pass as the morning light crept across the sky.

"I feel profound sadness," said Paloma Guevara, a 24-year-old nutritionist who had a megaphone and rallied alongside anti-abortion activists all night. "Our hope now is the Senate, and the good thing is, we're more prepared than we were two years ago."

Mr. Fernández, a center-left law school

Only three other countries in Latin America have authorized the procedure.

professor, campaigned as a champion of marginalized communities, drawing a contrast with his wealthy, center-right predecessor, Mauricio Macri. He placed gender and sexual orientation disparity alongside social, economic and racial inequality and promised to tackle them.

But he took office a year ago during a deep recession, and the coronavirus epidemic struck Argentina within three months of his swearing in. The country imposed one of the world's longest and strictest lockdowns, but still the virus spread, leaving it among the nations with the highest death rates per capita.

Despite these hardships, Mr. Fernández, 61, kept gender and sexual orientation parity a priority in his government, surprising even some activists aligned with his initiatives.

This year, the government created a quota system that set aside at least one percent of federal public-sector jobs for transgender Argentines.

"It really was something that surprised us all," said Maryanne Lettieri, an English teacher who leads an organization that helps fellow transgender people find jobs. "I hope someday we won't need quotas, but now we need them."

Mr. Fernández's 2021 budget identifies more than 15 percent of projected spending as going to initiatives that would further gender parity, including funding violence prevention programs, bringing women who were not part of the formal labor force into the pension system, and fighting human trafficking.

Mr. Fernández has also asked his team to avoid scheduling meetings that in-



Supporters of the abortion bill cheered in Buenos Aires Friday, after the lower house of Argentina's Congress passed it. The Senate vote is expected to be tighter.



Lawmakers in Buenos Aires. Some have criticized the timing of the bill, as Argentina faces debt and virus crises.

clude only straight men. Since August, any audience of more than four people with the president should have women or members of the L.G.B.T.Q. community make up one third of participants.

The emphasis on making Argentina more equitable as the nation grapples with inflation, rising poverty and a crushing debt may appear to some like a distraction, or a populist ploy by Mr. Fernández. Some critics, such as Patricia Bullrich, a former security minister who now leads the PRO party of Mr. Macri, have argued that, at the very least, "it isn't the right time" to discuss divisive issues like abortion.

"I would work much more on the economy and people's realities," she said on CNN Radio Argentina. "I'd have other priorities."

But government officials say they see

investments in making Argentina a fairer country as part of the path to a more prosperous future.

"More equality and access to opportunities is part of the vision that we are pursuing in this government," the economy minister, Martín Guzmán, said.

The abortion bill, which would make it legal to end pregnancies up to 14 weeks, is the highest-profile and most divisive part of that plan.

Abortion in Argentina is now allowed only in cases of rape or if the pregnancy poses a risk to the mother's health. In practice though, doctors, particularly in rural areas, are often reluctant to practice even legal abortions for fear of legal repercussions.

At least 65 women died between 2016 and 2018 from complications from abortions, according to a report by Argenti-

na's Access to Safe Abortion Network. In that same period, 7,262 girls from 10 to 14 years old gave birth.

Argentina came close to legalizing abortion in 2018, despite loud protests from the churches and from Pope Francis, who is Argentine. Mr. Macri, who was president at the time, said he opposed the measure, but urged allied lawmakers to vote their consciences.

Drawing a sharp contrast with his predecessor, Mr. Fernández submitted the bill to Congress last month conspicuously wearing a green tie, the color that has come to represent the effort to legalize abortion.

"I am convinced it is the state's responsibility to care for the life and health of those who decide to interrupt their pregnancy," Mr. Fernández said in a video posted on Twitter.

In doing so, he fulfilled a campaign promise that some reproductive rights activists feared would get lost amid the heavy toll the coronavirus and the economic crisis have taken on Argentina. The bill was unveiled as Mr. Fernández's team struggled to renegotiate the \$44 billion in debt it holds with the International Monetary Fund and to reopen a paralyzed economy.

The biggest hurdle for abortion-rights activists will come in the Senate, where the measure narrowly failed in 2018, after facing strong opposition from senators of rural provinces, where the Roman Catholic and evangelical churches have greater sway.

Despite the loss, the massive mobilization ahead of the 2018 vote, particularly by young women, galvanized a new generation of feminists in Argentina who have taken to the streets in great numbers to campaign for legal abortion and broader representation.

Legalizing abortion would fulfill one of the main demands of that movement, and hand Mr. Fernández his biggest legislative victory, giving further impetus to a national project that has already begun to reshape Argentina.

As the pandemic hit women especially hard, making them the majority among the newly unemployed, Argentina led the way as the country that has taken the greatest number of gender-sensitive measures to respond to the crisis, according to a database by the United Nations Development Program.

"In Argentina, the pandemic has fully exposed the inequality between men and women," said Mercedes D'Alessandro, who leads the equality and gender department in the Economy Ministry. "Even with such an adverse context, this agenda has kept moving forward."

Argentina's increased focus on gender equality comes at a time when other countries in the region are also making sure women have a voice in government decisions.

In neighboring Chile, for example, voters in November approved a referendum to draft a new constitution which also required gender parity among the delegates to the constitutional convention.

Yet few measures are likely to have as much regional impact as if Argentina joins Cuba, Uruguay and Guyana in making abortion legal.

In China, if a Player's Hair Color Is Not 'Black Enough,' It Can Cost Her the Game

By YAN ZHUANG

Forget skill, training or even luck. If you're a female soccer player in China, sometimes victory or defeat comes down to the color of your hair, as one university team recently found out the hard way.

The women's teams at Fuzhou University and Jimei University were supposed to face off at an intercollegiate tournament last week in China's southeast. But they were barred from participating because players from both teams had dyed hair, which was against the rules.

Photos from the tournament show all the players with either black or dark-brown hair, but apparently those were the wrong shades. The Fujian Province Department of Education's rules governing university soccer state that players will be disqualified from a match if they wear accessories or jewelry, or have "strange" hairstyles or dyed hair.

So coaches rushed to buy black hair dye to meet the requirements and assembled seven players with dark hair

from each team to compete, according to state-run media.

But the Jimei University team members argued that one of their opponents still did not have "black enough" hair, and she was ordered to leave the game. One player short, the Fuzhou University team forfeited the match.

Under China's top leader, Xi Jinping, the Communist Party's creeping interference on the smallest details of Chinese life is being felt more and more. Censors have blurred the bejeweled earlobes of young male pop stars on television and the internet so that, in their mind, the piercings and jewelry don't set a bad example for boys. Women in costumes at a video game convention were told to raise their necklines.

With soccer a national priority under Mr. Xi, the crackdown has spread to sports. Last year, members of the men's national soccer team were forced to play in long sleeves in stifling heat at the Asian Cup in Abu Dhabi after the government banned the display of tattoos dur-

The Communist Party's crackdown on everyday life intrudes on sports.

ing matches.

The ban applied both to the national team and to domestic soccer players all the way down to university leagues. Other players have had to put bandages over tattoos and have been barred from playing for wearing necklaces on the field.

The episode last week sparked intense debate on Weibo, a Chinese microblogging platform, where the hashtag "female soccer team lost due to too many players having dyed hair" has been viewed 180 million times.

Many noted the lagging performance of China's national teams and opined that the focus should be on improving the

skills of players rather than on superficial aspects of the game. One user characterized the episode surrounding the women's teams as "nitpicking over irrelevant details," and added, "This shows that our soccer culture is not tolerant or forgiving enough."

Some users also noted that the rules were simply out of touch because it is all too common for university-age women in China to dye their hair — much as the American soccer star Megan Rapinoe did with a shade of violet while helping the U.S. team take the 2019 World Cup title.

But others supported the Chinese officials' decision to enforce the rules. "This kind of requirement is right, because these players often become idols for schoolchildren and their conduct can influence other people," one social media user wrote.

The Fujian Education Department's rules governing university soccer do not apply only to female players: Male players are barred from having long hair.

But some male professional soccer players have gotten more adventurous with their hair colors and styles. Wei Shihao, a player for Guangzhou Evergrande, made headlines last year when he sported dreadlocks with white tips, and recently when he dyed his hair blond.

The Fuzhou University sports department could not be immediately reached for comment. In a post on its website about the forfeited match, it said: "Although the match against Jimei University on November 30 was unable to go ahead for some reason and we were declared to have lost, the outstanding strength and determination of the whole team was clear to see. They learned a lesson from the event and adjusted their attitudes."

The following day, the post revealed, the team won its match against another university team, and it came in second over all in the competition.

Apparently, the players had achieved the right shade of black, after all.

Hong Kong Media Mogul and Bloomberg Staffer Snared in Dissent Crackdown

By VIVIAN WANG
and CHRIS BUCKLEY

HONG KONG — In two strokes unveiled on Friday, the Chinese Communist Party laid out in stark relief the rapidly shrinking space for speech and independent journalism in China.

In Hong Kong, the police said on Friday that Jimmy Lai, the outspoken founder of an ardently antigovernment newspaper, had been charged under the city's new national security law with colluding with foreign forces. Hours later, Bloomberg News disclosed that plainclothes security officials had earlier that week detained Haze Fan, a Chinese staffer in Beijing, also on potential national security violations.

Both announcements were shrouded in secrecy. The police in Hong Kong did not specify how Mr. Lai was said to have colluded with foreign countries. Chinese officials said only that Ms. Fan, who had been taken four days earlier from her apartment, was accused of "criminal activities that jeopardize national security," according to Bloomberg's report.

But both cases made clear how potent the party's aggressive use of national security concerns has been in spreading fear, both among its own people and in foreign organizations.

Pro-democracy activists in Hong Kong said the indictment of Mr. Lai was a clear warning that Beijing intended to use the security law, which was just enacted in June, to silence dissent and erode free speech. Mr. Lai had been one of the most internationally recognized faces of last year's massive pro-democracy protests, pouring his fortune and his platform into supporting them.

In the mainland, the news of Ms. Fan's detention sent ripples of disquiet among foreign news outlets, which have already been beleaguered by expulsions of journalists and tightening reporting restrictions.

Many supporters of democracy in once-free-wheeling Hong Kong have long feared that the Communist Party is seeking to turn the semiautonomous territory into just another mainland city. Friday's dual revelations showed some of them just how much the differences between the two places had collapsed.

"I have always questioned why the national security of the Chinese regime is so fragile," Lo Kin-hei, the chairman of Hong Kong's opposition Democratic Party, said of the twin allegations. "They just keep on using these kinds of laws or these kinds of allegations to try to silence people."

The move against Mr. Lai, the most high-profile person to be charged under Hong Kong's new law, was not a surprise. State-run news outlets have railed against him as a "black hand" behind last year's protests, pointing to his trip last year to the United States to lobby Vice President Mike Pence and Secretary of State Mike Pompeo for action against China. Chinese officials have openly thirsted for him to be punished.

That call was answered in August, when Mr. Lai was arrested on suspicion of violating the security law, and police officers raided the headquarters of Apple Daily, his newspaper. The indictment on Friday stems from that arrest.

If convicted, Mr. Lai could face up to life in prison. Under the national security law, court proceedings can be held behind closed doors, and defendants can even be removed to mainland China to stand trial.

The police did not specify what Mr. Lai was accused of having

Elsie Chen and Amber Wang contributed research.



Jimmy Lai arriving at a Hong Kong detention center. Mr. Lai, founder of an antigovernment newspaper, is the most prominent figure charged under a new security law.

done to violate the security law. As written, the law is not supposed to be retroactive, and since it was imposed, Mr. Lai has said that he would be more careful about his words, shying away for example from explicit requests to American lawmakers.

But Claudia Mo, a former pro-democracy lawmaker, said many believed the authorities were merely looking for a premise on which to shut down Apple Daily, which has continued to needle the government even after the security law was enacted.

"This seems likely a key part of their ideological control over Hong Kong," Ms. Mo said. "They hate Lai's high political profile and find his media influence more than bothersome."

Mr. Lai was already in jail after being denied bail on unrelated fraud charges, a decision he is appealing. But because of the charge under the national security law, which grants the authorities sweeping powers to hold defendants without bail, it is unlikely that he will win release.

The indictment followed a string of punishments for other high-profile figures in recent weeks. The young activists Joshua Wong and Agnes Chow were sentenced to jail last week, and several pro-democracy lawmakers were ejected from the city's legislature last month, leading the rest of the opposition, including Ms. Mo, to resign en masse.

In targeting Mr. Lai, the Chinese government may also have been sending a message to other countries that have been harshly critical of its crackdown on Hong Kong. President Trump's administration this week imposed travel bans and financial sanctions on 14 senior Chinese officials it said were responsible for the repression.

President-elect Joseph R. Biden Jr. has also promised to take a tough stance on China.

Few details were available on Friday about the accusations

against Ms. Fan, the Bloomberg staffer. In the mainland, the sweeping set of potential national security charges includes illegally obtaining or sharing confidential government information, or engaging in political subversion.

According to Bloomberg's news report, Ms. Fan disappeared into the hands of investigators on Monday, soon after she was last in contact with a Bloomberg editor. Bloomberg said it published its report after receiving confirmation from Chinese authorities that Ms. Fan had been detained.

John Micklethwait, Bloomberg's editor in chief, told employees on a call on Friday that the company was doing everything it could to secure Ms. Fan's release, according to a person aware of the remarks but who requested anonymity because the comments were not public.

Mr. Micklethwait urged the staff to keep covering China and finance and business in the world as they always had and said the company was proud of its coverage, the person said. He said the company did not know why Ms. Fan had been detained.

The news organization tried to obtain information about Ms. Fan's whereabouts from the Chinese government and Chinese embassy in Washington, the report said. The Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs did not respond immediately to a fax and phone calls about the case.

The Chinese government bans Chinese citizens from doing independent reporting for foreign news organizations, allowing them to work only as researchers and assistants. Bloomberg News, whose lifeblood is financial and business reporting, employs many Chinese in its large Beijing operation.

Foreign journalists in China have become a growing point of tension in recent years. The Chinese foreign ministry has often complained of what it sees as biased coverage from Western

news outlets, and this year it expelled a dozen or so American journalists after the United States expelled a number of Chinese reporters.

The list of recent articles that Ms. Fan helped on features mostly reports about Chinese businesses. But she also worked on reports about the coronavirus pandemic that began in Wuhan, trade tensions between China and the United States, and other broader topics.

In her profile on LinkedIn, Ms. Fan described herself as a senior producer in China for Bloomberg, where she has worked since 2017. Previously, she worked for CNBC, Al Jazeera and other news outlets.

In August, the authorities in Beijing detained Cheng Lei, an

Australian of Chinese descent who was working as a journalist for CGTN, a Chinese state-run broadcaster. Officials later said Ms. Cheng was suspected of violating national security laws, but no details have been disclosed.

In 2004, Zhao Yan, a Chinese researcher for The New York Times's Beijing bureau, was detained by state security officers. Mr. Zhao was initially accused of disclosing state secrets to The Times, linked to reporting on Communist Party leaders. He was later convicted on a lighter charge of fraud, and served three years in prison.

Mr. Lai's indictment and Ms. Fan's detention come as China faces heavy fire from the United States and other Western coun-

tries for its new constrictions on Hong Kong.

Some officials and state newspapers have indicated that they would seek a reset with the United States under Mr. Biden — a reset that these moves could endanger.

But Willy Lam, a professor of Chinese politics at the Chinese University of Hong Kong, said China's leader, Xi Jinping, was determined to broadcast strength against "the so-called bullying and intimidation from the U.S. and the Western world."

"This is a show of defiance," Professor Lam said of the charge against Mr. Lai, "telling the world that in spite of the sanctions and so forth, there is no possibility that they would relax this tight regime."

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Questions may be directed to Hodges Ward Elliott at finance@hodgeswardelliott.com.

U.K. to Halt Fossil Fuel Subsidies Abroad

By STEPHEN CASTLE

LONDON — Prime Minister Boris Johnson of Britain promised on Friday to end direct taxpayer support for fossil fuel projects overseas as soon as possible, in a move designed to help position his country as a global leader in the battle to curb climate change.

The announcement, to be made formally on Saturday at a Climate Ambition Summit convened by the United Nations, Britain and France, follows other recent pledges intended to burnish Mr. Johnson's environmental credentials and put pressure on other nations to reduce their emissions.

Next year Britain will host the United Nations climate negotiation in Glasgow, a meeting that is seen in Downing Street as an opportunity for the country to demonstrate that Brexit has not diminished its desire to play a leading role on the global stage. Climate change is also a policy where Mr. Johnson expects to find common cause with President-elect Joseph R. Biden Jr. who — unlike President Trump — opposed Brexit, which the prime minister championed.

In a statement the prime minister's office said that Britain

Somini Sengupta contributed reporting from New York.

would end financing, aid and trade promotion for new projects overseas to extract or use crude oil, natural gas or the type of coal burned to generate electricity. There will be a few limited exceptions for gas-fired power plants and other projects, within parameters that align with the Paris Agreement on climate change, the government said.

"Climate change is one of the great global challenges of our age, and it is already costing lives and livelihoods the world over. Our actions as leaders must be driven not by timidity or caution, but by ambition on a truly grand scale," Mr. Johnson said in a statement.

Also on Friday, European Union leaders agreed to cut net carbon emissions over the next decade by 55 percent of their 1990 levels, despite objections from countries like Poland that remain heavily dependent on coal.

Britain, along with other wealthy countries, is an important source of funds for fossil fuel projects abroad, often by providing loans to British companies involved in the work or underwriting loans from British banks. According to the British government, it has supported 21 billion pounds, or about \$27.8 billion, of British involvement in overseas oil and gas projects in the last four years.

Both the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development and the International Energy Agency have called on countries to curb or stop government subsidies for fossil fuel. An independent scorecard estimates Britain's total public support for fossil fuel projects at \$16 billion a year.

Earlier this month Mr. Johnson announced plans to end the sale of new gas and diesel cars within a decade and to change the way people heat their homes. That was part of a program that the British government said would reduce greenhouse gas emissions, by 2030, by at least 68 percent of their 1990 levels, the fastest rate of any major economy.

Environmental groups largely welcomed that push, though some have questioned whether the government would spend enough to realize its goal of net zero carbon emissions by 2050.

Advocacy groups also welcomed the move to end taxpayer support for fossil fuel projects overseas. "The U.K. can start a domino effect of countries ending taxpayer support for fossil fuel projects around the world, hastening the end of the fossil fuel era and raising the chances of success at the Glasgow summit," Adam McGibbon of Global Witness said in an emailed statement.

Sanctions Movement Against Israel Divides Berlin's Cultural Elite

By MELISSA EDDY

BERLIN — For months, the leaders of dozens of Germany's most prominent cultural institutions met in secret, swapping stories of self-censorship, of hours spent worrying about the social media histories of artists or scholars they wanted to invite to their programs, and fears for their futures, if they slipped up.

Their concern? That they or their institutions could face charges of anti-Semitism over links — real or perceived — to the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions movement against Israel, widely known as B.D.S. That's what happened earlier this year to a prominent Cameroonian philosopher, who was disinvented from addressing a high-profile arts festival in Germany for drawing parallels between the situation of Palestinians and apartheid in South Africa in his writing.

The striking of Achille Mbembe from the program of the Ruhrtriennale, in May, led to a monthslong public debate here, in which the relationship of genocide and colonialism to the Holocaust, and Germany's special relationship to Israel, all came into question. It also spurred the cultural leaders' decision to go public with their fears that the discussion was taking an unwelcome turn.

At a news conference in Berlin on Thursday, the directors of 32 institutions released an open letter in which they rejected the sanctions movement. "At the same time," the letter added, "we consider the logic of a counter-boycott, triggered by the parliamentary anti-B.D.S. resolution, to be dangerous."

They were referring to a resolution passed by the German Parliament in May 2019 that designated the sanctions campaign as anti-Semitic. The advisory declaration called on all Germany's states and municipalities to deny public funding to any institution that "actively supports" the movement, or questions the right of the state of Israel to exist.

But instead of curbing anti-Semitism, the resolution has stifled the open exchange of ideas in the public sphere and freedom of expression in the arts, both of which are guaranteed by Germany's constitution, the open letter's signatories said.

"Cultural exchange does not work by deciding who we are allowed to talk about, and who we aren't," said one of the signatories, Johannes Ebert, the secretary general of the Goethe Institute, an organization that promotes German culture abroad. "Especially in international cultural exchange, you have to listen closely, you have to be willing to speak to people whose positions you don't share."

The directors of the Berliner Festspiele, the Humboldt Forum and the Federal Cultural Foundation, along with the leaders of theaters, museums and institutes for Jewish cultural studies from across the country, are among those who signed the appeal.

Monika Grütters, Germany's minister for culture, said in response to the letter that cultural institutions always walk a tightrope between artistic freedoms and the limits of what is acceptable in society. But red lines exist, she said, and one of them is anti-Semitism.

The German government's view was that there are "rules applying to contentious and controversial debates. With regard to Israel, these include unequivocal recognition of Israel's right to exist," Ms. Grütters said through a spokesman. Germany "rejects anti-Semitism and the denial or trivialization of the Holocaust in the strongest possible terms," the spokesman added.



Leaders of some of Germany's most important cultural institutions held a news conference Thursday in Berlin to discuss their concerns over the sanctions movement.



Debate over the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions movement has roiled Germany's cultural sphere, which is keen to protect artistic freedoms but depends heavily on government funding.

Germany is not alone in finding its political discourse upended by the debate over the Israel sanctions movement. But whereas in the United States and Britain the focus is on college campuses, in Germany, it is in the cultural sphere, which depends heavily on government funding, that the dispute comes into sharpest relief.

Months after the 2019 resolution was passed, the director of Berlin's Jewish Museum, Peter Schäfer, quit his post amid criticism that he had become too politically involved in the battle over the sanctions movement. The previous year, the Scottish rappers Young Fathers were removed from the lineup of the Ruhrtriennale over their public support for it.

Barbara Stollberg-Rilinger, the director of the Berlin Institute for Advanced Study, an interdisciplinary research institute, said the resolution limited the mandates of organizations like hers, which encourage the free exchange of ideas among scholars.

"If we were to take this resolution literally, then we could not invite many Jewish and Palestinian Israeli intellectuals who oppose the human rights violations of their own government," said Ms. Stollberg-Rilinger, another signatory of Thursday's open letter.

Felix Klein, Germany's government-appointed commissioner for fighting anti-Semitism, defended the resolution as an important symbol of the country's unequivocal rejection of anti-Jewish senti-

ment in all its forms and its unwavering support for Israel's right to exist.

"Our democracy is a militant democracy," said Mr. Klein, whose pronouncement of Mr. Mbembe as anti-Semitic fueled the debate over the Cameroonian philosopher's dismissal earlier this year. "It is deliberately against such displays of intolerance."

He said that he was surprised the cultural leaders decided to make a public pronouncement about their difficulties with the resolution, without ever discussing them with him first.

Yehudit Yinhar, a Jewish Israeli student at the Weissensee Art Academy, learned first hand how the resolution could be interpreted when she found herself,

along with the other members of a project she jointly organized called "School for Unlearning Zionism," facing accusations of anti-Semitism.

"We want to do our own homework, teaching ourselves about power and privilege," she said of the events, which consisted of 12 online lectures and public discussions, with titles such as "Zionism as Settler Colonialism." Participants were encouraged to explore what Ms. Yinhar described as "perspectives outside of the language of power" that were learned growing up in Israel.

Instead, the group found their website, which was hosted by the academy, taken offline after accusations of links to the sanctions movement among some of its members surfaced, first in the Israeli and then in the German news media. "No taxpayer money should be used to delegitimize Israel," the American Jewish Committee Berlin said in a statement on Twitter, pointing out the Weissensee Art Academy is publicly funded.

A description of the project is now listed on the site of the Amadeu Antonio Foundation, which documents anti-Semitic attacks in Germany. There, it joins reports of police officers circulating Nazi symbols in a chat group and a violent attack on a Jewish student wearing a skullcap in Hamburg.

"The claim of anti-Semitism toward us and our project is violent," Ms. Yinhar said in an interview. She declined to comment on the sanctions movement.

"It feels like a group of Jewish Israelis doing research on their own collective story are being told by the white German institutions they can't do that," she said. "As if they have the right to set the conditions on which we are allowed to define our own history and participate in public discourse."

Harassment of individuals, often starting on social media, has

become widespread as a result of the parliamentary resolution, said Bernd Scherer, the director of the House of World Cultures, a Berlin exhibition space.

"Although the resolution mentions nothing about individuals, what we have seen is that it usually how it is carried out," Mr. Scherer said.

In addition to denying financial support, the resolution calls on states and municipalities to make public spaces off limits for events involving supporters of the sanctions movement. The Bavarian capital of Munich implemented such a ban already in 2017.

The following year, when a citi-

Some say a fear of offending is driving groups to self-censor and stifle expression.

zen sought to organize a public debate on the local ban in Munich's City Museum, local authorities refused to allow it to proceed, on grounds that the movement would be discussed.

Last month, a higher Bavarian court ruled that this decision violated the constitutional right to freedom of expression, adding that an event could not be banned in anticipation of what might be said at it.

The city has said it will appeal the ruling, but the rebuke was welcomed by the 32 cultural leaders, who said it gave credence to their argument.

"We want to show that we have a problem with carrying out this resolution," said Hortensia Völckers, the artistic director of the Federal Cultural Foundation, who signed the open letter. "We need to have a discussion with political leaders to make it clear."

Hezbollah Member Sentenced in Absentia Over Killing of Ex-Premier in Lebanon

By BEN HUBBARD

BEIRUT, Lebanon — A United Nations-backed tribunal in The Hague on Friday sentenced a member of the Hezbollah militant group to life in prison after convicting him in absentia of conspiring in the 2005 car-bomb attack that killed former Prime Minister Rafik Hariri of Lebanon.

The defendant, Salim Ayyash, was convicted in August on five charges related to the attack, and on Friday the court granted him a life sentence for each one, to be served concurrently. But the sentence was entirely symbolic because Mr. Ayyash's whereabouts remain unknown. That means that if he is apprehended, he will have to be tried all over again.

The sentencing was a muted final note to an expensive effort to bring the perpetrators of the most significant political assassination in Lebanon's modern history to account. But after millions of dollars spent on investigating and trying suspected perpetrators of the 15-year-old crime, not a single person has been punished.

Judge Janet Nosworthy an-

nounced the sentence in a session held partly virtually because of the coronavirus, saying that Mr. Ayyash's grave crimes deserved harsh punishment.

"Lebanon is a parliamentary democracy," Judge Nosworthy said. "Its politicians and leaders

A symbolic ruling that will be thrown out for a new trial if the defendant is captured.

should be removed from office at the ballot box rather than by the bullet or a bomb."

The special tribunal was established at the behest of the United Nations Security Council in 2009 after Lebanon failed to investigate the crime. It can only try individuals, but Judge Nosworthy said that a state had most likely been behind Mr. Hariri's killing and that the country with the most to

gain from it was "most likely Syria."

At the time of Mr. Hariri's killing, Syrian forces occupied Lebanon and interfered deeply in the country's politics, supporting Syria's Lebanese allies, including Hezbollah, and undermining its foes. Many in Lebanon believe that Syria oversaw Mr. Hariri's killing to eliminate a political challenger. Syrian officials have repeatedly denied any involvement by their government.

The judge also suggested that Hezbollah, a powerful militia and political party backed by Iran that the United States and other countries consider a terrorist organization, had been protecting Mr. Ayyash from being arrested.

The court issued new warrants for Mr. Ayyash's arrest and authorized its prosecutor to request a "red notice" from Interpol, the international law enforcement organization, asking its member states to secure his arrest.

A huge car bomb killed Mr. Hariri and 21 others near Beirut's Mediterranean coastline on Feb. 14, 2005.



Women praying in Beirut at the grave of former Prime Minister Rafik Hariri of Lebanon. To date, no one has been punished for the 2005 car bomb attack that killed Mr. Hariri and 21 others.

After Azerbaijan War, a Scarcity of Life, Let Alone Forgiveness

From Page A1

trolled, after six weeks of a blistering military offensive that ended with a Russian-brokered truce. Most of the core of Nagorno-Karabakh remains in Armenian hands, patrolled by Russian peacekeepers.

The war's violence — the most intense conflict in Europe or its periphery this century — has layered fresh trauma and tragedy on top of decades of devastation.

For Armenians, it is families uprooted, a homeland lost, thousands of soldiers killed while defending against a fearsome 21st-century war machine. For Azerbaijanis, it is the legacy of a quarter-century of expulsion from their Soviet-era houses, from land that is recaptured but that may not become habitable for years.

And while the war may be over, a repository of hatred, reinforced by reports of atrocities by both sides, including videos of executions and beheadings of prisoners, promises to linger for generations to come.

Just days before, as Mr. Safarov was taking in his homeland's devastation, a chilly mountain fog was creeping through the trees and filling every crevice of a military camp hidden off a village road on the other side of the front line, to the north. There, Armenian volunteer soldiers, some in their 60s, in sundry sneakers and hats, their faces blank and weathered, listened to their commander in silence and sadness.

The commander, retired Col. Artur Aleksanyan, 63, was telling them that it was time to go home.

"Everything is only beginning," he pledged in a soft voice. "I'm sure we will return to our lands."

Colonel Aleksanyan's men, asked about the war, fixed on the horrors of Azerbaijan's "suicide drones" that hovered over the battlefield, waiting for a target. The ordnance was so precise that Armenian soldiers operating battle tanks would drive onto the battlefield, fire off a round and jump out and run for cover, the soldiers said.

"It was hell," one man kept repeating.

Reviewing his troops' positions at the front, where the heavy weaponry had just been withdrawn, Colonel Aleksanyan picked his way through the dense, sticky mud past unexploded cluster bombs with their telltale red ribbons. The hillside was pockmarked with blast craters, some of them filled with twisted metal, moldy bread and human excrement. Along the ridgeline, the troops had dug trenches, a few feet deep and barely wide enough for one man to sleep in while a comrade manned the machine gun above him.

Colonel Aleksanyan was still dealing with the stomach injury he had sustained in the last war, in the 1990s, and the catheter tube snaking out of his uniform as he trudged up the battlefield was a reminder of that conflict's unhealed wounds. He pointed out the valley below where, this fall, Azerbaijan had sent waves of infantry; his unit held their ground, and the scores of dead lay there for weeks, the stench drifting up to the trenches, until after the war's end.

"We need to analyze our mistakes and after this, we will return," Colonel Aleksanyan told his troops. "All the Armenians of all the world stand behind us."

Armenians believe that the Soviet Union's early decision to make Nagorno-Karabakh part of Azerbaijan is a historical wrong.

Colonel Aleksanyan was on the victorious side in the 1990s, when Armenia captured not only Nagorno-Karabakh proper but also surrounding territory inhabited by hundreds of thousands of Azerbaijanis.

To Armenia, occupying so much Azerbaijani territory was necessary to assure Nagorno-Karabakh's security. To Azerbaijanis, it was an injustice that they were determined to reverse.

Now, despite its celebration of victory, Azerbaijan has recovered a mostly desolate and destroyed region.

"It looks like a hell," said Umud



IVOR PRICKETT FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES



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MAURICIO LIMA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Clockwise from top: Cleaning up at a mosque in Aghdam, Armenian territory that is now under Azerbaijani control; part of an artillery rocket outside Martakert, Nagorno-Karabakh; Nureddin Namazaliyev, who returned to the town of Fizuli after fleeing the war 27 years ago. "I could not find even a small piece of my house, not a piece of glass, not a single nail," he said.

Mirzayev, head of an Azerbaijani news agency, whose own village was among those ruined. "It used to be so green; it's a place that was famous for farming, for grapes, cotton and sheep."

Two former college classmates, returning to the town of Fizuli for the first time since fleeing the war 27 years earlier, struggled to find their way through ruins smothered in brambles and sprouting trees.

"It was impossible to pass along the roads because they are full of trees and undergrowth," said one of them, Atakshi Babayev.

His companion, Nureddin Namazaliyev, spotted the imposing czarist portico of the regional newspaper building, one of the few monuments still recognizable, and instantly knew his way home. His father had worked as editor in chief of the newspaper, Araz, for 50 years, and he had often walked with him to work.

But when he reached their old home, nothing remained.

"I could not find even a small piece of my house, not a piece of glass, not a single nail," he said. He took instead some soil from the yard and brought it back to sprinkle on the graves of his parents in their ancestral village. "That was a very big thing for me because they could not go back," he said.

Mr. Namazaliyev recalled that his cousin, who was held by Armenian forces as a prisoner of war,

was forced to work dismantling houses in Aghdam. The stone, famous for its golden color, was sold, he said.

Vagif Hasanov, 61, the mayor of Aghdam, was blunt in his view of why Armenian forces destroyed the city. The graceful 19th-century central mosque is the only building left standing in Aghdam. Defiled by Armenian graffiti, it was used as a cowshed.

"They wanted to hurt Turks and Muslims," Mr. Hasanov said. Would he contemplate Armenians returning to live in the city? He answered with a curt "No."

It was the purposeful destruction of the city and its heritage that upset Mr. Namazaliyev the most. The newspaper and its printing presses were gone, the cinema and the cultural center had vanished, and the central Alakbar mosque had been reduced to rubble. The fine vineyards had been uprooted and turned to dust.

"They even damaged the soil of Fizuli," Mr. Namazaliyev said.

Azerbaijan's officials have pledged to offer reconciliation and equal status to Armenians living on its territory, but few can see it working in practice.

Armenians believe they are targeted by Azerbaijanis because Armenians are Christian, and they fear Azerbaijan's increasingly close alliance with Turkey, which continues to deny the Armenian Genocide that started in 1915.

"There is no reason for Armenians to want to live under Azerbaijani rule," said Gerard Libaridian, a former adviser to Armenia's first president and a retired professor of Armenian history at the University of Michigan. "It would be a domination. It would not be a governance."

Many Armenians say they will keep fighting for Nagorno-Karabakh to be recognized as an independent country, despite an international consensus that the territory is part of Azerbaijan.

"How can we talk about justice?" said Garik Melkonyan, the director of the Armenian newspaper Aravot and a member of Colonel Aleksanyan's unit of volunteer soldiers, rejecting the idea of reconciliation with Azerbaijan. "History shows that they can't give us anything."

Some Armenians now acknowledge that opportunities for a lasting peace were lost over decades of halting and unproductive peace talks.

Mediators tried to at least allow Azerbaijanis to return and resettle some of the outlying districts such as Aghdam and Fizuli. But for years Armenia held on to them, seeing them as a bargaining chip for independence or secession for Nagorno-Karabakh. Azerbaijan's leaders considered, but in the end never could agree, to letting go of Nagorno-Karabakh.

The deadlock was complicated

by Armenian politicians and activists around the world increasingly taking the position — disputed by Azerbaijanis — that all of the captured lands were rightfully Armenian. And when Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan traveled to Nagorno-Karabakh — known in Armenia as Artsakh — in August 2019 and declared that "Artsakh is Armenia," he sent the unmistakable message that the maximalist approach had won out.

For years, foundations funded by members of the Armenian diaspora have pushed for Armenian settlement of the occupied regions of Azerbaijan outside the core of Nagorno-Karabakh, arguing that they are also Armenia's rightful lands.

"We have lived in this place for 5,000 years and we are only leaving it temporarily," said the primate of the Armenian Church in Britain, Bishop Hovakim Manukian, in a goodbye sermon at the church in the village of Hak, or Minkend in Azerbaijani. "We have to come back. We have to come back and take over our land."

A plaque in the church described centuries of pillaging and massacres by Turks and Kurds that wiped out the Armenian population of the area. The renovation of the church was financed by Virginia Davies, a lawyer in New York, in memory of her grandmother, a survivor of the Arme-

nian genocide.

"For me and for all Armenians worldwide — and we are united — we cannot believe what has just happened to us," Ms. Davies said in her farewell address at the church last month. "We will not cede our historic lands."

But there was little mention of the ruins all around the village and the remains of houses dotting the hillside for miles along the road. Azerbaijanis' desire to return to their homes here — even if it meant war — has long been a driving force in their country's politics.

Now it is those ruins, visible across Nagorno-Karabakh and the territories controlled until recently by Armenia, that may feed a new wave of Azerbaijani anger at their neighbors as the damage and neglect of the last quarter-century comes into view.

Many Azerbaijanis say they are ready to accept Armenians remaining in Nagorno-Karabakh and even for Russian peacekeepers to protect them. But they insist on their territorial sovereignty and want to see a change in the general Armenian stance.

"Why should we fight, take guns and kill each other?" Teymur Hacıyev, who was displaced from his home in the city of Shusha at the age of 9, said of the Armenians. "We really wish this was a good lesson for them. Maybe they will forget their dreams."



MAURICIO LIMA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES



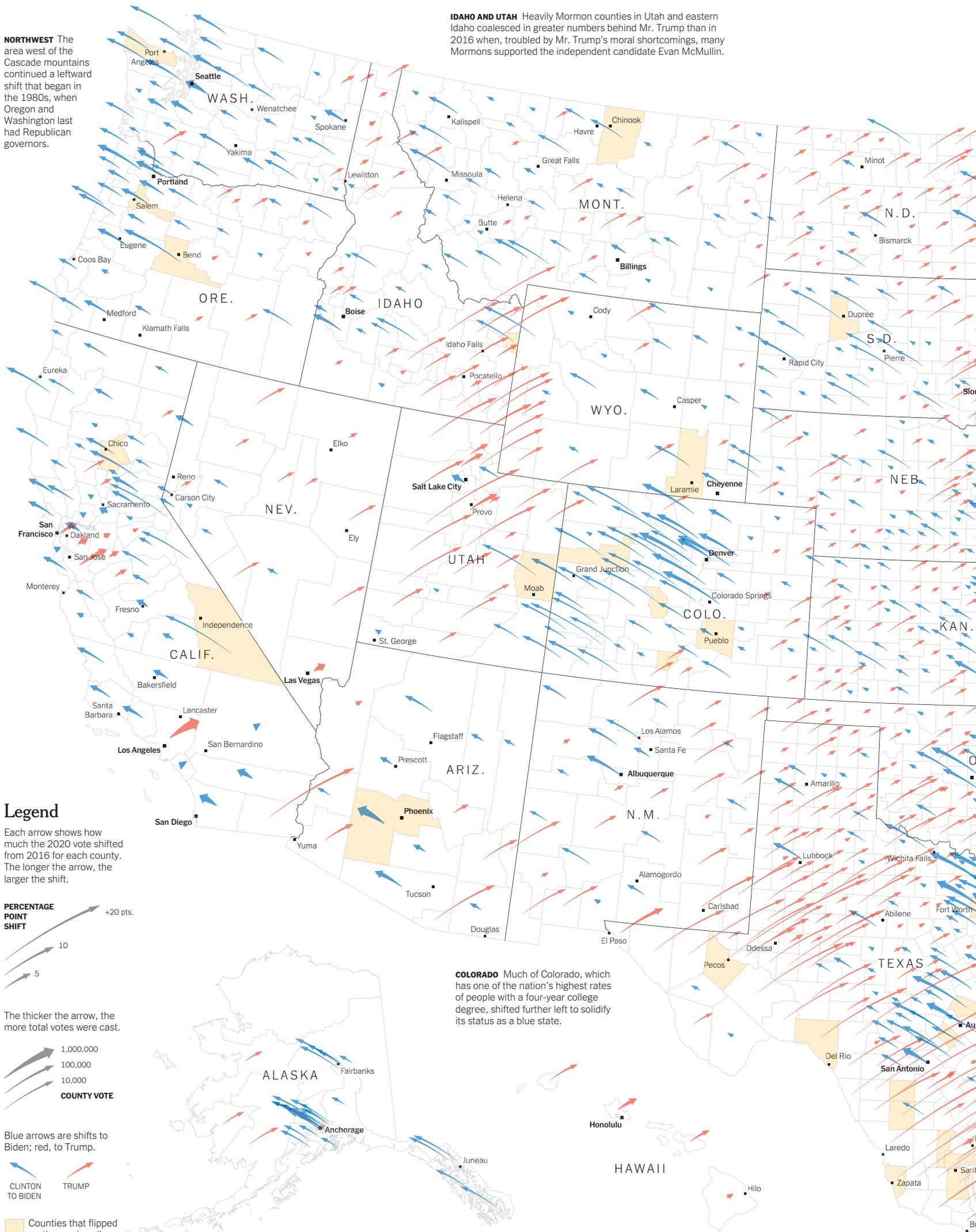
MAURICIO LIMA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Artur Aleksanyan, a retired Armenian colonel, with his volunteer troops last month. Right, displaced Armenians who had fled the region returning to Stepanakert, Nagorno-Karabakh.

Transition in Washington Election Results

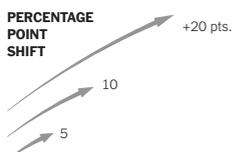
NORTHWEST The area west of the Cascade mountains continued a leftward shift that began in the 1980s, when Oregon and Washington last had Republican governors.

IDAHO AND UTAH Heavily Mormon counties in Utah and eastern Idaho coalesced in greater numbers behind Mr. Trump than in 2016 when, troubled by Mr. Trump's moral shortcomings, many Mormons supported the independent candidate Evan McMullin.



Legend

Each arrow shows how much the 2020 vote shifted from 2016 for each county. The longer the arrow, the larger the shift.



The thicker the arrow, the more total votes were cast.



Blue arrows are shifts to Biden; red, to Trump.



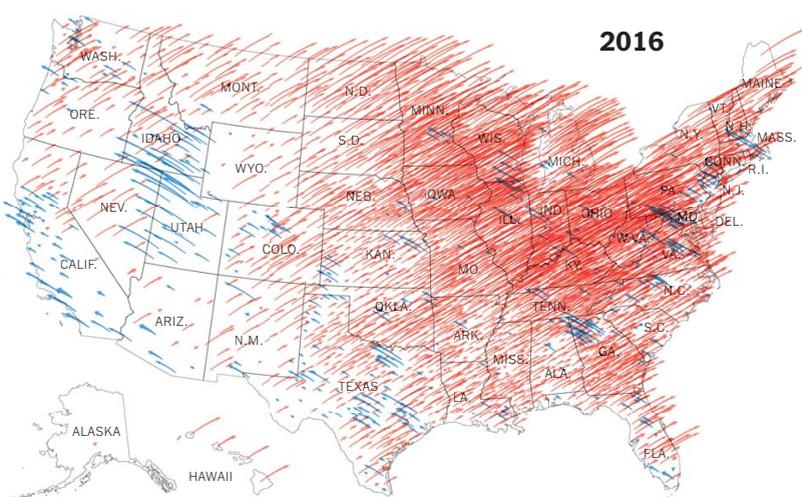
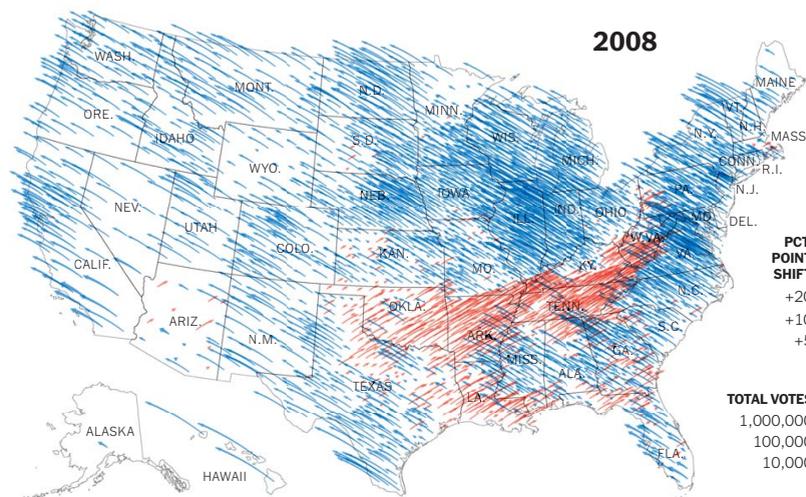
Counties that flipped parties are in yellow.

COLORADO Much of Colorado, which has one of the nation's highest rates of people with a four-year college degree, shifted further left to solidify its status as a blue state.

How the Vote Shifted in Previous Elections

Most of the country, including strongly Republican states like Idaho and Utah, shifted left. A stretch of the rural south, from West Virginia to Texas, shifted right for John McCain.

Mr. Trump surpassed Mitt Romney's 2012 performance in counties across the country, flipping several states that President Obama won in 2008 and 2012.

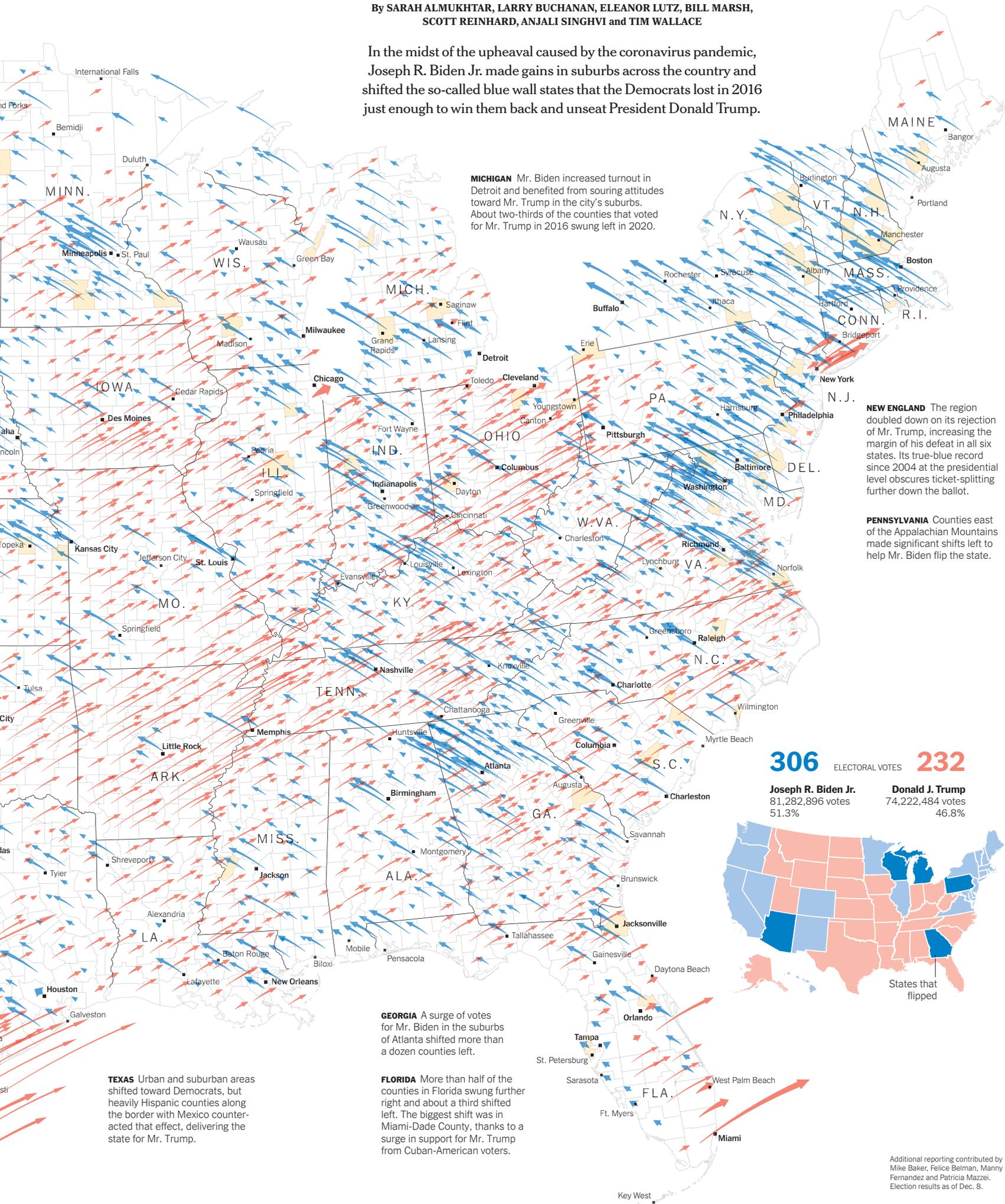


Arrows indicating shifts in Alaska represent state House districts; in Louisiana, parishes; and in Washington, D.C., the District. | Sources: National Election Pool/Edison Research (results); Associated Press (race calls); Dave Leip's Atlas of U.S. Presidential Elections (historical results)

How the Vote Shifted in 2020

By SARAH ALMUKHTAR, LARRY BUCHANAN, ELEANOR LUTZ, BILL MARSH, SCOTT REINHARD, ANJALI SINGHVI and TIM WALLACE

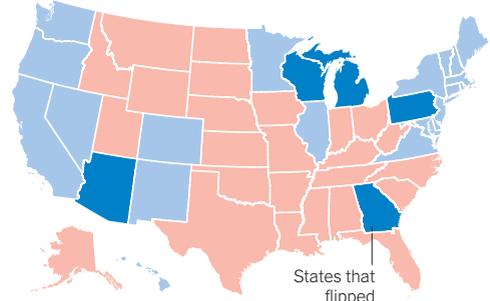
In the midst of the upheaval caused by the coronavirus pandemic, Joseph R. Biden Jr. made gains in suburbs across the country and shifted the so-called blue wall states that the Democrats lost in 2016 just enough to win them back and unseat President Donald Trump.



306 ELECTORAL VOTES **232**

Joseph R. Biden Jr.
81,282,896 votes
51.3%

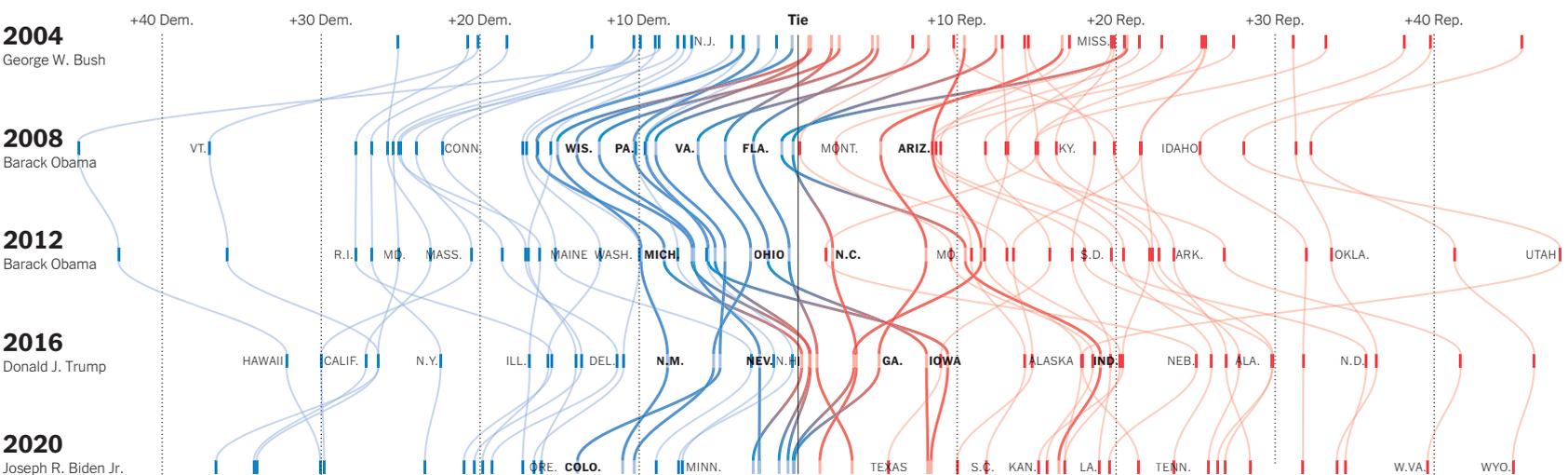
Donald J. Trump
74,222,484 votes
46.8%



Additional reporting contributed by Mike Baker, Felice Belman, Manny Fernandez and Patricia Mazzei. Election results as of Dec. 8.

How the States Shifted in Previous Elections

This diagram shows how each state shifted in the past five presidential elections. All states that flipped in any of the past five elections are in **boldface**.



Note: The District of Columbia is not shown. It has always voted for the Democratic candidate by a margin of more than 60 percentage points.

National

The New York Times

Minneapolis Shifts \$8 Million From Police Budget After Turmoil

No Staff Cuts, but Aid Goes to Other Services

By JENNY GROSS
and JOHN ELIGON

Months after their pledge to dismantle the Police Department fell apart, members of the Minneapolis City Council voted early Thursday to divert nearly \$8 million from the proposed policing budget to other city services, a move heralded by some as an important step toward transforming public safety in a city where law enforcement has long been accused of racism.

The shift in funds — about 4.5 percent of the proposed \$179 million police budget — was not nearly the sweeping change that activists and some lawmakers had demanded in the wake of the police killing of George Floyd in May. Still, Jeremiah Ellison, a city councilman who had favored more aggressive efforts to defund the police, called it an “incredible investment.”

“I think what we’re able to do with that \$8 million is going to do a lot for public safety in our city,” he said.

The money will go toward bolstering the city’s Office of Violence Prevention, starting a team of mental health professionals who can respond to crises without the aid of the police and allowing city workers outside the Police Department to process minor complaints, such as parking violations and property damage.

The decision to divert the funds capped several days of charged, emotional debate over the size of the police force and the role of the department and came amid a spike in violent crime this year.

In his budget proposal, Mayor Jacob Frey suggested slashing last year’s police budget of \$193 million by more than 7 percent. Council members went further, in large part by cutting money earmarked for overtime and other staffing costs. Trimming of those items raised alarm bells among the police chief and some lawmakers, as the department has lost 166 officers this year — some perma-

A city has been grappling with efforts to overhaul law enforcement since the killing of George Floyd.

nently, others because they are on disability, and still others saying they have post-traumatic stress from the massive protests that swept the city over the summer.

“I believe we’re at that breaking point,” said Linea Palmisano, chair of the council’s budget committee. “I’m very concerned that we are reducing our city’s ability to respond to 911 calls and do investigations well. I am extremely concerned because I don’t think that we can keep asking our current officers to work at the rate that they’re working.”

In addition to the diversion of \$8 million, the council put \$11.4 million in a reserve fund intended for hiring and overtime. The department will have to appeal to the council to gain access to those funds.

The council had originally planned to reduce the number of officers to 750, from 888, starting in 2022, despite a surge in gun violence in Minneapolis this year. Mr. Frey had threatened to veto the budget if the council approved such a measure, which narrowly failed.

“My colleagues were right to leave the targeted staffing level unchanged from 888 and continue moving forward with our shared priorities,” Mr. Frey said in a statement on Thursday. “The additional funding for new public safety solutions will also allow the city to continue upscaling important mental health, non-police response, and social service components in our emergency response system.”

Steven Belton, the president of the Twin Cities chapter of the Urban League, called the cuts to the police budget misguided and misinformed. He said council members made it an either-or proposition between funding the police and other services when he believed everything was needed.

The city’s roughly \$1.5 billion budget is a slight increase over last year’s budget, although many city agencies were forced to take cuts.

The allocation for the Office of Violence Prevention, though, grew to \$6.7 million from \$1.5 million. Established in 2018, its aim is to prevent crime, deploying strategies such as having community members mediate disputes in their neighborhoods and having social workers meet with victims of violence at hospitals.

This year, the city has logged 5,164 violent crimes, up 25.7 percent from last year, according to data from the Minneapolis Police Department. The cuts to the police budget could embolden criminals to think that policing was going away, Mr. Belton said.

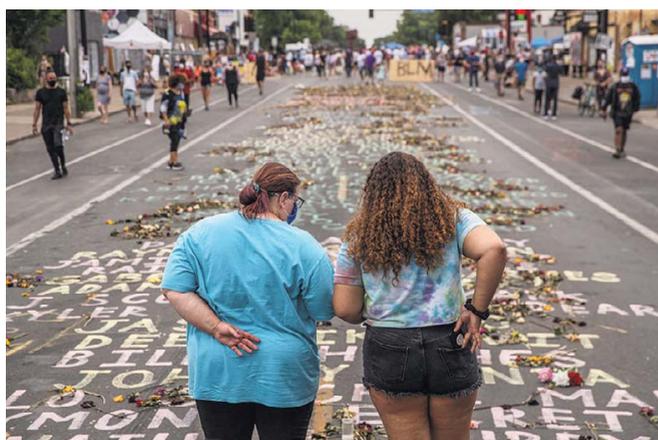
“It’s the wrong optics to the communities that are most impacted detrimentally by violence and the absence of policing and poor policing,” he said.

Across the country this year, violence has spiked in many cities, a rise experts say is likely the result of several factors,

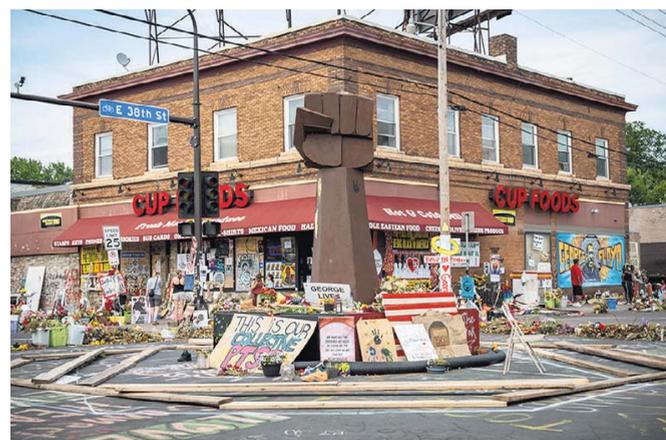


VICTOR J. BLUE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

The police killing of George Floyd in May led to protests, clashes with officers, and memorials on the streets of Minneapolis. Black residents have long said that the city’s Police Department exerts disproportionate violence against them. Some City Council members pledged to dismantle the force but later backtracked.



VICTOR J. BLUE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES



CAROLINE YANG FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

‘I think what we’re able to do with that \$8 million is going to do a lot for public safety in our city.’

JEREMIAH ELLISON, Minneapolis city councilman

including the economic hardship caused by the coronavirus pandemic.

The loss of Minneapolis police officers cannot be blamed for the city’s rise in crime, said supporters of the movement to defund the police, a group that largely wants money to be diverted from police departments and directed toward other services it says could prevent or decrease crime. Supporters point to the fact that crime has been high when the Police Department had more officers.

“We are living among a Police Department that has wrought a lot of trauma and damage to our city,” said D.A. Bullock, a filmmaker who lives in Minneapolis. If the department felt like it needed more staff to make the community safer, he added, “they owe it to us to prove that

that is actually an effective strategy.”

Residents in Minneapolis, especially Black residents, have long complained of a police force that they say exerts disproportionate violence against them. Minneapolis police have used force against Black people at a rate at least seven times that of white people during the past five years.

That violence against Black residents came into stark relief when video surfaced of Mr. Floyd, a Black man, with his neck pinned to the ground by a white officer while handcuffed on May 25. Mr. Floyd’s death led to widespread protests, in Minneapolis and across the country, against police brutality and systemic racism.

Less than two weeks after Mr. Floyd’s

death, a majority of the Minneapolis City Council pledged to dismantle the Police Department and create a new system of public safety.

After an attempt to change the city charter to allow for the elimination of the Police Department failed, some council members backtracked on their pledge. The most far-reaching policy reforms in Minneapolis did not move forward.

“I think our pledge created confusion in the community and in our wards,” Lisa Bender, the council president, said in September when asked if the council’s statement had led to uncertainty at a pivotal moment.

Instead of larger policing changes, Minneapolis agreed to ban chokeholds and passed several reforms, including a

revamped use-of-force policy.

Residents in Minneapolis had mixed opinions about the council’s efforts to change how the police force runs. On the city’s North Side, which has a majority Black population, residents have complained about mistreatment, but also about rampant crime.

The Police Department’s Fourth Precinct, which covers North Minneapolis, has seen more homicides and violent crimes this year than any other precinct in the city.

“Our communities are in so much trauma now,” Andrea Jenkins, the council vice president, said at this week’s meeting. “We must try all the options to restore a sense of safety — of real safety — in our communities.”

Transition in Washington The Incoming Administration

2nd Hunter Biden Inquiry Used Giuliani's Material

This article is by Adam Goldman, Katie Benner and Ben Protess.

WASHINGTON — As federal investigators in Delaware were examining the finances of Hunter Biden during his father's campaign for president, a similar inquiry ramped up this year in Pittsburgh, fueled by materials delivered by President Trump's personal lawyer Rudolph W. Giuliani.

Attorney General William P. Barr had asked the top federal prosecutor in Pittsburgh, Scott W. Brady, to accept and vet any information that Mr. Giuliani had on the Biden family, including Hunter Biden. Mr. Brady hosted Mr. Giuliani for a nearly four-hour meeting in late January to discuss his materials.

The arrangement immediately raised alarms within the F.B.I. and the Justice Department. Mr. Giuliani had served as Mr. Trump's attack dog during the Russia investigation before becoming the face of an effort to tarnish Hunter Biden during President-elect Joseph R. Biden Jr.'s campaign. If Mr. Brady's investigation became public, the agents feared that the F.B.I. could be drawn into a politically toxic battle in the midst of the presidential election, just as it was in 2016.

The officials worried about how the Justice Department, which they saw as trying to placate the president, would handle the inquiry. Some prosecutors and agents in Pittsburgh regarded Mr. Brady as a Trump loyalist who was thought to be angling to run for office, and they expressed concern that Mr. Brady was wielding the F.B.I. as a weapon to damage Mr. Biden's candidacy. At one point, Mr. Brady made clear that he wanted the U.S. attorney in Delaware, David C. Weiss, to continue his investigation, even though Mr. Brady is not authorized to direct other federal prosecutors' offices.

This account is based on interviews with five current and former law enforcement officials and others with knowledge of F.B.I. interactions with the Justice Department. Most spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss continuing federal investigations.

Mr. Giuliani himself was also the focus of a criminal investigation in New York over his dealings in Ukraine, including his effort to oust the American ambassador to the country, which was at the heart of the impeachment trial. And the Pittsburgh investigation appeared to be parallel to the existing inquiry in Delaware.

Mr. Brady has not brought any criminal charges, and Mr. Barr has not publicly discussed the investigation's status since revealing in February that the department would accept Mr. Giuliani's material.

Hunter Biden disclosed this week that prosecutors in Delaware were continuing to investigate him for possible federal tax crimes, serving multiple subpoenas on Tuesday to Mr. Biden and his business associates after apparently going dormant in the run-up to the election. The investigation appeared focused on his dealings with China and with

Burisma Holdings, the Ukrainian gas company on whose board he served, according to people familiar with the matter.

Legal experts said that prosecutors could be examining how Mr. Biden obtained the money to pay hundreds of thousands of dollars in tax liens this year.

The president-elect is not under investigation. But the disclosure of a criminal inquiry into his son thrust Mr. Biden into a charged position as he prepares to take office. Republican senators called for an independent special counsel to investigate Hunter Biden, and Mr. Trump complained that the Delaware inquiry did not surface before the election.

"I'm proud of my son," Mr. Biden told reporters on Friday.

The F.B.I. and the Justice Department declined to comment. Mr. Giuliani did not respond to a request for comment.

In 2018, the F.B.I. and the U.S. attorney's office in Wilmington, Del., quietly began investigating whether Hunter Biden had violated money laundering laws, according to people with knowledge of the inquiry.

Investigators eventually determined that the money laundering aspect of the Hunter Biden inquiry was not going to lead to charges. But they had discovered potential tax law violations and felt they had the makings of a strong tax case against him, according to several people familiar with the matter. The inquiry came to involve I.R.S. agents.

Separately, Mr. Giuliani was collecting information in Ukraine that could benefit Mr. Trump by hurting his perceived rivals, including Mr. Biden. Mr. Giuliani had tried to promote scrutiny of Hunter Biden's work for Burisma, which had been mired in a corruption scandal. He accused Joseph R. Biden Jr. of corruptly pushing for the ouster of Ukraine's top prosecutor, who had been investigating Burisma, as a favor to his son while he was vice president. No evidence of wrongdoing by the president-elect has emerged.

Mr. Trump's pressure campaign on the Ukrainian government to announce investigations that could help him politically was the focus of his impeachment. Mr. Giuliani sought during impeachment to equate his allegations about Hunter Biden with the accusations that Mr. Trump had abused his power.

He also continued to wage his campaign to further any investigations that could benefit Mr. Trump by damaging his opponents. Mr. Giuliani's lawyer, Robert J. Costello, asked the Justice Department for a meeting to discuss what he felt was explosive information about Hunter Biden that he had gathered from people in Ukraine and elsewhere, according to a person with direct knowledge of the matter.

In response, Mr. Brady called Mr. Costello and offered to meet. Mr. Giuliani and Mr. Costello sent reams of documents to Pittsburgh, then traveled there on Jan. 29. They were picked up by F.B.I. agents and stopped for breakfast



ERIN SCHAFF/THE NEW YORK TIMES

Prosecutors served subpoenas this week to Hunter Biden, whose financial dealings shadowed his father's presidential campaign.



POOL PHOTO BY ANDREW HARNIK/EPA, VIA SHUTTERSTOCK

Attorney General William P. Barr instructed Scott Brady, center, the top prosecutor in Pittsburgh, to investigate the Biden family.

before meeting for nearly four hours at the local F.B.I. office with Mr. Brady and his top deputies on the inquiry, Stephen Kaufman and Ira Karoll, the person said.

Mr. Costello had several ensuing conversations with Mr. Brady's office, including as recently as this summer, about the Bidens. Mr. Costello and Mr. Giuliani also recommended a handful of potential witnesses in the United States and Ukraine for the F.B.I. to interview, but Mr. Costello said the F.B.I. never followed through.

"The choice of which U.S. attorney's office investigates a matter is left to the Justice Department, and not the F.B.I.," Mr. Costello said, adding that no one from the F.B.I. or Mr. Brady's office raised any concerns with them about their material on the Bidens. "It is inappropriate for the F.B.I. to question Justice's decision."

At a news conference about a week after the meeting, Mr. Barr announced that he had created an intake process for information about Ukraine to "assess its prevalence and its credibility."

He did not mention Pittsburgh, nor the meeting. Mr. Barr cautioned that investigators had to be careful about any information coming from Ukraine, including from Mr. Giuliani. "There are a lot of agendas in the Ukraine, a lot of crosscurrents," Mr. Barr warned. "And we can't take anything we received from Ukraine at face value."

It was not clear why Mr. Barr assigned the task to Mr. Brady, but he has farmed out other politically sensitive investigations to trusted U.S. attorneys outside Washington.

Investigators considered Mr. Brady's decision to empower Mr. Brady as highly unusual because prosecutors in Delaware had already been scrutinizing Hunter Biden for more than a year.

Colleagues saw Mr. Brady, whom Mr. Trump nominated to the post in 2017, as a deeply partisan leader. While an assistant prosecutor in the office during the George W. Bush administration, he said he would never serve a Democrat, and he left after former President Barack Obama was

elected.

After he returned to lead the office, some prosecutors grumbled about his approach to prosecutions, including the Hunter Biden inquiry. Amid the discontent, Mr. Kaufman, the longtime career prosecutor who served as his top deputy, was marginalized after relaying objections to Mr. Brady. Mr. Karoll, a young lawyer who had joined the office in 2017 from the Jones Day law firm, was elevated.

The investigation in New York into Mr. Giuliani also set up a potentially messy situation that might allow him to leverage the work in Pittsburgh — and his role as a potential witness in any case — against a prosecution in New York.

Federal law enforcement officials also feared that Mr. Giuliani was submitting questionable information to the Justice Department to make it seem more credible than it really was. They said that it was impossible to separate his efforts from his crusades on behalf of the president, and some told associates that he could damage the department's credibility by forcing investigators to examine issues that seemed like nothing more than conspiracy theories.

Officials said that Mr. Brady almost immediately started pushing to take aggressive steps. He had a list of people he wanted F.B.I. agents to question. It was not clear whether they were the same witnesses that Mr. Giuliani and Mr. Costello had submitted, but a former law enforcement official said that Mr. Brady had wanted the F.B.I. to question people mentioned in Mr. Giuliani's materials.

The steps were outside "normal investigative procedures," one former senior law enforcement official with knowledge of the events said, particularly in an election year; Justice Department policy typically forbids in-

vestigations from making aggressive moves before elections that could affect the outcome of the vote if they become public.

The Pittsburgh F.B.I. office refused to comply without the approval of David L. Bowdich, the F.B.I.'s deputy director, the former official said.

Mr. Brady's demands soon prompted a tense confrontation with F.B.I. officials at the bureau's headquarters in Washington. The meeting was mediated by Seth D. DuCharme, now the acting U.S. attorney in Brooklyn and at the time a trusted aide and ally of Mr. Barr's at the Justice Department in Washington.

The F.B.I. viewed the investigative steps into Mr. Biden that Mr. Brady sought as unwarranted because the Delaware inquiry involving money laundering had fizzled out and because they were skeptical of Mr. Giuliani's material. For example, they had already examined a laptop owned by Mr. Biden and an external hard drive that had been abandoned at a computer store in Wilmington and found nothing to advance the inquiry.

Investigators were also worried that the effort might become public — particularly any interviews of witnesses who were Mr. Giuliani's sources of information — and could drag the F.B.I. back into presidential campaign politics, the same turbulent path it had stumbled down in 2016 with investigations into Hillary Clinton's private email server and the Trump campaign's ties to Russia.

Still, Mr. Brady pressed the F.B.I. to do more, officials said. The agents found ways to ostensibly satisfy Mr. Brady without upending the election. It is not clear how they compromised, but agents could have investigated more discreetly, like questioning witnesses they were confident would keep quiet or checking databases.

Activist Groups Urge Biden to Move Quickly on Nominating Diverse Slate of Judges

By CARL HULSE

WASHINGTON — Hours after Joseph R. Biden Jr. was projected as the winner of the presidential election last month, Russ Feingold, the former Democratic senator who now leads the progressive American Constitution Society, delivered the names of scores of carefully screened candidates for federal judicial posts to top Biden transition officials.

After four years of watching nearly helplessly as Republicans filled court vacancies with more than 220 conservative judges — and stalled Obama administration picks for the two years before that — liberal groups like Mr. Feingold's were eager to jump-start the Biden administration's effort with a more diverse slate of nominees for the federal bench.

How quickly any of those recommendations will find their way to and through the Senate is another matter entirely.

With control of the Senate hanging on two Jan. 5 runoff in Georgia, the new administration could find itself dependent on Republicans to advance judicial nominees to confirmation. Republicans are already voicing deep skepticism about potential executive branch selections and was likely to give even closer scrutiny to nominees for lifetime judicial posts, particularly since they have just spent four years engineering a distinctly rightward tilt on the courts.

At the same time, judicial nominations are not always a top priority of a new administration as it takes power and confronts a host of other more pressing issues. The Obama administration, facing multiple crises, made its first judi-

cial nomination in mid-March 2009 and set a slow pace that progressives have lamented ever since.

But Mr. Biden, a former longtime chairman of the Judiciary Committee, is deeply versed in the judicial confirmation process as are many of his top advisers, some of whom were his senior staff during contentious Supreme Court fights. As a senator, Vice President-elect Kamala Harris has been a member of the judiciary panel, with a front-row seat for the Republican drive to install conservative judges as a hallmark of the Trump era.

Liberal activists say they believe the Republican judicial onslaught — including the high-profile confirmation of three Supreme Court justices nominated by President Trump — has reshaped the judicial confirmation environment and given it fresh visibility and urgency. Anticipating a Biden victory, activists have been working for months to come up with lists of judicial candidates so the Biden administration could be ready from Day 1.

"For the transition to have to start doing this from scratch would have been a daunting task," said Mr. Feingold, who, as a senator from Wisconsin, was deeply involved in judicial confirmations during his 18 years in Congress.

In addition to the candidates put forward by Mr. Feingold's group after a nationwide effort, another coalition of organizations has provided the transition with over 100 names of candidates developed over the past several months.

"The process started earlier so



BRIAN DAVIES/THE REGISTER-GUARD, VIA ASSOCIATED PRESS

Russ Feingold leads the progressive American Constitution Society, a group that screened candidates for federal judicial posts.

we would be ready," said Nan Aron, the president of the Alliance for Justice, which in cooperation with nearly three dozen other groups has given the Biden team a list of more than 100 potential nominees. "We are pushing hard for them to make judges a priority."

Besides finding prospects with an ideological contrast to the Trump judges, the activists want to diversify the ranks of jurists presiding in federal court and include more defense lawyers, plaintiffs' lawyers, civil rights specialists and labor law experts, among others, rather than the more traditional white male prosecutors and corporate lawyers.

"We just don't see a reason why it has to be that way," Mike Landis, a public interest lawyer and a

member of the Colorado chapter of the American Constitution Society, said about the conventional demographic profiles of judicial nominees.

Mr. Landis is among those who have taken part in a bottom-up effort initiated by the organization to identify and screen prospects for district and circuit court judgeships as well as top legal jobs in the administration. Mr. Feingold said 45 groups working in 36 states spent months on the project and came up with 119 appeals court and 187 candidates for district court as well as almost 200 candidates for top and midlevel legal jobs.

The group would not disclose the names of the judicial candidates but did provide demographic breakdowns that showed a

range of legal expertise. Of the total, 83 are government or legal aid lawyers, 69 are plaintiff or civil rights lawyers, 52 are academics, 42 are state or magistrate judges and 25 are public defenders. At the same time, 166 of the 306 are women, 134 are Black, Indigenous or people of color and 186 are under the age of 50.

"We think there should be a broader range of experience on the courts," Mr. Feingold said.

Those who have worked closely with Mr. Biden over the years believes he, too, wants the courts to have a different look.

"That he wants the intellectual excellence and the capacity to judge appropriately is of course a given," said Cynthia Hogan, a top adviser to Mr. Biden both in the Senate and in the White House. "I think what he has always looked for is people who have real life experience. He is big on sort of being able to put yourself in other people's shoes."

Top transition officials said they had found the recommendations from the interest groups to be helpful — though noted that the final decisions on who gets the nod will be up to the president.

Compared with his predecessor, who benefited from Republicans blocking President Barack Obama from filling judicial slots, Mr. Biden will enter office with about 50 federal court vacancies, less than half as many as Mr. Trump had when he came in. But progressives have identified about 100 currently serving judges appointed by Democratic presidents who are eligible to take senior status, creating vacancies to be filled. Activists expect many

of them to step aside in the next two years so they can be replaced during Mr. Biden's time in office.

The question would then become how the White House could squeeze the nominees through what will be a narrowly divided Senate, and potentially one where Republicans controlled the agenda and decided which nominees got hearings and floor votes.

"We will take it as it comes," said Senator John Cornyn of Texas, a senior Republican member of the Judiciary Committee, who said presidents of one party and members of the Senate controlled by another have come to terms over judicial nominees in the past.

Both sides believe that any movement will be mainly transactional, with the two parties negotiating packages that lead to confirmations sought by each side.

The progressives say that Democrats must use whatever leverage they can to whittle their nominees.

"Our view is the administration should push to make judges a critical part of the conversation," Ms. Aron said. "The Democrats will need to fight for the judges they want."

Though acknowledging winning confirmations will be difficult — certainly compared with the free hand Republicans have had when controlling both the White House and the Senate — Mr. Feingold said he was optimistic that Mr. Biden, using the available political tools and with strong progressive support, could get his picks on to the courts.

"I see opportunity here," Mr. Feingold said.

Transition in Washington Legal Strategies

Playing to Base, Most in House G.O.P. Joined Failed Election Suit

By CATIE EDMONDSON
and LUKE BROADWATER

WASHINGTON — In the hours before the Supreme Court rejected it, another 20 House Republicans — including their top leader — joined a legal brief on Friday supporting an extraordinary lawsuit seeking to overturn President-elect Joseph R. Biden Jr.'s victory, underscoring the increasingly extreme lengths to which many in the party are willing to go to invalidate the election results.

The Supreme Court on Friday rejected the suit brought by Texas to throw out the results in four battleground states won by Mr. Biden, but not before more than 60 percent of House Republicans had signed onto the effort. The group reached beyond Mr. Trump's staunchest allies and included powerful figures such as the chamber's top two officials and the leaders of influential committees, all of whom put their official stamp on a brazen effort to upend millions of legally cast votes.

The court declined to do so, but the number of House Republicans who backed the effort highlighted their unflagging willingness to stand in support of Mr. Trump no matter how audacious the test — even during his waning days in the White House — and foreshadowed a toxic dynamic awaiting Mr. Biden when he takes office.

The effort to rally lawmakers around the lawsuit had begun earlier this week when Representative Mike Johnson of Louisiana sent an email to his Republican colleagues soliciting signatures for the legal brief in support of it. The initiative had been personally blessed by Mr. Trump. Mr. Johnson wrote, and the president was “anxiously awaiting” to see who in Congress would step up to the plate to defend him.

By Friday afternoon, 126 lawmakers had done so, including Representative Kevin McCarthy, the minority leader. Some conceded openly that they did not expect the effort to succeed. Others privately characterized it as a recognition that many of their constituents believed Mr. Trump's false assertions that he was the true winner of the election.

“A lot of people saw that as a threat to their very existence being in Congress,” Representative Denver Riggleman, Republican of Virginia, said of Mr. Johnson's email. “They're getting pressure from multiple angles. They can come out and say they're defending the president, knowing that it's a fool's errand, but that it allows them to stay in good graces with a certain segment of the voting population.”

Mr. Johnson's call to arms, reported earlier by CNN, amounted to the latest in a series of loyalty tests for elected Republicans that Mr. Trump has effectively laid out on his way out of power, which have exposed divisions in the



Representative Kevin McCarthy, center, the minority leader, was one of 126 House Republicans to support the Texas lawsuit.

party that are likely to outlast him. The vast majority of Republicans have been unwilling to question Mr. Trump's fictitious claims of having won the election. Many have eagerly taken up the allegations themselves, while a small and increasingly marginalized minority has raised alarms about the party's efforts to sow distrust in the election.

Republicans who signed the brief claimed that the election had been “riddled with an unprecedented number of serious allegations of fraud and irregularities” and argued that it was reasonable to ask the justices to review them. There has been no evidence of widespread fraud or irregularities, despite Mr. Trump's allegations, and nearly every one of the signers was just re-elected in the same balloting they claimed was invalid.

“My personal hope is that drawing additional attention to it forces states to clean up their act, and adopt far better and more secure systems going forward that will garner the kind of faith in our elections our nation so desperately needs,” said Representative Dan Crenshaw, Republican of Texas, who signed onto the brief.

But other Republicans in Capitol Hill had been scathing in their condemnations of the suit, which legal experts criticized as lacking merit and as a baseless attempt to indulge Mr. Trump's fantasies that he won the election.

On Friday, some of them cheered the ruling and suggested members of their own party had played a role in misleading Americans about the election.

“Since election night, a lot of people have been confusing voters by spinning Kenyan birther-type, ‘Chavez rigged the election from the grave’ conspiracy theories,” said Senator Ben Sasse, Republican of Nebraska. “But every American who cares about the rule of law should take comfort that the Supreme Court — including all three of President Trump's picks — closed the book on the nonsense.”

Senator Lisa Murkowski, a centrist Republican from Alaska, told reporters Friday on Capitol Hill that she had been “surprised and disappointed” by the actions of the House Republicans.

“I was just really disappointed that this is continuing in this way,” she said.

Republican critics of the lawsuit had been particularly concerned that it violated their party's longstanding support for the principle of states' rights.

“This was almost a certainty,” Representative Chip Roy, Republican of Texas, said Friday night of the Supreme Court's rejection of the challenge. “But the harm was spinning people up for grandstanding while tossing federalism on its head.”

In the end, that was the rationale the court gave for rejecting the suit, in an unsigned order that said Texas had “not demonstrated a judicially cognizable interest in the manner in which another state conducts its elections.”

While the legal case may be over, the reverberations were still being felt within the party and across the country. The Orlando

Sentinel took aim at Representative Michael Waltz, Republican of Florida, who had signed onto the brief, in a blistering editorial apologizing for endorsing him in his 2020 campaign.

“We had no idea, had no way of knowing at the time, that Waltz was not committed to democracy,” the editorial board wrote.

Democrats joined in the rebukes, calling Republicans' actions dangerous and destructive. Representative Bill Pascrell of New Jersey called on House leaders not to seat the Republicans who signed onto the brief in the new Congress, accusing them of traitorous behavior. In a letter to colleagues on Friday before the Supreme Court ruled, Speaker Nancy Pelosi of California called the lawsuit “an act of flailing G.O.P. desperation.”

“Republicans are subverting the Constitution by their reckless and fruitless assault on our democracy,” Ms. Pelosi wrote, “which threatens to seriously erode public trust in our most sacred democratic institutions, and to set back our progress on the urgent challenges ahead.”

Polls show that most Republicans do not believe the election was legitimate, and the participation of members of Congress in the lawsuit reflected their refusal to stand up to Mr. Trump or challenge their constituents' beliefs, fueled by the president's claims and amplified in conservative media.

“House Republicans wake up in the morning afraid of being primaried,” said Alex Conant, a Re-

publican strategist. “In 2022, loyalty to Trump could be a litmus test in the primary. Republicans aren't signing on because they're impressed with the legal argument. They're signing on because they're afraid of their base.”

Time and again throughout his presidency, Mr. Trump has challenged Republicans to support him in his often outlandish behavior, lashing out at those who do not go along and threatening them with electoral defeat. Most recently, the president has attacked Republican officials in Georgia over failing to subvert the will of the voters.

“There is barely a Republican leader in the country who has accepted the results,” Mr. Conant said. “If you're a Republican voter, there aren't a lot of Republican leaders telling you the election was fair.”

Courts in at least eight key states across the country have rejected challenges waged by the Trump campaign in an attempt to throw out the results of the election. On Tuesday, the Supreme Court unanimously refused a long-shot request from Pennsylvania Republicans to overturn Mr. Biden's victory in the state.

Mr. Trump has not come close — even once — to overturning the results in a single state, let alone the results in at least three states that he would need to take a victory from Mr. Biden. This month, Attorney General William P. Barr acknowledged that the Justice Department had uncovered no voting fraud that would have changed the results of the election.

Democrats Cheer Ruling As Final Blow In Legal Fight

By SHANE GOLDMACHER

The rejection came swiftly. The celebrations came just as fast.

The Supreme Court's unsigned order on Friday rejecting Texas's bid to toss the results of the presidential election in four states won by Joseph R. Biden Jr. unceremoniously ended a case that President Trump had teased only hours earlier as “perhaps the most important case in history.”

Democrats cheered the ruling as a symbolic final blow to more than a month of failed legal challenges by Mr. Trump and his allies and a victory for the will of voters who delivered Mr. Biden 306 Electoral College votes and a margin of more than seven million in the popular vote.

“The will of the people will be heard,” New York's attorney general, Letitia James, a Democrat, said on Twitter. Josh Shapiro, the attorney general of Pennsylvania and a Democrat, said that the Supreme Court had recognized the lawsuit as a “seditious abuse of the judicial process.”

Though legal experts never gave the case much of a chance, it drew support from more than 120 Republican members of Congress and 17 Republican attorneys general. On Friday night, Senator Ben Sasse of Nebraska was the highest-level Republican to break with Mr. Trump and much of his own party in applauding the ruling.

“Since election night, a lot of people have been confusing voters by spinning Kenyan Birther-type, ‘Chavez rigged the election from the grave’ conspiracy theories,” Mr. Sasse said in a statement, “But every American who cares about the rule of law should take comfort that the Supreme Court — including all three of President Trump's picks — closed the book on this nonsense.”

Among those who had signed on in support of the lawsuit on Friday was Representative Kevin McCarthy of California, the top House Republican. When the case was dismissed House Speaker Nancy Pelosi said the lawmakers who signed onto the lawsuit “brought dishonor to the House” and chastised them for choosing “to subvert the Constitution and undermine public trust in our sacred democratic institutions.”

The Supreme Court's ruling effectively ended the president's attempts to use the legal system to get a result the voters denied him, leaving him to press his case in the court of public opinion, where his baseless arguments about fraudulent voting have found far more fertile ground than in state and federal courts.

Rick Hasen, a professor of law at the University of California at Irvine, said the ruling, while unsurprising, was significant for the country.

“The good news is that our institutions held,” Mr. Hasen said. “While many Republican legislators and attorneys general signed onto Texas's antidemocratic effort, Republican election officials who count the votes and Republican judges did not.”

Yet even among those who celebrated the outcome of the case, many feared the longer term impact of Mr. Trump's rhetoric on public trust in democracy and the mechanics of elections.

“Pleased with the SCOTUS ruling, but also immediately slightly terrified of where this crazy train goes next,” Brendan Buck, an adviser to the last two Republican speakers, Paul Ryan and John Boehner, wrote on Twitter. He later added, “We should know by now there's a bottomless supply of crazy.”

Not long after, Allen West, a former congressman and the chairman of the Texas Republican Party, slashed at the Supreme Court and said in a statement that hinted at secession that “perhaps law-abiding states should bond together and form a union of states that will abide by the Constitution.”

Representative Adam Kinzinger, Republican of Illinois, called on the Texas G.O.P. to retract the statement and fire Mr. West. “My guy Abraham Lincoln and the Union soldiers already told you no,” Mr. Kinzinger wrote on Twitter.

With loss after loss in the courts and multiple recounts showing Mr. Biden ahead in the decisive states, Mr. Trump's November defeat has been repeated, certified and confirmed enough to keep many Democrats pleased.

“With each loss we get to celebrate the Biden/Harris victory all over again,” Ken Martin, a vice-chairman of the Democratic National Committee and the state party chair in Minnesota, said. “It's like the gift that keeps on giving.”

Michael M. Grynbaum and Emily Cochrane contributed reporting.

Justices Deny Texas Lawsuit Seeking to Subvert the Vote

From Page A1

tive network Newsmax soon after the decision was announced, Rudolph W. Giuliani, Mr. Trump's personal lawyer, said that the campaign's legal effort would continue, insisting that his team had originally planned for “four or five separate cases.”

“We're not finished, believe me,” he said with a laugh at the end of the interview.

The president, who at a White House Hanukkah party earlier in the week eagerly mentioned the pending court case in his remarks, was scheduled to attend another holiday party around the time the ruling came down. But around 8:30 p.m., guests were informed that Mr. Trump would not be coming down from the residence to speak.

Friday's order was not quite unanimous. Justice Samuel A. Alito Jr., joined by Justice Clarence Thomas, issued a brief statement on a technical point. But it was nonetheless a comprehensive rebuke to Mr. Trump and his allies. It was plain that the justices had no patience for Texas' attempt to enlist the court in an effort to tell other states how to run their elections.

The majority ruled that Texas could not file its lawsuit at all. “The state of Texas' motion for leave to file a bill of complaint is denied for lack of standing,” the court's order said.

Justice Alito, taking a slightly different approach, wrote that the court was not free immediately to shut down lawsuits filed by states directly in the court. “In my view,” he wrote, “we do not have discretion to deny the filing of a bill of complaint in a case that falls within our original jurisdiction.”

Alan Feuer and Maggie Haberman contributed reporting from New York, and Chris Cameron from Washington.

But that was as far as those two justices were willing to go. “I would therefore grant the motion to file the bill of complaint but would not grant other relief,” Justice Alito wrote, “and I express no view on any other issue.”

Some of Mr. Trump's advisers had anticipated the court would give the president and the Republican attorneys general something that could be characterized as supportive, in the form of a dissent or a lengthy commentary. Instead, there was simply the brief statement from the two justices.

Mike Gwin, a spokesman for the Biden campaign, said the Supreme Court had “decisively and speedily rejected the latest of Donald Trump and his allies' attacks on the democratic process.”

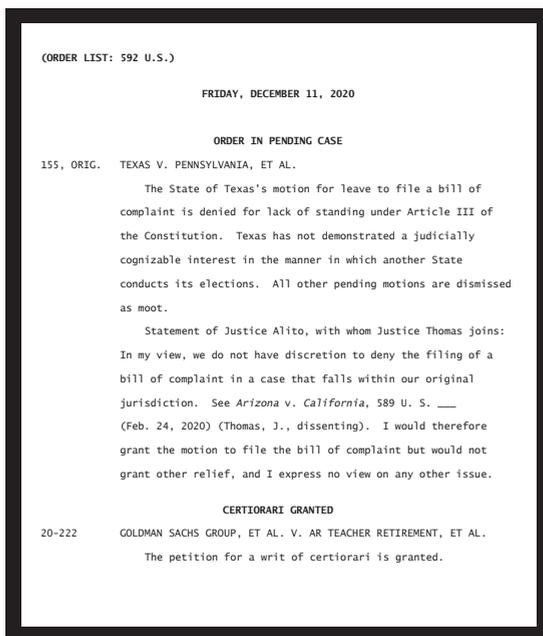
“President-elect Biden's clear and commanding victory will be ratified by the Electoral College on Monday, and he will be sworn in on Jan. 20,” Mr. Gwin said.

Despite the court ruling, Mr. Trump's campaign plans to continue describing the election outcome as illegitimate. On Friday night, it announced that it would be running ads on YouTube, which has started accepting political ads again after a moratorium, making that very case.

In the Texas case, the Supreme Court received more than a dozen friend-of-the-court briefs and motions seeking to intervene, from Mr. Trump, from coalitions of liberal and conservative states, from politicians and from scholars.

Among them was a brief filed by more than 100 House Republicans who fell in line to claim that the general election — the same one in which most of them were re-elected — had been “riddled with an unprecedented number of serious allegations of fraud and irregularities.” More than a dozen Republican state attorneys general expressed similar support on Wednesday.

Legal experts almost univer-



sally dismissed Texas' suit as an unbecoming stunt. In invoking the Supreme Court's “original jurisdiction,” Texas asked the justices to act as a trial court to settle a dispute between states, a procedure theoretically possible under the Constitution but employed sparingly, typically in cases concerning water rights or boundary disputes.

In a series of briefs filed Thursday, the four states that Texas sought to sue condemned the effort. “The court should not abide this seditious abuse of the judicial process, and should send a clear and unmistakable signal that such abuse must never be replicated,” a brief for Pennsylvania said.

On Friday morning, Texas' attorney general, Ken Paxton, responded with his own brief. “Whatever Pennsylvania's definition of sedition,” he wrote, “moving this court to cure grave threats to Texas' right of suffrage in the Senate and its citizens' rights of suffrage in presidential elections

upholds the Constitution, which is the very opposite of sedition.”

Claims that the election was tainted by widespread fraud have been debunked by Mr. Trump's own attorney general, William P. Barr, who said this month that the Justice Department had uncovered no voting fraud “on a scale that could have effected a different outcome in the election.”

Some 20 states led by Democrats, in a brief supporting the four battleground states, urged the Supreme Court “to reject Texas' last-minute attempt to throw out the results of an election decided by the people and securely overseen and certified by its sister states.”

Georgia, which Mr. Biden won by less than 12,000 votes out of nearly five million cast, said in its brief that it had handled its election with integrity and care. “This election cycle,” the brief said, “Georgia did what the Constitution empowered it to do: it implemented processes for the election,

The Supreme Court's order. Justices Samuel A. Alito Jr. and Clarence Thomas made brief remarks on a technical point but went no further.

administered the election in the face of logistical challenges brought on by Covid-19, and confirmed and certified the election results — again and again and again. Yet Texas has sued Georgia anyway?”

Starting even before Election Day, Mr. Trump and his Republican allies have filed nearly five dozen challenges to the handling, casting and counting of votes in courts in at least eight different states.

They generally lost those cases, often drawing blistering rebukes from the judges who heard them. Along the way Mr. Trump has not come close to overturning the election results in a single state, let alone the minimum of three he would need to seize victory from Mr. Biden.

The first batch of actions preceded the election and sought to end or pare back voting measures that states across the country had put in place to deal with the coronavirus crisis. In Texas, for instance, Republicans pursued a failed effort in federal court to stop drive-through voting in Harris County, home to Houston. A similar move was made in Pennsylvania to stop the state from accepting mail-in ballots received after Election Day.

Mr. Trump and his allies switched tactics after the election, filing a barrage of suits in Nevada, Arizona, Pennsylvania, Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota and Georgia claiming that all manner of fraud had compromised the vote results.

While some of the claims were supported by sworn statements from witnesses, judge after judge in case after case ruled that the evidence was not persuasive, credible or anywhere near enough to give Mr. Trump the extraordinary relief he requested: a judicial order overturning the results of an election.

Transition in Washington Political Fallout

Georgia Governor Drew On Trump's Help, but Now Is the Focus of His Ire

By RICHARD FAUSSET
and LISA LERER

ATLANTA — Few politicians have been both elevated and diminished by the vicissitudes of President Trump like Brian Kemp, the Republican governor of Georgia.

Mr. Kemp rocketed from hard-right underdog candidate to the governor's mansion two years ago on the strength of a surprise endorsement from Mr. Trump, and an argument that the president was right about a lot of issues facing the country.

But these days Mr. Kemp is facing daily reminders of the perils of deciding that Mr. Trump is actually wrong.

In recent weeks, Mr. Kemp has infuriated the president for resisting his demands to help overturn the election results in Georgia, a state Mr. Trump lost by roughly 12,000 votes. The president's outrage has spread to many of his supporters in Georgia as he persists in his extraordinary intervention into the nation's electoral process.

At a news conference in the State Capitol on Tuesday to discuss the rollout of the coronavirus vaccine, Mr. Kemp was confronted by Trump loyalists asking why he had refused to call a special session of the legislature, as the president has requested, so that lawmakers can reallocate the state's 16 electoral votes to Mr. Trump. The question crowded the screen of a Facebook live feed of the event. As he departed the event, Mr. Kemp was stopped by a small group who presented a bag that they said was filled with 2,000 petitions making the same plea.

"If he doesn't call a special session, he's definitely a one-term governor, no doubt about it," said one of the activists, Erik Christensen, the chief executive of a moving company, who said he voted for Mr. Kemp in 2018.

Mr. Kemp is now the most vivid example of the battle-scarred and even shellshocked conservative Republicans who once basked in Mr. Trump's glow but now find themselves denied for enforcing their state election rules and laws. Republican governors like Mr. Kemp and Doug Ducey of Arizona, and lower-level state officials like Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger in Georgia, have emerged as a new kind of institutionalist in the face of the Trump attacks on the election system: They are refusing to bend procedures to the will of Mr. Trump, and potentially paying a political price for it.

As Mr. Trump continues to grope for a way to undo his electoral loss to President-elect Joseph R. Biden Jr., he is also engaged in a furious effort to torpedo Mr. Kemp's political future.

Mr. Trump has called Mr. Kemp "hapless," mocked him for a supposed dip in popularity, and suggested, at a recent rally, that United States Representative Doug Collins should mount a primary challenge Mr. Kemp when he seeks a second term in 2022.

"I'm ashamed that I endorsed him," Mr. Trump said in a Fox News interview.

The president's willingness to threaten the governor's fervently pro-Trump voter base demonstrates how challenging it may be for Republicans to navigate a post-presidency in which the mercurial Mr. Trump could choose to play kingmaker, de facto party head and potential 2024 candidate.

Republican politicians, strategists and party officials are anxiously watching the turmoil in Georgia, fearing that the civil war the president started among Georgia's Republicans could spread throughout the country. That would complicate the politi-



PHOTOGRAPHS BY ERIK S. LESSER/EPA, VIA SHUTTERSTOCK

Gov. Brian Kemp of Georgia refused to call a special session of the legislature to reallocate the state's 16 electoral votes to President Trump, who lost there by 12,000 votes.



The Georgia State House in July. President Trump has called Mr. Kemp "hapless" and said, "I'm ashamed I endorsed him."

cal dynamics for incumbents like Mr. Kemp, who plans to run for reelection two years from now.

In November's election, Mr. Trump expanded the party base, driving up margins in rural areas, winning a larger share of Latino voters and capturing a record number of Republican votes. Whether those new voters will transform into loyal Republicans when Mr. Trump is not on the ticket remains one of the biggest uncertainties facing the party. And much may depend on what Mr. Trump tells Republicans to do. "Any operative is wondering right now whether this is what the future looks like," said Henry Barbour, a Republican committeeman from Mississippi and an influential voice in the party. "We don't know, but the Party has a tremendous opportunity going forward to build on what the president has accomplished."

Mr. Kemp, 57, has not been the only target of Mr. Trump's wrath. Republican politicians and officials across the country who have defended the integrity of the election — and resisted bending to the will of the president — have faced a backlash from their own party.

In Arizona, Mr. Trump has criticized Mr. Ducey for certifying Mr. Biden's win in that state, and suggested he would also pay a political price for it. ("Republicans will

long remember!" he wrote in a recent tweet.) While term limits prevent Mr. Ducey from seeking another term, he is among those mentioned as a potential presidential contender in 2024.

On the same day that Mr. Ducey was selected to head the Republican Governors Association, Representative Andy Biggs of Arizona said Mr. Ducey had "harmed the common cause of the Republican Party," in a column on a conservative news site.

"The Duceys and the Kemps of the world, they may have some difficulty if they want to seek elective office within the Republican Party," said Michael Burke, the chairman of the Republican Party in Pinal County in Arizona. "People will remember what happened here," added Mr. Burke, who worked at Mr. Trump's properties before becoming involved with politics.

Allies of the president have begun issuing veiled threats toward Mr. Kemp, warning that what they see as his insufficient loyalty to the president could carry a political price.

"If you're not fighting for Trump now when he needs you the most as a Republican leader in Georgia, people are not going to fight for you when you ask them to get re-elected," said Senator Lindsey Graham, of South Carolina, in an

appearance on Fox News.

Democrats are trying to exploit these divisions. MeidasTouch, a progressive national political committee, announced plans this week to put up billboards in Georgia emblazoned with a Trump tweet that reads, "Why bother voting for Republicans if what you get is Ducey and Kemp?" Mr. Biden plans to travel to the state next week to campaign for the two Democratic candidates, who would give his party control of the Senate if they won runoffs against Republican incumbents on Jan. 5.

Mr. Kemp's descent from Mr. Trump's circle of approval is particularly striking. Throughout his career, he has taken pains to demonstrate his conservative credentials: In one particularly unsubtle ad that ran during his 2018 run for governor, titled "So Conservative," he demonstrated his desire to "blow up government spending" with actual explosives, and "cut regulations" with a real chain saw.

It was Mr. Trump's positive tweet just days before the Republican primary runoff that helped Mr. Kemp gain the nomination. Then in the general election, Mr. Kemp became one of the Trump era's most enduring villains in the eyes of the left after his narrow victory over Stacey Abrams, who was vying to become the nation's first Black woman governor.

Ms. Abrams and her allies argued that Mr. Kemp, then the secretary of state, engineered a "stolen" election by supporting policies that Democrats said amounted to voter suppression and in some cases targeted minorities.

Since then, much of Mr. Kemp's political personality had been borrowed directly from Mr. Trump. Billing himself as a "politically incorrect conservative," Mr. Kemp has echoed Mr. Trump's hyperbolic message about the violent threats illegal immigrants pose to American citizens.

Despite his rhetoric, Mr. Kemp has not played the role of radical disrupter the way doctrinaire former Republican governors like Sam Brownback of Kansas or

Bobby Jindal of Louisiana did. But he has delivered for his conservative base by supporting and signing an anti-abortion "heartbeat" law, which was permanently enjoined by the courts.

Other policy actions, including a raise for public schoolteachers, and a slew of appointments reflecting the state's increasing diversity, suggest some movement on Mr. Kemp's part toward a practical center. But much of that has been overshadowed by criticism of his reopening of the state in the early stages of the coronavirus pandemic and his conflicts with the Democratic mayor of Atlanta, Keisha Lance Bottoms, including over her efforts to implement a mask mandate.

Still, this generally conservative track record has not stemmed the torrent of criticism that is currently engulfing the governor from the right. Nor have Mr. Kemp's delicate — or perhaps awkward — efforts to praise Mr. Trump while steadfastly declining

view.

Mr. Kemp's relationship with the president began to seriously deteriorate late last year when he defied Mr. Trump's wishes and appointed Kelly Loeffler, a wealthy Atlanta businesswoman, to an open Senate seat. Ms. Loeffler and Senator David Perdue are the Republican candidates in the Georgia runoffs in January.

Mr. Kemp will have to run on a ticket in 2022 with whoever wins the Senate seat. By choosing Ms. Loeffler, he was most likely trying to craft the image of the state Republican Party in a way that he thought would reflect Georgia's evolving politics: a female candidate who he believed could win back more moderate voters in Atlanta's populous northern suburbs. He also considered Ms. Loeffler, a political novice, a good fit for his brand, which he considers to be pro-business, outside the establishment and conservative.

Mr. Trump preferred that the Senate seat go to Mr. Collins, the conservative Georgia Republican who had passionately defended Mr. Trump against impeachment. Mr. Collins subsequently jumped into this year's race, losing in the first round of voting but pushing Ms. Loeffler far to the right to prove her conservative bona fides.

A similar dynamic could emerge if Mr. Trump backs a primary challenger in the 2022 governor's race. That could lead Mr. Kemp to lurch rightward after he has made more effort to move to the center. Such a shift might help Ms. Abrams, who may challenge Mr. Kemp in a rematch.

But all of these projections are clouded with questions about the president himself. Will he get involved in 35 local and statewide races, or concentrate on two or three? Will he settle old scores? Mr. Kemp's political future may depend on the answer.

"I'm 100 percent Donald Trump. I'm 100 percent Brian Kemp," said former Representative Jack Kingston, Republican of Georgia and a Trump ally. "I believe it's just something that we've got to get through."

Another Republican is derided for balking at interfering with election results.

to give him the overturned election results he wants. At the news conference on Tuesday, for instance, Mr. Kemp talked about how "grateful" he was for the Trump administration's "unprecedented and incredible achievement" of making the vaccine available.

A Republican consultant in Georgia familiar with Mr. Kemp's thinking said that while the governor agrees with many of Mr. Trump's policies, the president's request that he work to overturn the election — a request Mr. Trump made in a phone call with the governor last weekend — crossed a line.

Mr. Kemp's office declined to make him available for an inter-

U.S. Executes 10th Inmate of 2020, Marking Surge in Use of Federal Death Penalty

By HAILEY FUCHS

WASHINGTON — The Justice Department on Friday executed Alfred Bourgeois, a 56-year-old inmate sentenced to death for murdering his 2-year-old daughter in 2002.

Mr. Bourgeois's execution was the 10th carried out by the Trump administration since the federal government resumed its use of capital punishment in July after a 17-year hiatus. The last scheduled by the Trump administration for 2020, Mr. Bourgeois's execution adds to what became the deadliest year in the history of federal capital punishment since at least the 1920s.

Mr. Bourgeois was declared dead at 8:21 p.m. at the federal penitentiary in Terre Haute, Ind., according to the Bureau of Prisons.

On Thursday, the federal government executed Brandon Bernard, despite a high-profile campaign for leniency that included Kim Kardashian West and two lawyers who helped defend President Trump during his impeach-

ment. Mr. Trump's administration has executed three people since Election Day, the only federal executions during the lame-duck period before a new presidential administration in at least 90 years.

The Justice Department said Mr. Bourgeois, once a truck driver living in Louisiana, tortured and beat to death his young daughter. After a paternity test established him as the father and a court ordered that he pay child support, Mr. Bourgeois temporarily assumed custody of his daughter, according to court filings.

When the child tipped over her potty chair in Mr. Bourgeois's truck, he attacked the young girl, and she died the next day, the Justice Department said. After the jury heard evidence of his violence toward others, Mr. Bourgeois was sentenced to death in 2004 for the killing, which was a federal offense because it occurred at the Corpus Christi Naval Air Station.

In his final words, Mr. Bourgeois did not apologize, according to a report from a journalist in at-



NUECES COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE, VIA A.P.

tendance. Rather, he asserted that he did not kill his daughter.

"I ask God to forgive all those who plotted and schemed against me, and planted false evidence," he said, adding "I did not commit this crime."

As the lethal injection began, Mr. Bourgeois gave a thumbs-up

Alfred Bourgeois was put to death by lethal injection on Friday. He was convicted of murdering his daughter.

to his spiritual adviser, standing in a corner of the death chamber, the report said. Within minutes, his body was still.

In a statement, the victim's family said they could now begin the process of healing, but justice should not have taken 18 years.

The department had scheduled Mr. Bourgeois's execution for last January but the previous month the Supreme Court let stand a lower court order that blocked it. A federal judge in Indiana also issued a stay in his case in March, after his defense claimed that Mr. Bourgeois was intellectually disabled and ineligible for the death penalty. Another court vacated that stay in October.

The Federal Death Penalty Act bars the government from executing a mentally disabled inmate under the law, and the Supreme Court ruled in 2002 that mentally

disabled criminals could not be put to death. His lawyers claimed that Mr. Bourgeois received IQ scores low enough to constitute evidence of deficits in intellectual functioning and underwent other assessments that they said helped show he should be exempt from capital punishment.

But like other inmates executed by the federal government this year, Mr. Bourgeois had no success with his final plea to delay his execution. The Supreme Court denied Mr. Bourgeois's application for a stay on Friday, with Justices Sonia Sotomayor and Justice Elena Kagan dissenting. Joined by Justice Kagan, Justice Sotomayor wrote that the court should resolve the legal issue in his case that is likely to recur before sanctioning Mr. Bourgeois's execution.

Victor J. Abreu, a lawyer for Mr. Bourgeois, maintained that the government killed his client without fair consideration and "in spite of clear directives from the U.S. Supreme Court and federal laws that prohibited" his execu-

tion. Another bid for reprieve in Mr. Bourgeois's final days was also unsuccessful. In a 5-to-4 decision from the Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia, the judges also declined to issue a stay in a challenge to the federal execution protocol.

The Federal Death Penalty Act requires executions to be carried out "in the manner prescribed by the law of the state in which the sentence is imposed." Death row inmates have challenged the federal execution protocol with arguments about whether the law requires the federal government to follow details in the protocols required by the states.

The next federal death row prisoner scheduled to die is Lisa M. Montgomery, the only woman on federal death row. Her execution is scheduled for Jan. 12. The Trump administration intends to put three inmates to death next month before President-elect Joseph R. Biden Jr. takes office. Mr. Biden has said he will work to end the federal death penalty.

Manhattan's D.A. Escalates the Investigation Into Trump

From Page A1

has the power to pardon himself — that authority applies only to federal crimes, and not to state or local investigations like the one being conducted by Mr. Vance's office.

Mr. Trump, who has maintained he did nothing improper, has railed against the inquiry, calling it a politically motivated “witch hunt.”

The investigation by Mr. Vance, a Democrat, has focused on Mr. Trump's conduct as a private business owner and whether he or employees at his family business, the Trump Organization, committed financial crimes. It is the only known criminal inquiry into the president.

Employees of Deutsche Bank and Aon, two corporate giants, could be important witnesses. As two of Mr. Trump's oldest allies — and some of the only mainstream companies willing to do regular business with him — they might offer investigators a rich vein of information about the Trump Organization.

There is no indication that either company is suspected of wrongdoing.

Because grand jury rules require secrecy, prosecutors have disclosed little about the focus of the inquiry and nothing about what investigative steps they have taken. But earlier this year, they suggested in court papers that they were examining possible insurance, tax and bank-related fraud in the president's corporate dealings.

In recent weeks, Mr. Vance's prosecutors questioned two Deutsche Bank employees about the bank's procedures for making lending decisions, according to a person familiar with the interviews. The employees were experts in the bank's underwriting process, not bankers who worked with the Trump Organization, the person said.

While the focus of those interviews was not on the relationship with Mr. Trump, bank officials expect Mr. Vance's office to summon them for additional rounds of more specific questions in the near future, the person said.

Glimpses into the investigation have come in court records during the bitter and protracted legal battle over a subpoena for eight years of Mr. Trump's personal and corporate tax returns and other financial records.

A month after Mr. Vance's office demanded the documents from the president's accounting firm,

Michael Rothfeld contributed reporting.



DREW ANGERER/GETTY IMAGES

Manhattan's district attorney, Cyrus R. Vance Jr., at federal court last year for a hearing related to President Trump's financial records.

Mazars USA, in August 2019, Mr. Trump sued to block compliance with the subpoena. The case has twisted its way through the federal courts, with the president losing at every turn, and is now in front of the Supreme Court for the second time.

Danny Frost, a spokesman for Mr. Vance, declined to comment on recent moves in the investigation. Alan Garten, the Trump Organization's general counsel, declined to comment, but recently said that the company's practices complied with the law and called the investigation a “fishing expedition.”

Aon confirmed that the company had received a subpoena for documents from the district attorney's office but declined to comment on the interviews with prosecutors. “As is our policy, we intend to cooperate with all regulatory bodies, including providing copies of all documents requested by those bodies,” a company spokeswoman said in a statement.

Deutsche Bank, Mr. Trump's primary lender since the late 1990s, received a subpoena last year from the district attorney and has said it is cooperating with the inquiry.

In court papers, the prosecutors

have cited public reports of Mr. Trump's business dealings as legal justification for their inquiry, including a Washington Post article that concluded the president may have inflated his net worth and the value of his properties to lenders and insurers.

Michael D. Cohen, the president's former lawyer and fixer who turned on him after pleading guilty to federal charges, also told Congress in February 2019 that Mr. Trump and his employees manipulated his net worth to suit his interests.

“It was my experience that Mr. Trump inflated his total assets when it served his purposes, such as trying to be listed among the wealthiest people in Forbes, and deflated his assets to reduce his real estate taxes,” he said in testimony before the House Oversight Committee.

Mr. Trump's supporters have noted that Mr. Cohen pleaded guilty in 2018 to lying to Congress and accused him of lying again to earn a reduced prison sentence.

The Trump Organization's lawyers are also likely to argue to prosecutors that Mr. Trump could not have duped Deutsche Bank because the bank did its own analysis of Mr. Trump's net worth.

Over the years, employees and executives inside the bank thought that Mr. Trump was overvaluing some of his assets by as much as 70 percent, according to current and former bank officials. Deutsche Bank still decided to lend Mr. Trump's company hundreds of millions of dollars over the past decade, concluding that he was a safe lending risk in part because he had more than enough money and other assets to personally guarantee the debt.

The prosecutors' interviews with the employees were not the only recent activity in the investigation. Last month, The Times reported that Mr. Vance's office had subpoenaed the Trump Organization for records related to tax write-offs on millions of dollars in consulting fees, some of which appear to have gone to the president's daughter Ivanka Trump.

According to people with knowledge of the matter, the subpoena sought information about fees paid to TTT Consulting L.L.C., an apparent reference to Ms. Trump and other members of her family. Ms. Trump was an executive officer of the Trump companies that made the payments, meaning she appears to have been paid as a consultant while

also working for the Trump Organization.

Mr. Garten, the Trump Organization's general counsel, argued in a statement at the time that the subpoena was part of an “ongoing attempt to harass the company.” He added that “everything was done in strict compliance with applicable law and under the advice of counsel and tax experts.”

Mr. Vance's investigation has spanned more than two years and shifted focus over time. When the investigation began, it examined the Trump Organization's role in hush money payments made during the 2016 presidential campaign to two women who claimed to have had affairs with Mr. Trump. Prosecutors were examining how the company recorded a reimbursement to Mr. Cohen for one of the payments. Mr. Cohen pleaded guilty to federal campaign finance violations for his role in the scheme.

A state grand jury convened by Mr. Vance's office heard testimony from at least one witness about that issue last year, according to a person with knowledge of that testimony, but the payments have receded as a central focus of the inquiry.

Senate Sends Veto-Proof Military Bill To President

By CATIE EDMONDSON

WASHINGTON — The Senate overwhelmingly passed a sweeping military policy bill on Friday that would require that Confederate names be stripped from American military bases, clearing the measure for enactment and sending it to President Trump's desk in defiance of his threats of a veto.

The 84-13 vote to approve the legislation reflected broad bipartisan support for the measure that authorizes pay for American troops and was intended to signal to Mr. Trump that lawmakers, including many Republicans, were determined to pass the critical bill even if it meant potentially delivering the first veto override of his presidency.

The margin surpassed the two-thirds majority needed in both houses to force enactment of the bill over Mr. Trump's objections. The House also met that threshold in passing the measure on Tuesday, raising the prospect of a potential veto showdown during Mr. Trump's final weeks in office.

The scene that played out on the Senate floor on Friday underscored how Republicans, who have been reluctant to challenge the president on any other issue during his four years in office, have been extraordinarily willing to break with Mr. Trump over one of the party's key orthodoxies — projecting military strength.

“I encourage all of us to do what we have to do to get this bill done,” Senator James M. Inhofe, Republican of Oklahoma and the chairman of the Armed Services Committee, told his colleagues in a speech from the floor. “There's no

Many Republicans have been willing to break with the White House on the issue.

one more deserving in America than our troops that are out there in harm's way, and we're going to make sure we do the right thing for them.”

Thirteen senators, split evenly among party lines, voted against the bill, with Republicans supporting Mr. Trump's objections and Democrats chafing at the bill's topline number. Three senators, Lindsey Graham, Republican of South Carolina, Mike Rounds, Republican of South Dakota, and Kamala Harris, Democrat of California and the vice president-elect, did not vote.

Congress has succeeded in passing the military bill each year for 60 years. But Mr. Trump has threatened to spend that tradition, pledging since the summer to veto the legislation even as leaders in his own party privately implored him to support it.

Mr. Trump first objected to a provision supported overwhelmingly by lawmakers in both parties in both chambers that would strip the names of Confederate leaders from military bases. In recent weeks, his attention shifted, and he demanded that the bill include an unrelated repeal of a legal shield for social media companies.

That demand, registered late in the legislative process, found little support among lawmakers in either party, who regard shoe-horning a major unrelated policy move into a defense bill as untenable. They have hoped that strong votes in both chambers would cow Mr. Trump into retreating from his veto threat. But the president has given no indication to date that he will do so.

Included in the legislation are a number of noncontroversial, bipartisan measures, including new benefits for tens of thousands of Vietnam-era veterans who were exposed to Agent Orange, a 3 percent increase in pay for service members and a boost in hazardous duty incentive pay.

It would also take steps to slow or block Mr. Trump's planned drawdown of American troops from Germany and Afghanistan, and would make it more difficult for the president to deploy military personnel to the southern border.

The legislation also directly addresses the protests for racial justice spurred over the summer by the killing of Black Americans, including George Floyd, at the hands of the police. It would require all federal officers enforcing crowd control at protests and demonstrations to identify themselves and their agencies. And it contains the bipartisan measure that directs the Pentagon to begin the process of renaming military bases named after Confederate leaders, a provision that Democrats fought to keep in the bill.

If Mr. Trump were to follow through with his threatened veto, the House would be the first to try at an override.

One Voice Sinks Honor For Women and Latinos

By NICHOLAS FANDOS

For more than two decades, Latinos and their allies in Congress have been fighting to approve the creation of a National Museum of the American Latino in Washington. The push to create a national women's history museum has taken about as long.

There have been studies and commissions, and this year, bipartisan bills authorizing their creation under the Smithsonian umbrella passed the House for the first time by overwhelming margins.

So on Thursday night, as their congressional term dwindles to just days, Republican and Democratic senators gathered on the Senate floor in hopes of capturing overwhelming support to push both over the finish line. Instead, their attempt set off a rare and tense debate in the halls of Congress — over what the nation's museums stand for and the role of ethnic and gender identity in American life.

In the end, the objections of a single senator out of 100, Mike Lee of Utah, were enough to stop both measures and ensure that for now, their proponents will keep waiting. In a week where lawmakers have struggled, once more, to find agreement on stimulus money to help suffering Americans and small businesses, it was a fitting punctuation mark for an institution gripped with paralysis.

The dispute began shortly before dinnertime when Senators John Cornyn, Republican of Texas, and Bob Menendez, Democrat of New Jersey, tried to advance the legislation setting up the Latino museum on the National Mall. They lauded the history and contributions of 60 million Americans, and painted the creation of a museum as a proper and symbolically significant recognition in the nation's capital of a diverse segment of Americans.

Mr. Lee, a conservative with libertarian leanings who often finds himself at odds with his colleagues and does not bend, quickly made his disapproval known on broad philosophical grounds.

“My objection to the creation of a new Smithsonian museum or se-

ries of museums based on group identity — what Theodore Roosevelt called hyphenated Americanism — is not a matter of budgetary or legislative technicalities,” Mr. Lee said. “It's a matter of national unity and cultural inclusion.”

Because his colleagues were trying to pass the bill by unanimous consent, a practice reserved for noncontroversial measures that speeds up the normal legislative process, his reservations alone were enough to block it.

Mr. Lee argued that creating the museums would drive wedges among Americans. He conjured dire scenes of societal strife.

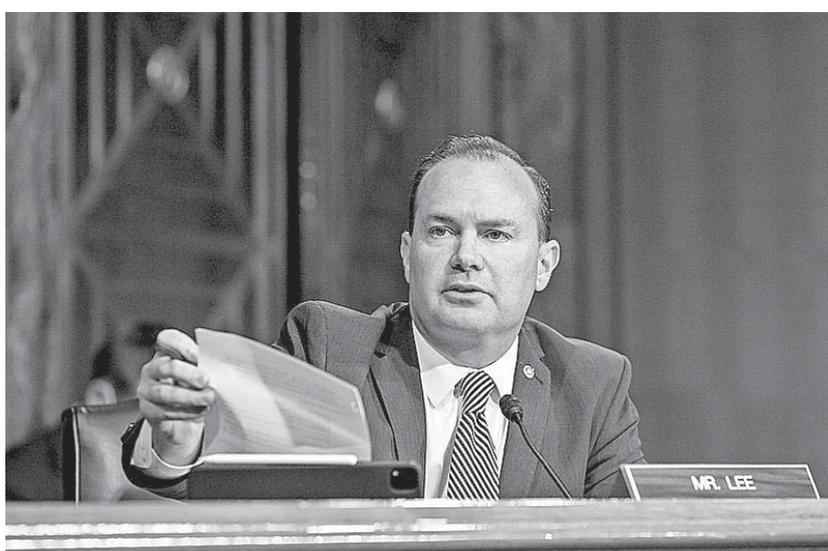
“The so-called critical theory undergirding this movement does not celebrate diversity; it weaponizes diversity,” he said. “It sharpens all those hyphens into so many knives and daggers. It has turned our college campuses into grievance pageants and loose Orwellian mobs to cancel anyone daring to express an original thought.”

Addressing Mr. Menendez, he said that the history of Latinos and women should be a part of existing Smithsonian museums, and because those topics were not adequately represented there, that should be Congress's focus, not building new institutions.

Mr. Menendez, fuming, was far from convinced.

“I'm sorry,” he said. “Sixty million Latinos in this country are watching tonight because this is a much-expected moment. Uninvited, Telemundo, affiliates across the country, national organizations and others have been waiting for this moment — a moment that everybody in the Congress of the United States agrees to, except for one colleague.”

He argued that Latinos were just as entitled to their own cultural institution as African-Americans and Native Americans, to whom Smithsonian museums have been dedicated in recent years. When Mr. Lee said those groups had had their stories “virtually erased” by the government that sought to enslave or eradicate them, giving them a unique claim to dedicated federal facilities, Mr. Menendez said Latinos, too, had been “systemically ex-



JASON ANDREW FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Senator Mike Lee of Utah objected to the measures, which needed unanimous consent to pass.



ANNA MONEYMAKER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Senator Susan Collins of Maine said “it seems wrong” for a single senator to block a proposal that is favored by a clear majority.

cluded.”

Mr. Lee is not the first to raise concerns about the Smithsonian being fractured into multiple identity-based museums. That concern, along with budgetary ones, has been one of the main points of opposition to a Latino museum in recent years amid extensive lobbying campaigns in its favor.

But Senator Susan Collins, Republican of Maine, who tried to pass the bill creating a women's history museum, lamented that “it seems wrong” for a single senator to subvert a clear majority that favored the institutions.

“Surely in a year where we are celebrating the 100th anniversary of women's suffrage, this is the time, this is the moment to finally pass the legislation unanimously recommended by an independent commission to establish an American women's history museum in our nation's capital,” Ms. Collins said. “I regret that will not occur this evening, but we will not give up the fight.”

Senators in favor of the museums could still push to have them included in a must-pass year-end spending package. But with only days remaining in the congress-

sional session, it was unclear whether they would succeed.

Proponents of the museums had already overcome another last-minute hurdle put up this week by Senator Lisa Murkowski, Republican of Alaska, who said she supported their creation but wanted changes to how museum sites on the National Mall would be selected.

The effort to establish a museum dedicated to Latinos traces back to the early 1990s, when an institutional report concluded that the Smithsonian “displays a pattern of willful neglect” toward Latinos. The institution's leaders tried to change that, establishing the Smithsonian Latino Center. In 2008, Congress authorized a commission that ultimately recommended the creation of a 310,000-square-foot museum on the National Mall to function like the African-American museum.

The road for the women's history museum has been nearly as long. Ms. Collins noted on Thursday that she had introduced a bill in 2003, along with Ms. Murkowski and Senator Dianne Feinstein of California, to create one. Congress established a commission in 2014 to study the issue, and it also recommended building a full American Museum of Women's History at a prominent location in Washington, if not on the National Mall.

Indoor Dining Will Shut Down in New York City, Again

By MICHAEL GOLD

Indoor dining will once again be barred in New York City restaurants starting on Monday, Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo said on Friday, in a significant reversal of the city's reopening that comes as officials try to halt the escalation of a second wave of the coronavirus and avoid a broader shutdown.

The decision, which Mr. Cuomo earlier this week suggested was all but certain, is a crushing blow to the city's restaurant industry, a vital economic pillar that has been struggling all year in the face of pandemic restrictions and a national recession.

Mr. Cuomo acknowledged the hardship his decision was likely to cause and once more called on federal lawmakers to provide relief to the hospitality industry. Congressional leaders have so far failed to reach an agreement on a new economic stimulus package.

Even as he announced the new restriction, the governor provided data that showed restaurants and bars were likely not the primary driver of new cases in the state, lagging far behind private gatherings.

Still, the governor portrayed the end of indoor dining in New York City as necessary given new federal guidance, an increasing rate of virus transmission and the city's population density. Mr. Cuomo has warned that an anticipated surge in cases this winter threatens to overwhelm the medical system. Over the last month, while preparations have begun to distribute the first doses of a vaccine, virus-related hospitalizations in the state have more than tripled.

The governor said on Friday that the city was currently on a

Luis Ferré-Sadurni contributed reporting.



JUSTIN LANE/EPA, VIA SHUTTERSTOCK

Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo portrayed the restriction as necessary given federal guidance and the increasing rate of transmission.

trajectory to hit 90 percent of its hospital capacity, at which point he would close down all nonessential businesses. He described the prohibition on indoor dining as an attempt to avoid such a move.

Restaurants and bars, Mr. Cuomo said, are "one of the few areas that we think we can actually make a difference."

The order came as the 21 Club in Manhattan appeared to become the latest iconic New York City restaurant to succumb to the pandemic. In a notice filed Wednesday with the state's labor department, the restaurant — a favorite of President Trump — said it would "indefinitely" cease its operations and lay off all of its employees next March.

In a statement, the restaurant's owners said that the pandemic, and an anticipated long recovery, made it unfeasible to reopen the 21 Club "in its current form for the foreseeable future." But the owners said they hope to reopen at some point, and are exploring long-term options, according to the statement.

The restaurant, which opened

as a speakeasy during prohibition, first closed and laid off employees on March 16, when the governor ordered nonessential businesses in the state to shut down. Though officials eventually permitted outdoor dining and limited indoor dining, the 21 Club remained closed to customers.

Bill Granfield, the president of Local 100 of Unite Here, the union representing the restaurant's workers, said that the union was hopeful that the restaurant might one day reopen in some fashion.

Andrew Rigie, the director of the New York City Hospitality Alliance, said in a statement that the governor's decision "is at odds with the state's own data that's been presented as driving these decisions, and it will be the last straw for countless more restaurants and jobs."

Mr. Rigie also called for more economic support for struggling restaurants and bars, saying the end of indoor dining would "severely jeopardize" their survival.

For months, New York City's restaurant owners have warned that their businesses, many of

which operate on tight margins in the best of times, are on the edge of financial collapse. Thousands of employees, many of them low-wage workers, have been laid off since March, and their jobs have yet to fully return.

The industry's anxieties are only mounting as winter approaches and frigid temperatures threaten to deter customers from dining outdoors. Industry groups have called repeatedly for federal or state financial assistance, with restaurant and bar owners watching nervously as stimulus talks drag on in Washington.

The governor's announcement came after weeks with shifting messages on indoor dining, which resumed in New York City only at the end of September.

As virus cases rose across the state this fall, Mr. Cuomo hesitated to impose the restrictions that he implemented in March, when he limited restaurants and bars to takeout and delivery.

In October, the governor said he would shutter indoor dining only in the hardest-hit areas in the state, so-called microclusters. He briefly changed course in late November, saying he would shut down indoor dining citywide if the seven-day average test positivity rate hit 3 percent. He walked back that statement about a week later.

Mr. Cuomo and his aides have said that the state's approach has changed to follow evolving guidance from epidemiologists. Until this week, the governor had focused much of his attention on parties and other indoor gatherings and had downplayed the risks of indoor dining, even as growing evidence suggested it was a significant source of the virus's spread.

But on Monday, Mr. Cuomo had warned that he would curb indoor dining in regions where hospitalizations did not stabilize, citing

recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention that described eating at indoor restaurants as a "particularly high-risk" activity.

Then on Friday, Mr. Cuomo said that contact tracing data showed that restaurants and bars were the fifth main source of new infections in the state, well behind household and social gatherings. The data is based only on those who give a response to contact tracers and does not capture every infection in the state, officials have said.

Of 46,000 cases between September and November, 1.43 percent could be linked to restaurants and bars, compared to 73.84 percent connected to private gatherings and 7.81 percent tied to the health care system, the second-largest source.

The governor acknowledged the disparity but said the state was limited in how it could address such gatherings and other sources of infection.

"We're doing everything we can," he said.

Mr. Cuomo did not announce new restrictions on restaurants and bars in the rest of the state, which were allowed to reopen more quickly and have been operating at 50 percent maximum capacity indoors, compared to 25 percent in New York City.

However, he said the state would monitor hospitalization numbers over the weekend and "make any adjustments next week" if the data suggested it was necessary.

The governor also did not provide a timeline or threshold for indoor dining to resume in New York City. An adviser, Jim Malatras, said the state would monitor virus cases and hospitalizations over a two-week period to see if trends allowed for eating indoors to restart.

Businessman, Once Broke, Pays Off Bills For Floridians

By JOHN ISMAY

Mike Esmond walked into City Hall in Gulf Breeze, Fla., in November 2019 and cut a check for \$4,300 to pay for 36 local residents whose gas and water bills were overdue and at risk of being disconnected.

This month, Mr. Esmond, 74, who owns a pool and spa construction company in Gulf Breeze, wrote another check for \$7,600 to pay off the overdue balances for 114 residents to ensure they could heat their homes through the holidays.

It appears that his generosity — born of his own experience with hardship — may have inspired others to do the same, all for a community that has been hit especially hard by twin disasters: Hurricane Sally, which in September damaged the bridge that connects Gulf Breeze to Pensacola, and the coronavirus pandemic, which has strained the local economy and shut many area businesses.

"When he first came in I thought this was incredibly generous," said Joanne Oliver, the utility billing supervisor for Gulf Breeze, which has about 7,000 residents. "I've been in customer service more than 20 years, and this had never happened."

Ms. Oliver said that in September, after the hurricane struck, a local company reached out to her offering similar help. That month, the company paid \$42,000 to settle overdue balances for 252 Gulf Breeze residents. And Ms. Oliver said a local couple had just volunteered \$500 to settle another 14 overdue accounts.

In a phone interview on Friday, Mr. Esmond said he was inspired to donate money last year after he opened his own utility bill and saw the due date: Dec. 26. His memory flashed back to the winter of 1983, when he was broke and his own gas and water service was shut off over the holidays.

"I had three young girls at home at the time, and the temperature got down to 6 degrees, with ice and frost on the inside of the house," said Mr. Esmond, speaking from his truck at a construction site. "I've lived that where I didn't have a dollar in my pocket to care for my family, so I know what it's like to really be broke and in need."

"I wanted to see if I could help people that might be experiencing the same thing — where they couldn't pay their bills and their utilities were going to be shut off around Christmastime."

Mr. Esmond said he felt that this year could be even tougher for families in Gulf Breeze, especially because of the pandemic, but also because he had seen so many homes still waiting to have their roofs repaired from Hurricane Sally.

The past year was good for Mr. Esmond's business, as he gained new clients who decided to take the money that they had saved for vacations and spend it instead on building new swimming pools at their homes.

He began working in pool construction in Doylestown, Pa., in 1968, shortly after returning from a tour in Vietnam. Mr. Esmond volunteered for the Army in 1966 and spent a year ferrying troops and supplies from a base in Cam Ranh Bay, Vietnam, as the coxswain of a 75-foot landing craft.

Mr. Esmond moved in 1977 to the Florida Panhandle, where he said people wanted to build pools year round. His financial fortunes improved after he started his own company in 2010, he said, and he now builds about 50 swimming pools a year.

"When people ask me what kind of year I had, I'm almost ashamed to tell them because it was such a good year when so many other people are suffering," Mr. Esmond said. "And that's why I want to share my prosperity with those who are less fortunate."

Ms. Oliver said on Friday that the city was mailing cards to the 114 families helped by Mr. Esmond, notifying them that their overdue balances had been taken care of. Whether she will be sending the same kinds of cards again next year is largely dependent on how Gulf Breeze manages to bounce back economically, but Mr. Esmond said he would be there to help families who needed it in 2021.

"We'll just have to see how things go," Mr. Esmond said. "I'm 74 years old and I don't even know if I'm even going to be here next year, but I can guarantee you one thing: If I am, I'll do something to help people out."

No day is complete without
The New York Times.

A Return to France From Brooklyn Brings Lockdown Culture Shock

By STEVEN MOITY

SACLAY, France — Where are my keys, my wallet, my face mask, my backup face mask? Do I have my ID? Have I filled out paperwork describing where I'm going, and when, and why? Is my destination legal? Can I make it back in three hours or less?

I've spent most of the pandemic in New York, but a trip to visit family back home in Saclay, a small town outside Paris, has turned everything upside down. The French government has imposed far more restrictions to help curb coronavirus infections, regulating even something as simple as getting some fresh air.

The differences were evident even before I landed in Paris, when I was checking in for my Air France flight at John F. Kennedy International Airport. Unsurprisingly, I needed a negative coronavirus test and a statement swearing that I was not ill. But I also needed a form allowing me to travel from Paris-Charles de Gaulle Airport to a hotel near my parents' house to quarantine for a few days.

That paperwork is not only required for traveling from the airport. In fact, the form — an attestation, in French — is the new life-line to venturing outside of your home in France. You must fill it out on paper or on a mobile app and have it with you every time you leave home. Forget it and you face serious penalties that can reach six months imprisonment and a 3,750 euro fine (about \$4,500) on the third offense.

This is dramatically different from even the toughest lockdown measures I experienced in the spring in Brooklyn. Leaving my apartment in New York might have felt risky during the worst of the pandemic, but never illegal. I could walk or bike in parks for hours at any time of day, meet with friends outdoors, or go shopping at the other end of the city.

Here, in France, just having a bit of fun requires a big effort.

Until Nov. 28, I was not allowed to leave the house for more than an hour a day and could not travel farther than a kilometer from home without facing a fine. I could buy only essential items. Shops that sold nonessential goods were shut down. Those that normally sold a variety of goods could sell only items deemed necessary by the government — with other products off limits to customers. For example, I could buy a newspaper, but not a book. Construction materials, but not flowers.

Thankfully, those rules have eased somewhat, along with the spread of the virus. I can now go outdoors for three hours and travel 20 kilometers (almost 13 miles) from home, which feels liberating. Granted, we are still not allowed to meet people from other households in public spaces.

Still, even adhering conscientiously to the rules doesn't mean one will avoid an encounter with law enforcement, as happened to me one recent evening.

All I wanted to do was take a walk. The government says that's among the acceptable reasons to leave home. Among the others: buying groceries, picking up a



STEVEN MOITY/THE NEW YORK TIMES

Streets were empty this week in Jouy-en-Josas, in the southwestern suburbs of Paris. People must fill out forms before venturing out.



ANDREA MANTOVANI FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Police officers in Paris checking paperwork. They can fine or even jail people who don't have them.

child at school, helping a family member in dire need.

And it's still OK to walk at night, at least until next week. (On Thursday, the government announced that a new curfew from 8 p.m. to 6 a.m. would be imposed, beginning Dec. 15, but the attestation requirement would be revoked during the day.)

Before venturing out, I filled out the form with the day's date and the precise time I was leaving the

house. My sister and her husband joined me for the walk, both filling out their own certificates. We walked up a hill to the Plateau de Saclay to take in the lovely views of the nearby fields. This was before the recent loosening of restrictions, so we were allowed just one hour outdoors.

It was a spot I'd visited many times before with friends, often on bicycles, though that sort of outing remains off-limits for now.

Conflicting feelings of nostalgia, sadness and calm washed over me as I surveyed my old hometown, now quieter than ever.

There were barriers and chalk instructions on the sidewalk outside a community center, reminding people to social distance while waiting in line to get a coronavirus test, a constant reminder — even here, in a semirural place — of the pandemic.

And to my surprise, a police car

appeared out of the darkness. The cruiser approached slowly, its headlights a beacon in the dark, misty night.

We knew right away that the officers intended to do an identity check. They rolled down a window and called us over.

We pulled out our identifications and handed them over. The officers looked at our certificates and questioned us.

What were we doing outside during the lockdown? Where were we going? Where did we live?

They were trying to see if we had failed to respect the very specific rules allowing us to leave our home. We weren't doing anything wrong, but it was unnerving nonetheless. And elsewhere in the country, pandemic-related police stops are not always as smooth as ours.

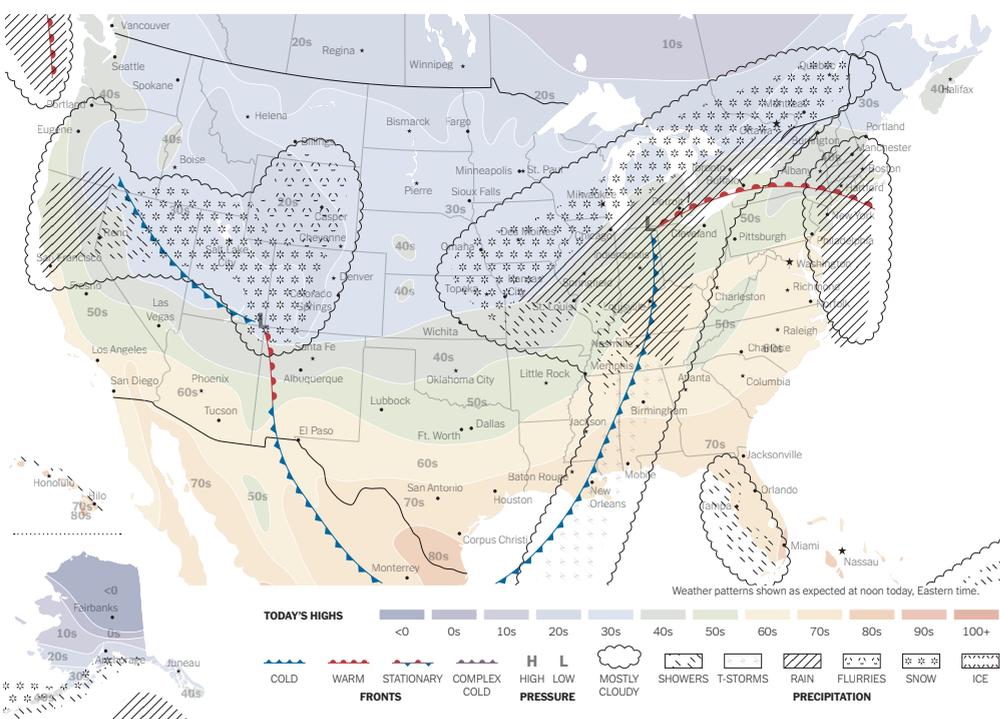
As the officers left, their greeting resounded in my ear: "Your attestation please" — a stark reminder that one's physical presence in the outside world is no longer normal or acceptable, but limited and codified by strict laws, even if temporary.

When I originally planned my trip home — last January — I imagined meeting friends at La Villette, a science museum, and eating in restaurants. I looked forward to the delicacies at L'imprévu bar in Paris and a show at the elegant MK2 movie theater along the Quai de Loire. I hoped to visit cousins in Lille, a city close to the Belgian border.

L'année prochaine peut-être?

Weather Report

Meteorology by **AccuWeather**



Highlight: Potential Northeast Snowstorm Next Week

There is the potential for a significant snowstorm across portions of the Northeast during the middle of next week. A storm is expected to strengthen along the North Carolina Coast on Wednesday and move northeast to just off the New England Coast. If this track remains, a major snowfall is possible from east-central Pennsylvania to New England into Thursday. Mostly rain is expected along the coast.



National Forecast

A storm system that began taking shape over the Plains on Friday will continue to move toward the Great Lakes region today. This storm will bring areas of rain, some heavy, to Illinois, Indiana, southern Michigan and Ohio before moving into Canada overnight.

On the northern side of the storm, several inches of snow is expected across Iowa, Wisconsin and northern Michigan, which can cause travel delays. Conditions will improve overnight as the storm moves away. Meanwhile, winds generally out of the south will keep high temperatures in much of the East above normal for the beginning of December.

In the West, the next storm system tracking through the region can produce snow in the higher elevations from California to Wyoming and Colorado.

Metropolitan Forecast

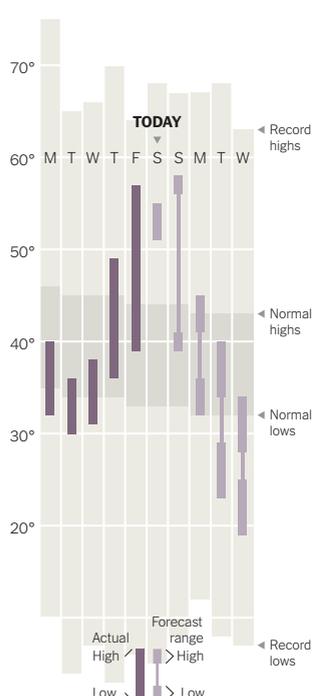
TODAYA little rain
High 54. An increase in moisture will result in plenty of clouds along with areas of fog. Rain moving northward will be far enough to the west to clip the area, bringing a couple of hours of damp weather.

TONIGHTMostly cloudy and mild
Low 42. Skies will be mostly cloudy as a front approaches from the west. A south-to-southwest breeze will keep temperatures nearly steady. A shower is possible.

TOMORROWDecreasing clouds
High 57. A push of drier air will come in behind the front. Although the morning will start with clouds, the rest of the day will be partly sunny. It will remain mild, with chillier air waiting until night.

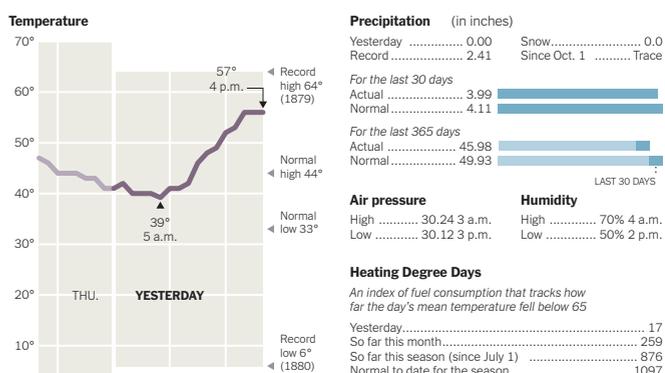
MONDAYFeeling chilly
A storm passing to the south will be far enough to the north to bring clouds. It can also bring a shower, though a northward shift could result in steadier rain. It will feel chilly.

TUESDAYSunny to partly cloudy
WEDNESDAYChillier
Tuesday will be sunny to partly cloudy. The high will be 40. A storm system will bring rain Wednesday. A shift in the storm track could make it could enough for some snow. The high will be 38.



Metropolitan Almanac

In Central Park, for the 16 hours ended at 4 p.m. yesterday.



Cities

High/low temperatures for the 16 hours ended at 4 p.m. yesterday, Eastern time, and precipitation (in inches) for the 16 hours ended at 4 p.m. yesterday. Expected conditions for today and tomorrow.

- C** Clouds
- F** Fog
- H** Haze
- I** Ice
- PC** Partly cloudy
- R** Rain
- Sh** Showers
- S** Sun
- SS** Snow showers
- T** Thunderstorms
- Tr** Trace
- W** Windy
- Not available

N.Y.C. region

City	Yesterday	Today	Tomorrow
New York City	57/39 0	54/52 R	57/40 PC
Bridgeport	51/28 0	52/48 R	57/39 PC
Caldwell	52/28 0	53/48 F	59/37 PC
Danbury	49/22 0	49/43 F	56/33 PC
Islip	56/26 0	55/48 R	57/38 C
Newark	54/31 0	54/50 R	57/39 PC
Trenton	53/28 0	50/50 F	50/38 PC
White Plains	50/28 0	51/47 R	54/37 PC

United States

City	Yesterday	Today	Tomorrow
Albany	45/32 0	40/38 F	48/32 C
Albuquerque	49/26 0.05	47/25 PC	42/21 S
Anchorage	15/10 0	18/15 PC	20/16 C
Atlanta	67/50 0	65/52 Sh	65/51 PC
Atlantic City	60/51 0	64/54 R	62/42 PC
Austin	76/47 0.16	69/46 S	70/35 W
Baltimore	59/44 0	61/51 C	61/40 PC
Baton Rouge	73/62 0	73/50 R	69/45 R
Birmingham	67/57 0	66/45 T	61/43 C
Boise	39/23 Tr	38/26 C	38/27 C
Boston	49/37 0	46/43 R	55/36 C
Buffalo	51/39 0	50/42 R	44/30 SS
Burlington	43/34 Tr	40/38 R	49/31 R
Casper	27/17 0.05	27/13 SS	32/23 W
Charlotte	65/46 0	65/53 C	69/47 PC
Chattanooga	66/52 0	63/44 R	62/41 C
Chicago	46/41 0.04	43/28 R	34/25 PC
Cincinnati	61/51 0	57/39 R	43/32 C
Cleveland	54/45 0	54/38 R	39/29 C
Colorado Springs	32/17 0.10	31/17 Sn	34/20 S
Columbus	59/47 0	56/39 R	42/31 C
Concord, N.H.	45/28 0	40/34 Sh	50/28 C
Dallas-Ft. Worth	69/41 1.18	57/40 S	48/32 Sh
Denver	29/17 0.10	32/13 Sn	39/21 S
Des Moines	40/29 0.09	35/19 Sn	32/17 S
Detroit	47/40 0	52/33 R	37/27 C
El Paso	61/38 0	64/40 S	55/25 W
Fargo	31/17 0	31/15 PC	33/6 Sn
Hartford	50/33 0	45/41 Sh	58/33 C
Honolulu	85/73 0	84/72 W	85/72 PC
Houston	73/58 0.30	71/51 PC	69/42 R
Indianapolis	59/51 0	56/33 R	41/25 C
Jackson	69/57 Tr	69/41 C	64/40 R
Jacksonville	71/48 0	73/56 C	76/58 PC
Kansas City	45/33 0.13	39/26 Sn	41/22 C
Key West	73/69 0.01	78/72 C	79/73 PC
Las Vegas	56/37 0	57/35 PC	52/34 PC
Lexington	62/51 0	58/38 R	45/33 C

Little Rock

City	Yesterday	Today	Tomorrow
Little Rock	63/43 0.37	55/33 PC	47/30 R
Los Angeles	61/47 0	65/49 S	70/48 S
Louisville	65/48 0	61/41 R	47/36 C
Memphis	66/54 0	58/37 PC	51/37 R
Miami	75/70 0	80/69 PC	82/67 PC
Milwaukee	43/38 0.62	39/28 Sn	34/23 PC
Mpls.-St. Paul	37/27 0	34/22 C	32/18 S
Nashville	67/56 0	67/38 R	53/37 C
New Orleans	73/64 0	73/56 T	69/48 R
Norfolk	66/55 0	67/56 C	66/47 PC
Oklahoma City	49/31 0.09	47/32 C	38/18 Sn
Omaha	38/28 0.05	35/16 C	36/16 S
Orlando	71/56 0	76/61 PC	79/61 PC
Philadelphia	57/45 0	60/52 F	60/40 PC
Phoenix	65/48 0	67/47 S	66/44 S
Pittsburgh	59/41 0	55/43 Sh	45/32 C
Portland, Me.	43/30 0	40/35 R	45/33 C
Portland, Ore.	43/30 0.37	44/39 C	45/41 R
Providence	52/39 0	50/47 R	58/35 C
Raleigh	64/46 0	67/53 C	68/48 PC
Reno	58/38 0	46/31 Sh	55/30 R
Richmond	63/50 0	65/53 C	67/43 PC
Rochester	52/37 0	48/44 R	46/30 W
Sacramento	56/46 Tr	56/46 C	58/41 R
Salt Lake City	36/27 0.01	34/18 SS	37/26 C
San Antonio	75/50 0.08	73/49 S	72/35 Sh
San Diego	63/48 0	64/48 R	71/48 R
San Francisco	56/51 0.01	60/52 C	60/47 R
San Jose	57/47 0.01	61/51 C	62/48 R
San Juan	82/75 0.10	84/74 Sh	84/74 PC
Seattle	46/34 0.08	45/38 C	47/41 R
St. Louis	59/49 0.10	49/35 S	35/29 SS
St. Thomas	82/76 0.23	84/75 Sh	84/74 PC
Syracuse	49/36 0	47/44 F	48/32 C
Tampa	72/58 0.03	76/64 Sh	78/64 PC
Toledo	53/43 0	56/35 S	40/29 C
Tucson	65/40 0	68/39 S	65/40 S
Tulsa	57/36 0.12	47/33 C	42/25 Sn
Virginia Beach	65/54 0.10	69/54 S	68/49 PC
Washington	59/48 0	62/53 C	62/42 PC
Wichita	44/33 0.03	40/29 C	40/19 Sn
Wilmington, Del.	54/44 0	60/49 F	59/38 PC

New Delhi

City	Yesterday	Today	Tomorrow
New Delhi	77/53 0	74/50 C	74/45 PC
Riyadh	70/49 0	67/48 S	69/49 S
Seoul	48/29 0.16	43/28 S	38/15 Sn
Shanghai	53/48 0	55/42 PC	55/37 PC
Singapore	88/75 0.15	86/77 T	87/77 C
Sydney	66/59 0.02	71/58 PC	75/64 PC
Taipei City	70/66 0.36	69/62 C	72/62 PC
Tehran	45/31 0	45/31 PC	46/34 PC
Tokyo	57/47 0	58/48 PC	57/49 C

Europe

City	Yesterday	Today	Tomorrow
Amsterdam	40/31 0.60	46/42 R	46/42 C
Athens	59/48 0.66	63/56 Sh	63/54 R
Berlin	35/28 0	39/30 C	38/34 C
Brussels	44/32 0.37	47/39 R	45/43 C
Budapest	38/33 0	40/35 C	44/31 C
Copenhagen	38/35 0.01	41/38 C	41/38 C
Dublin	48/44 0.09	44/37 PC	53/44 R
Edinburgh	48/38 0.08	47/38 R	47/38 R
Frankfurt	39/30 0.08	44/39 Sh	46/37 C
Geneva	34/28 0.22	42/37 R	43/34 C
Helsinki	34/26 0.04	36/25 Sh	27/25 C
Istanbul	61/53 0.11	60/51 C	62/52 C
Kiev	32/26 0.06	29/28 Sn	35/31 C
Lisbon	62/59 0.16	64/57 S	62/58 Sh
London	52/45 0.40	49/35 C	52/49 R
Madrid	63/52 0.28	58/36 C	53/47 PC
Moscow	26/14 0	23/17 S	27/25 SS
Nice	47/41 0.16	54/43 Sh	59/44 S
Oslo	32/29 0.17	32/31 SS	32/30 C
Paris	52/41 0.46	51/37 Sh	46/45 C
Rome	59/33 0	37/32 C	41/32 C
Rosario	54/43 0	54/40 Sh	56/39 PC
St. Petersburg	31/19 0.03	34/21 C	28/22 C
Stockholm	32/23 0.13	40/36 Sh	37/34 C
Vienna	38/33 0	38/34 C	42/34 C
Warsaw	37/33 0	38/35 C	38/32 C

North America

City	Yesterday	Today	Tomorrow
Acapulco	87/74 0	88/73 S	88/73 S
Bermuda	69/64 0	72/67 PC	73/68 PC
Edmonton	17/1 0	19/11 PC	4/1 3 PC
Guadalajara	79/45 0.04	81/48 PC	81/49 S
Havana	79/48 0	83/63 PC	84/63 S
Kingston	86/75 0.06	86/74 S	87/73 S
Martinique	86/73 0.02	86/73 PC	86/73 Sh
Mexico City	75/52 0	75/49 PC	77/49 S
Monterrey	83/62 0	77/50 PC	86/39 PC
Montreal	40/29 Tr	35/33 Sn	40/27 Sh
Nassau	77/64 0	79/71 PC	80/69 PC
Panama City	88/73 0.06	89/74 PC	88/73 S
Quebec City	32/24 0	31/26 Sn	32/22 Sn
Santo Domingo	86/70 0.02	86/70 PC	86/70 PC
Toronto	46/34 0	44/38 R	40/29 C
Vancouver	43/38 0.19	42/35 PC	43/39 R
Winnipeg	29/20 0	25/18 PC	22/3 Sn

South America

City	Yesterday	Today	Tomorrow
Buenos Aires	83/61 0.06	85/66 S	76/61 PC
Caracas	87/73 0	87/73 Sh	87/74 T
Lima	73/65 0	75/66 C	75/66 C
Quito	65/50 0.17	67/51 R	67/49 R
Recife	84/77 0.02	83/77 PC	84/77 PC
Rio de Janeiro	83/73 0	83/75 Sh	87/76 T
Santiago	86/49 0	86/54 PC	89/56 S

Recreational Forecast



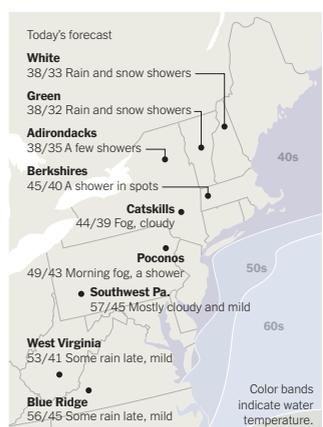
Boating

From Montauk Point to Sandy Hook, N.J., out to 20 nautical miles, including Long Island Sound and New York Harbor. Waves will be 1 foot or less on New York Harbor and on Long Island Sound and 2-3 feet on the ocean. Visibility 1 mile or less in areas of fog.

High Tides

Location	Time
Atlantic City	4:59 a.m. 5:19 p.m.
Barneget Inlet	5:12 a.m. 5:34 p.m.
The Battery	5:47 a.m. 6:09 p.m.
Beach Haven	6:37 a.m. 6:58 p.m.
Bridgeport	8:42 a.m. 9:15 p.m.
City Island	8:49 a.m. 9:29 p.m.
Fire Island Lt.	6:05 a.m. 6:28 p.m.
Montauk Point	8:23 a.m. 8:48 p.m.
Northport	8:54 a.m. 9:31 p.m.
Port Washington	9:04 a.m. 9:46 p.m.
Sandy Hook	5:19 a.m. 5:40 p.m.
Shinnecock Inlet	5:02 a.m. 5:26 p.m.
Stamford	8:47 a.m. 9:24 p.m.
Tarrytown	7:36 a.m. 7:58 p.m.
Willetts Point	8:49 a.m. 9:28 p.m.

Mountain and Ocean Temperatures



Showers will move in today from the Adirondacks through northern New England, mixed with some snow in a few areas. Despite clouds, areas farther to the south through the Blue Ridge and West Virginia mountains will be dry and mild. Snow will increase in the north tomorrow as rain spreads east in the south.

The New York Times

There's no business like this business.

Truck Plows Into Cyclists, Killing Five In Nevada

Four others were injured in the crash.

By MICHAEL LEVENSON

It was an annual tradition, a 130-mile ride on long stretches of highway from the M Resort Spa Casino in Henderson, Nev., through Searchlight to Nipton, Calif., and back.

But at 9:39 a.m. on Thursday, about 40 miles into the ride, a box truck slammed into the group of about 20 cyclists as they rode on the shoulder of U.S. 95 in Clark County, just north of Searchlight, according to the Nevada Highway Patrol.

Five cyclists were killed and four were injured, including one who was in critical condition, the Highway Patrol said.

The Highway Patrol said investigators did not know why the truck had plowed into the group but said the driver had left the roadway, hit the group from behind and then struck a Subaru hatchback that was accompanying the cyclists and another group of cyclists that was in front of the Subaru.

"Three were dead instantly, as you could tell from their bodies,"

'I watched two die in front of me. I have been crying all day.'

Michael Anderson, who had organized the ride and was cycling ahead of his friends when they were hit, said in a phone interview. "I watched two die in front of me. I have been crying all day."

Trooper Travis Smaka, a Highway Patrol spokesman, said the driver had stayed at the scene of the crash and was cooperating with the investigation.

Investigators do not believe that the driver was impaired by alcohol or drugs, and no charges have been filed as the investigation continues, he said.

The authorities have not released the names of the four men and one woman who were killed or the name of the driver. The speed limit on that portion of the highway is 75 m.p.h.

Mr. Anderson said the cyclists had split into two groups — with stronger riders ahead of the car that was accompanying them and slower riders drafting behind it — when the truck slammed into the group that was trailing the car.

He said he had been in the group ahead of the car and was told by a passing driver that the cyclists behind him had been hit.

"We turned around and went back, and that's when all hell broke loose — when I saw my friends all over the road," Mr. Anderson said.

Mr. Anderson, who retired last month after 22 years with the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department, said he had responded to crashes before, but nothing like this one.

"I felt helpless that my friends were literally there, shredded," he said. "I can't think of a more devastating crash ever here."

Clay Weeks, who works at Pro Cyclery, a bike shop in Las Vegas, said he knew some of the riders that were in the group, including a mechanic who works at the store who was unharmed but "very emotionally hurt."

"It's a road that typically would be safe," Mr. Weeks said. "The shoulder is plenty wide to ride out there. It's not a narrow, sketchy road."

He said news of the crash had traveled quickly through the close-knit cycling community.

"Everyone is just devastated," he said. "Hopefully this opens eyes for people and will make them more vigilant of cyclists on the road because stuff like this happens way too often in the community."

Bicycle rides account for only 1 percent of all trips in the United States, but cyclists face a higher risk of crash-related injuries and death than people in cars and trucks, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Last year, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration reported that more pedestrians and cyclists had been killed in 2018 in the United States than in any year since 1990.

The number of pedestrians killed grew by 3.4 percent in 2018, to 6,283, and the number of cyclists killed rose by 6.3 percent, to 857, even as total traffic deaths decreased, the agency said. On average, about 17 pedestrians and two cyclists were killed each day in crashes.

Yang Takes Steps Toward Run for Mayor of New York City

By EMMA G. FITZSIMMONS

Andrew Yang, the former tech executive who gained a national following as a Democratic presidential candidate, has been privately telling New York City leaders that he intends to run for mayor next year.

Mr. Yang is not expected to announce his bid until next month, but with the Democratic primary less than seven months away, he has begun to make overtures to several of the city's political power brokers.

He met with Corey Johnson, the speaker of the City Council, in a video call on Tuesday to seek his advice about running for mayor.

He plans to visit the Rev. Al Sharpton, the Harlem kingmaker — a rite of passage for any serious candidate — in person next week when he returns to the city from Georgia, where he has been trying to help Democrats win the U.S. Senate.

He has enlisted Bradley Tusk and Chris Coffey, prominent political strategists who worked for former Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg, as advisers.

Mr. Yang, whose presidential campaign was centered around offering every American a universal basic income, could shake up a race that has a large field of candidates and no clear front-runner.

He would be only the second Asian-American candidate to run for mayor and appear on the ballot, following a bid in 2013 by John Liu, a state senator from Queens who was then the city's comptroller. Eric Adams, a J.P. Morgan executive who led NYC Votes, the Campaign Finance Board's voter outreach program, is also planning to run.

Mr. Yang, who has temporarily relocated to Georgia to campaign for the Rev. Raphael Warnock and Jon Ossoff — both facing runoffs next month for U.S. Senate seats — declined to say on Thursday if he was running for mayor.

"I'm thrilled that people seem excited about my doing what I can to help, but no, right now I'm focused on these Senate races in Georgia," he said in an interview.

While his name recognition and fund-raising potential could easily put him in the top tier of mayoral candidates, Mr. Yang has never run for office in New York City. He will have to learn quickly about the thorny issues that can animate voters, from rezoning proposals for the SoHo and Flushing, Queens, neighborhoods to the debate over the admissions exam for the city's elite high schools that has pitted some Asian-American families against Black and Hispanic students.

At the same time, celebrity sta-

Dana Rubinstein contributed reporting.



Andrew Yang campaigned for the White House earlier this year, giving him an edge in name recognition and fund-raising potential.

tus and Twitter buzz do not always translate into votes in New York — Cynthia Nixon gained a lot of attention but not enough voters in her failed run for governor in 2018.

Mr. Yang will also be jockeying for endorsements along with more than a dozen candidates, some of whom have been courting elected officials and unions for years in anticipation of Mayor Bill de Blasio's exit next year because of term limits.

Two candidates have been mainstays in New York politics: Eric Adams, the Brooklyn borough president, and Scott Stringer, the city comptroller. Others are positioning themselves as outsiders, including Raymond J. McGuire, a business executive, and Maya Wiley, a lawyer and former MSNBC analyst.

And on Thursday, Representative Max Rose, who lost his re-election bid last month and was said to be interested in joining the mayor's race, registered a mayoral campaign committee with the city's Campaign Finance Board.

The pandemic has reshaped the mayor's race, and the candidates are all trying to argue that they are the best qualified to help the city recover. The field is also perhaps the most diverse ever, including several Black and Latino

candidates.

Mr. Yang, who was born in upstate New York, has spent most of his adult life living in the Hell's Kitchen neighborhood of Manhattan. He gained attention on the campaign trail with his MATH slogan — "Make America Think Harder" — and amassed 1.8 million followers on Twitter and nearly \$40 million in campaign contributions.

His campaign to give every American adult \$1,000 a month as part of a universal basic income mandate could be even more popular after many people relied on the federal stimulus to help survive the economic losses of the pandemic, said Susan Kang, a political science professor at John Jay College of Criminal Justice and a member of the Democratic Socialists of America.

"His brand is very zeitgeisty in many ways," she said. "He's made a name for himself by promoting universal programs at a time when everyone needs universal programs."

Earlier this year, Mr. Yang did not rule out a run in an interview with The New York Times.

"Certainly the mayor of New York City can do a lot of good," he said. "So that is something that I have to take a long look at."

Not long after, Mr. Yang publicly flirted with the idea of running for mayor, but his deliberations have recently grown more serious. He spoke with Mr. Johnson, who dropped out of the mayor's race in September after struggling with depression.

He also called Representative Grace Meng from Queens, the first Asian-American member of the state's congressional delegation and a top official for the Democratic National Committee. The

A former presidential candidate's bid could shake up the field.

conversations were confirmed by two people who were familiar with them, but who were not authorized to discuss them publicly.

A spokeswoman for Mr. Sharpton, Rachel Noerdlinger, confirmed his plans to meet with Mr. Yang next week.

Mr. Tusk was a campaign manager for Mr. Bloomberg in 2009 and has been a prominent critic of Mr. de Blasio. In 2016, a year before Mr. de Blasio won re-election,

Mr. Tusk led a public search for a Democratic candidate to unseat him.

After leaving the presidential race, Mr. Yang, who led a test-prep company and a nonprofit organization, created Humanity Forward, a New York-based nonprofit that is distributing money to needy families in the Bronx.

Mr. Yang performed well in a recent poll, receiving 20 percent of support as the top choice among 1,000 likely Democratic primary voters, compared with 14 percent for Mr. Adams and 11 percent for Mr. Stringer. The poll was conducted by Slingshot Strategies, a political firm that has worked for candidates like Jumaane Williams, the city's public advocate. Mr. Yang did not hire the firm; a private client did, according to the firm.

"It's always encouraging when people are excited about you," Mr. Yang said of the poll results.

The race for an executive job like mayor often comes down to personality, rather than policies, and Mr. Yang, like all the candidates, will have to establish an emotional relationship with voters, Professor Kang said.

"To what extent can he project warmth, humor and competence?" she asked.

After Losing House Seat, Democrat Eyes City Hall

By ED SHANAHAN

Representative Max Rose, the Staten Island Democrat who was soundly defeated last month in his bid for a second term, signaled on Thursday that he plans to enter an already crowded field in the 2021 mayor's race in New York City.

The evidence of Mr. Rose's intentions came in a bare-bones filing with the city's Campaign Finance Board indicating that he had formed a mayoral campaign committee.

Neither Mr. Rose nor anyone associated with him returned calls seeking comment on the filing. But the congressman did post a cryptic message on Twitter at around 7:30 p.m. that appeared to telegraph an imminent announcement.

He cited Taylor Swift, who announced on Thursday that a new album was forthcoming, saying that the singer was "not the only one previewing news tonight."

"Stay tuned NYC!" he added. The social media tease notwithstanding, Mr. Rose's filing brought him a significant step closer to vying to become the next mayor of a city that is facing huge challenges caused by the pandemic and the financial crisis it touched off.

Several of his congressional allies had suggested they expected him to join the race after losing his re-election bid to Nicole Mallio-

Katie Glueck contributed reporting.

takis, a Republican member of the State Assembly, in a district that encompasses parts of South Brooklyn in addition to Staten Island — the city's most conservative congressional district.

Ms. Malliotakis, who has been resolute in her support for President Trump throughout his term and re-election campaign, claimed 53 percent of the vote to Mr. Rose's 47 percent. And although The Associated Press did not declare her the winner until Dec. 1, Mr. Rose had conceded defeat two weeks earlier.

Mr. Rose had been far more reluctant himself to criticize Mr. Trump than many of his Democratic colleagues. In April, he went so far as to say that it would be all right with him if the president won re-election if it was because he had reined in the pandemic. He also initially opposed the move to impeach Mr. Trump, but ultimately voted for impeachment.

In a nod to the district's conservative tilt, Mr. Rose, who won election in 2018 by a margin similar to the one he lost by this year, effectively ran his centrist campaign against two opponents: Ms. Malliotakis and Mayor Bill de Blasio.

He did not waste words in criticizing Mr. de Blasio, referring to his fellow Democrat in a memorable six-second ad as "the worst mayor in the history of New York City."

capacity, not 20 percent, after the state modified the original stay-at-home order.

Errors are corrected during the press run whenever possible, so some errors noted here may not have appeared in all editions.

Editorials: letters@nytimes.com
Newspaper Delivery: customer@nytimes.com or call 1-800-NYTIMES (1-800-698-4637).



Representative Max Rose of Staten Island filed paperwork for a mayoral campaign committee.

Mr. Rose also attended a June demonstration on Staten Island to protest the police killing of George Floyd. Ms. Malliotakis made his participation in the event a focal point in the campaign as she sought to cast him as supporting calls to "defund the police" in a district that is home to many law enforcement officers.

He said he had taken part in the protest as a gesture of unity, and stood by his decision to do so on election night even as defeat loomed.

Mr. Rose, 34, is among several well-known Democrats who have been rumored to be considering joining a field that already includes more than a dozen candidates, with nearly half viewed as potentially serious contenders.

Others who may be set to enter the fray include Andrew Yang, a technology entrepreneur who ran unsuccessfully for the Democratic presidential nomination this year, and Christine Quinn, the former City Council speaker, who placed third in the Democratic mayoral primary in 2013.

It is unclear how Mr. Rose's political persona would play in the mayoral campaign. His positions

were on the liberal side for his district but might not be liberal enough to win over a plurality of mainstream Democrats in a city-wide primary.

On the flip side, several leading candidates are already battling for those voters, and Mr. Rose, a U.S. Army veteran who served in Afghanistan, might appeal to more conservative voters who consider law and order a priority at a time when homicides and shootings are rising in the city.

One quality that he would bring to a race that will most likely be expensive is a proven ability to raise money: He collected, and spent, more than \$9 million for his re-election campaign, federal campaign finance filings show.

Mr. Rose's filing came amid a flurry of activity in the race, arriving the same day that another Democratic mayoral hopeful, Kathryn Garcia, the city's former sanitation commissioner, formally announced her candidacy, and two days after Shaun Donovan, a former top housing official in the Obama administration, did the same.

They and the other contenders are competing to lead a city that is

in the midst of one of its most wrenching and consequential periods in recent history.

The coronavirus, which has already been linked to the deaths of more than 24,000 residents, is surging again. On Staten Island, emergency hospital beds were added in November to handle a spike in virus cases.

RELIGIOUS SERVICES

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WESTBURY, L.I., N.Y. 11590
TEL: (516) 333-6470

TRADITIONAL LATIN MASS

AS WAS OFFERED BY THE LATE FATHER GOMMAR A. DE PAUW
SUNDAY MASS @ 9 a.m.
FIRST SATURDAYS & HOLY DAYS @ 9:30 a.m.

DAILY: RADIO MASS
VIDEO: INTERNET MASS
www.latinmass-cjm.org
Facebook: Ave Maria-Chapel

Corrections

TRACKING AN OUTBREAK

An article on Tuesday about the latest lockdown in California misstated the capacity at which supermarkets can operate under new coronavirus restrictions. They can operate with 35 percent

Contact the Newsroom: nytimes@nytimes.com or call 1-844-NYT-NEWS (1-844-698-6397).

Opinion

The New York Times

EDITORIAL

Republicans Who Embraced Nihilism



JORDAN GALE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

What is left to say about a political party that would throw out millions of votes?

The substance of a lawsuit filed by the State of Texas, and backed by more than 17 other states, would be laughable were it not so dangerous. Texas' attorney general, Ken Paxton — who is under indictment for securities fraud — asked the Supreme Court to overturn the results of the presidential election in four other states. As a legal matter, this is the rough equivalent of objecting on the grounds that the other side is winning. As political rhetoric, however, it is incendiary.

The Supreme Court was right to toss out the lawsuit. But that the party tried and failed doesn't make the attempt any less odious. There are a lot of Republican leaders who, the history books will record, wanted it to succeed.

What makes this entire episode so sad is that the nation needs a vibrant, honest, patriotic opposition party. A party that argues in good faith to win more votes the next time around. Many Republicans, particularly at the state and local level, stood tall and proud against the worst instincts of the national party.

The health of a democracy rests on public confidence that elections are free and fair. Questioning the integrity of an election is a matter of the utmost seriousness. By doing so without offering any evidence, Mr. Paxton and his collaborators have disgraced themselves. Attorneys general are sworn to uphold the rule of law.

At least 126 Republican members of Congress — more than half of all House Republicans — rushed to sign a court filing endorsing the Texas lawsuit. That misuse of the legal system was not restricted to the fringes of the party. The minority leader, Representative Kevin McCarthy of California, said Friday that his name was inadvertently omitted from the original list.

It is particularly astonishing that 17 of the House signatories were elected by voters in the states whose election results Texas was seeking to invalidate. They signed a letter directly challenging the legitimacy of their own victories and the integrity of their own states' elections.

These lawmakers were humiliating themselves to conciliate President Trump, a man who once created a coat of arms for himself emblazoned with the words *Numquam Concedere* — never concede. Mr. Trump, not a man to often place the national interest above his own personal interests, is pursuing a series of increasingly desperate strategies to overturn the election results and remain in power. Having failed to convince the voters, he is now pressing state legislators, the courts and Congress to defy the will of the people as well. That the attacks on Mr. Biden's victory are unlikely to succeed is a very cold bowl of comfort.

Republicans are establishing a new standard for elections that anything short of a fight to the death amounts to not trying hard enough. The old norm of graceful concession

was not just an act of good manners. A concession has no legal force, but it has considerable value as an affirmation that the democratic process is more important than the result.

Conceding leaves the nation's political and social systems functional for the winner.

This new policy of election denialism, by contrast, is the latest manifestation of the Republican Party's increasingly anti-democratic tendencies. Rather than campaigning on issues that appeal to a majority of the electorate, the party has made a strategy out of voter suppression. Seeking to toss votes after the fact is a logical if perverse extension of that strategy. So is the growing willingness of Republican Party officials to deny the legitimacy of their opponents.

This isn't really about Mr. Trump anymore. He lost, and his ruinous tenure will soon be over. This is now about the corruption of a political party whose leaders are guided by the fear of Mr. Trump rather than the love of this country — and who are falling into dangerous habits.

The events of recent weeks have demonstrated the strength and resilience of the election system. A larger share of American adults voted in the 2020 presidential election than in any previous cycle. The votes were counted, sometimes more than once. The results were certified. In the states that have attracted the particular ire of Mr. Trump and his allies, most officials, including most Republican officials, defended the integrity of the results.

But the incendiaries are playing a dangerous game. They are battering public trust and raising doubts about the legitimacy of future elections. Most of it is political theater: Mr. Biden's decisive victory is difficult to overturn. But a great many voters trust their political leaders, they don't expect to be lied to, they aren't in on the grift.

It is also a short walk from rhetorical attacks on the legitimacy of the election to denying the legitimacy of Mr. Biden's administration. Republicans are certainly within their rights to disagree with Mr. Biden and to challenge the decisions made by his administration, but those who refuse to accept his victory are undermining the rule of law. Those who stand silent are complicit.

The implications of this assault on truth and trust extend well beyond elections. We are in the midst of a public health emergency. Lives depend on the government's ability to shape public behavior, including by persuading people to get vaccinated. By denying the authority of those who govern, Republicans are placing lives in danger.

They can now demonstrate a modicum of their professed patriotism by mustering the courage to say four simple words, "Congratulations, President-elect Biden."

If they can't bring themselves to do that, where does a party that rejects democracy go from here?

LETTERS

Shaming People for Their Covid Choices

TO THE EDITOR:

Re "Stop the Covid Shaming" (Op-Ed, Dec. 5):

Dr. Aaron E. Carroll doesn't seem to grasp the severity of the situation. We are not just faced with a virus, but with the worst worldwide public health crisis since 1918. Sadly, a good portion of the American public doesn't have the wits or the attention span to take responsibility for their own health or that of their fellow Americans.

Responsibility for the common good is not encouraged by the egocentric culture in this country. Donald Trump and his cohort have encouraged ego and self-interest even further, to the point of gross negligence.

In light of that, we may have to resort to Covid shaming, mandatory regulations and hefty fines to bring people to their senses.

SABINE THOMAS, NEW YORK

TO THE EDITOR:

To Aaron E. Carroll's understandable public health plea against excessive "shaming" and "scolding" of ill-informed Covid deniers I would respond: Why, then, do we shame (and fine monetarily or with other penalties, even jail) people for speeding, not wearing seatbelts, smoking in public facilities, cheating on tax returns and college exams, or lying under oath? Does "shame" have no place anymore in our society?

TY GELTMAKER
WEST HOLLYWOOD, CALIF.

TO THE EDITOR:

Thank you, Aaron Carroll, for a thoughtful, compassionate column

Beyond the Bob Dylan Deal

TO THE EDITOR:

Re "A Bard With a Business Side: Dylan Sells His Iconic Catalog" (front page, Dec. 8):

As board members of the Artist Rights Alliance, a nonprofit advocating for fair compensation for working musicians and songwriters, we can attest that online streaming hasn't "helped lift the entire music market." It has instead concentrated new revenues at a handful of major labels, publishers and superstars who operate at scale while most artists and songwriters struggle to build sustainable careers, even those who receive substantial airplay and critical acclaim.

That's why the Artist Rights Alliance and our peer creators' organizations continue to fight for higher baseline royalties and more equitable rules of the digital road on major platforms like Spotify and YouTube, and growing ones like Twitch, which continues to refuse to license or pay for most of the music on which its success is built.

Bob Dylan is a unique and historic genius, and we celebrate his musical greatness, as well as his continuing economic success. But if today's artists and songwriters can't capture a fair and sustainable share of the economic value their work creates, we risk a world in which the next Bob Dylan never gets heard at all.

IVAN BARIAS
ROSANNE CASH
THOMAS MANZI

The letter was also signed by four other members on the board of the Artist Rights Alliance. The full list is at letters@nytimes.com.

about people who make choices different from our own. Dr. Carroll reminds us that we have no idea why people make the choices they do, whether traveling over Thanksgiving or failing to social distance. Those who scold and blame may enjoy the feeling of righteousness, but actually further the divide we desperately want to narrow.

We are all flawed, failing and struggling with choices we must make.

PEGGY BARNHART, ST. LOUIS

TO THE EDITOR:

This is a pandemic the likes of which most of us have never experienced in our lifetime. Never, except in wartime, has it been more important to be a good citizen.

Whether some people's feelings are hurt when they are criticized for reckless behavior seems immaterial to our efforts to control this virus. And that will happen only if most of us tolerate inconvenience for everyone's benefit.

RAE KOSHETZ, NEW YORK

Faces of the Pandemic

TO THE EDITOR:

Re "The Epicenter" (special section, Dec. 6):

The profiles of the victims of the coronavirus in several neighborhoods in Queens turned cold statistics into flesh and blood innocent individuals who were struck down pitilessly by an invisible foe.

The writers of the article, Dan Barry and Annie Correal, made tangible the fear, suffering and anguish of loved ones who mourned, of overwhelmed but heroic hospital staff going beyond their endurance as they struggled to rescue patients from a disease they didn't yet understand, and the will of survivors to somehow go on after devastating loss.

The story bore witness to the worth and dignity of each of those depicted in this beautiful tribute. Thank you.

CARYLE KATZ, OCEANSIDE, N.Y.

Fixing a Broken Senate

TO THE EDITOR:

Re "'The Senate Is Broken,' Udall Says in Farewell" (news article, Dec. 9):

Senator Tom Udall is right to criticize the filibuster as an intractable obstacle to desperately needed legislation to address a host of issues, including the coronavirus and climate emergencies. Senators should replace the 60-vote hurdle with a majoritarian decision rule of 51 votes.

Other reforms are needed, too. The power of the majority leader has evolved to allow an authoritarian refusal by only one person to stop proposed legislation from moving forward to a vote. The tradition of a lock-step seniority system for the selection of committee chairs is also a relic.

Senators should reclaim their power to make democracy work again by changing their own rules.

ERIC W. ORTS, PHILADELPHIA

The writer is a professor of legal studies and business ethics at the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania.

JAMELLE BOUIE

The 'Trump Won' Farce Isn't Funny Anymore

TO TELL A JOKE to a crowd is to learn a little something about the people who laugh.

For our purposes, the "joke" is President Trump's ongoing fight to overturn the election results and hold on to power against the wishes of most Americans, including those in enough states to equal far more than the 270 electoral votes required to win the White House.

"#OVERTURN," he said on Twitter this week, adding in a separate post that "if somebody cheated in the Election, which the Democrats did, why wouldn't the Election be immediately overturned? How can a Country be run like this?"

Unfortunately for Trump, and fortunately for the country, he has not been able to bend reality to his desires. Key election officials and federal judges have refused his call to throw out votes, create chaos and clear a path for the "autogolpe" he hopes to accomplish.

The military has also made clear where it stands. "We do not take an oath to a king or a queen, a tyrant or a dictator. We do not take an oath to an individual," Gen. Mark A. Milley, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said in a speech not

long after the election.

But there are others who have chosen to support the president's attack on American democracy. They refuse to acknowledge the president's defeat, back lawsuits to throw out the results, and spread lies about voter fraud and election malfeasance to Republican voters. They are laughing at Trump's joke, not realizing (or not caring) that their laughter is infectious.

What was a legal effort by the Trump campaign, next became one by Texas, which petitioned the Supreme Court to scrap election results in Georgia, Michigan, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin, depriving Joe Biden of his victory. On Friday, the court dismissed the case, saying Texas lacked the standing to pursue its effort.

Filed by Ken Paxton, Texas's attorney general, the suit said it would be a violation of due process to accept the outcome in those states, on account of "election irregularities" and "interstate differences in the treatment of voters" that disadvantage Republican voters in areas with stricter voting rules.

This lawsuit rested on the novel argument that the Constitution gives exclu-

sive and unquestioned authority to state legislatures to appoint presidential electors as they see fit and renders any action to expand voting without direct legislative consent unconstitutional. The Supreme Court had already rejected that argument once this week when it turned away a similar lawsuit by the Trump

Republicans argue that elections are legitimate only when they win.

campaign to overturn the results in Pennsylvania.

Regardless, on Wednesday, 17 Republican attorneys general filed a brief in support of Texas, urging the court, in essence, to cancel the election and hand power back to Trump. The next day, more than 100 Republican members of Congress filed a brief in support of this lawsuit, in effect declaring allegiance to Trump over the Constitution and urging the court to end self-government in the name of "the framers."

There's a paradox here. This sloppy, harebrained lawsuit had no serious chance of success. Granting Texas (and, by extension Trump, who joined the lawsuit) its relief would have plunged the country into abject chaos, with violence sure to follow. That this quest was quixotic was, in all likelihood, one reason it had so much support.

It is only with the knowledge of certain defeat that Republican officeholders felt comfortable plowing forward with an effort that would have torn the United States apart if it had succeeded. They could play politics with constitutional government (Paxton, for instance, hopes to succeed Greg Abbott as governor of Texas) knowing that the Supreme Court was not going to risk it all for Donald Trump.

Then again, it was only two weeks before Election Day that four of the court's conservatives announced their potential willingness to throw out votes on the basis of this theory of state legislative supremacy over electoral votes. It is very easy to imagine a world in which the election was a little closer, where the outcome came down to one state instead of three or four, and the court's conserva-

tives could have used the conflict over a narrow margin to hand the president a second term.

With no evidence that Republicans have really thought about the implications of a victory in the courts, I think we can say that these briefs and lawsuits were part of a performance.

The Republican Party, or much of it, has abandoned whatever commitment to electoral democracy it had to start. It views defeat on its face as illegitimate, a product of fraud by opponents who don't deserve to hold power. It is fully the party of minority rule, committed to the idea that a vote doesn't count if it isn't for its candidates, and that if democracy won't serve its partisan and ideological interests, then so much for democracy.

None of this is new — there is a whole tradition of reactionary, counter-majoritarian thought in American politics to which the conservative movement is heir — but it is the first time since the 1850s that these ideas have nearly captured an entire political party.

And while the future is unwritten, the events of the past month make me worry that we're following a script the climax of which requires a disaster. □

MICHELLE GOLDBERG

Why Trump Cronies Get Covid Meds

ACCORDING TO A DOCUMENT from the Department of Health and Human Services, a total of 108 doses of Regeneron's monoclonal antibody cocktail have been allocated to Washington, which had 265 new coronavirus cases on Wednesday alone. Somehow Rudy Giuliani, Donald Trump's lawyer, got one of those doses. In an interview with a New York radio station on Tuesday, Giuliani did us all the favor of explaining why he qualified for privileged treatment.

"I had very mild symptoms," he told the radio station, WABC. "I think if it wasn't me, I wouldn't have been put in the hospital. Sometimes when you're a celebrity, they're worried if something happens to you; they're going to examine it more carefully and do everything right." He said on another show on the same station that the president's physician was involved in his care.

Giuliani, of course, is not the only presidential crony to get access to highly rationed experimental therapies. Trump himself was among the very first people to get the Regeneron treatment outside of a clinical trial, before it received an emergency use authorization from the F.D.A. on Nov. 21.

In October, Chris Christie, the former New Jersey governor and an informal adviser to the president, got a different monoclonal antibody treatment, one produced by Eli Lilly. Housing Secretary Ben Carson wrote on Facebook that Trump "cleared" him to receive monoclonal antibody therapy when he was hospitalized with Covid-19 last month.

Some of these men received their treatments before they were available to the public. Giuliani may have gotten his *instead* of a member of the public. His case sheds light on two kinds of corruption. There's the corruption of an administration that appears to be using government power to procure potentially lifesaving favors for the president's friends. And there's the corruption of a for-profit medical system in which V.I.P. patients can receive extraordinary levels of care, sometimes at the expense of the less connected.

Both the Regeneron and Eli Lilly therapies are meant for people who are at risk of getting sick enough with Covid to be hospitalized, not those who are hospitalized already.

A physician with experience administering the new monoclonal antibodies, who didn't want to use his name because he's not authorized by his hospital to speak publicly, said giving them to Giuliani "appears to be an inappropriate use outside the guidelines of the E.U.A. for a very scarce resource." Very scarce indeed: According to the Department of Health and Human Services, as of Wednesday the entire country had about

Giuliani received monoclonal antibodies. You probably can't.

77,000 total doses of the Regeneron cocktail and almost 260,000 doses of Eli Lilly's monoclonal antibody treatment. That's less than you'd need to treat everyone who'd tested positive in just the previous two days.

The criteria for distributing these drugs can be murky. Robert Klitzman, co-founder of the Center for Bioethics at Columbia, said that the federal government allocates doses to states, states allocate them to hospitals and hospitals then decide which patients among those most at risk will get treated. Some states have developed guidelines for monoclonal antibody treatment, "but my understanding is that most states have not yet done that," Klitzman said.

Klitzman told me there are often workarounds for V.I.P.s. He said it helps to know someone on the hospital's board. Such bodies typically include wealthy philanthropists. Often, he said, when these millionaires and billionaires ask hospital administrators for special treatment for a friend, "hospitals do it."

Why? More than ever, he said, hospitals "need money that is given philanthropically from potential donors."

In other words, Giuliani was right: Celebrities have access to better care than ordinary people. Covid, which is leading to rationing of medical resources, only magnifies this longstanding inequality.

But like so many in Trump's orbit, Giuliani combines unusual candor with unusual deceptiveness. He's honest about trading on his fame, but he uses his ultra-elite experience to play down the dangers of Covid for everyone. "If you get early treatment, nothing's going to happen to you," he said on WABC, adding, "You totally eliminate the chance of dying."

This is wildly untrue. Even if monoclonal antibody therapies were a foolproof cure — and there's no evidence they are — most people who listen to Giuliani won't have access to them. They might not learn that until it's too late.

"This message that's been delivered, that maybe we don't need to be so worried about Covid, that has been a deadly message, and it's part of a bigger package of misinformation that's been spread across our country, and it's why we're in the position we're in right now," said Clarke.

When I spoke to him on Wednesday, he'd just learned that one of the hospitals in his area had reached capacity. "We're expecting the others to follow suit in the next few weeks, to the point where we don't have I.C.U. beds available anymore," he said.

But don't worry. If friends of Trump need one, they'll surely find a way. □

IN the 1970s, movies like "Jaws" and "Star Wars" proved that audiences would turn out in droves for event films. In the decades since, Hollywood has lived and died by the blockbuster, and so has American pop culture.

Studios were defined by their blockbusters, giant investments in search of even bigger returns: "Star Wars" (again) and the Marvel Comics superhero films, "Harry Potter" and "The Fast and the Furious."

You may not have seen them, but you have almost certainly heard of them. Blockbusters were business propositions, but they also created common cultural language. Many were mediocre or worse, but every now and then one was pretty good — and a few were even great. You went to the theater because, every once in a while, one actually lived up to the hype.

At least, that's how it worked until 2020 and Covid-19, the first year in decades with no big-screen blockbusters to speak of, or at least none as we've long known them.

Yes, "Tenet," a time-bending tent pole from Christopher Nolan, briefly appeared in theaters, but it flopped domestically. And yes, "Wonder Woman 1984" will finally arrive on Christmas Day. But it will appear on both the big screen and the HBO Max streaming service. And it won't be the last to do so: Warner Bros., the studio behind the Wonder Woman sequel, recently announced that it would release its entire 2021 slate of movies simultaneously to streaming and theaters — including the blockbusters "Dune" and "The Matrix 4."

Americans can't go out to see blockbusters, so blockbusters are coming into their homes, direct from Hollywood to the living room couch. The transition was a long time coming, a slow-moving process with the growth of streaming services that the pandemic supercharged into an overnight revolution. It will transform both how we experience blockbusters and how they are made in a multitude of ways, both good and bad — and even, with the advance of ambitious video games, what they are.

The negative aesthetic consequences will fall hardest on those who work in and around the industry and those who are the most voracious consumers of its wares. The business ramifications are less clear. Studios have relied on blockbusters for revenue as well as downstream businesses like theme parks and merchandising. Warner Bros. reportedly gave its partners — filmmakers, actors, producers, agents — little notice about the shift, and the move has already been cast as a betrayal of both business responsibility and artistic principle.

Mr. Nolan, one of the studio's most successful directors and perhaps the industry's foremost advocate of theatrical viewing, complained that "some of our industry's biggest filmmakers and most important movie stars went to bed the night before thinking they were working for the greatest movie studio and woke up to find out they were working for the worst streaming service."

Theaters, especially, will bear the brunt of the decision's impact. The major chains were in dicey financial shape even before months of Covid-19 lockdowns decimated domestic box office revenues.

The move by Warner Bros. means that even if anxiety about Covid-19 diminishes, some of the biggest movies of 2021 will no longer be exclusive theatrical engagements. Some viewers who might have ventured out to a multiplex will undoubtedly choose to stay home. And that, in turn, is another reason for those of us who love seeing movies in theaters to worry that when the pandemic ends, the theatrical experience of yesteryear will be gone.

Theaters won't disappear completely, but they are more likely to become rare first-class events rather than everyday experiences for the masses. To some extent, this was already happening, with comfier seating and more upscale concessions, and ticket prices rising in tandem. In the aftermath of the pandemic, moviegoing, once a Saturday-afternoon time waster and the go-to option for an inexpensive date, could become a comparatively rarefied luxury.

But as theatrical viewing becomes a luxury, movies will become more accessible than ever. The shift to home viewing will expand choice and access by reducing the time commitment and cost of watching a movie. Just as Block-

The Risk in Suspending Vaccine Patent Rules

Thomas Cueni

SOUTH AFRICA and India have petitioned the World Trade Organization to suspend some intellectual property protections from Covid-19 drugs, vaccines and diagnostic technologies. In support of the effort, Doctors Without Borders began a social media campaign urging governments to "put lives over profits," warning of "pharma profiteering" and urging support for "#NoCovidMonopolies." The W.T.O., which governs trade rules among 164 nations, considered the proposal on Thursday and has not yet made a decision.

The activists lobbying to end Covid-19 patents do so out of a legitimate concern. Now that we have tools to end the pandemic, what if they aren't distributed fairly? My colleagues in the pharmaceutical industry share this worry. Global inequality will only worsen if rich nations vaccinate themselves and leave the rest of the world to fend for itself.

It is unclear how suspending patent protections would ensure fair distribution. But what is clear is that if successful, the effort would jeopardize future medical innovation.

Intellectual property rights, including patents, grant inventors a period of exclusivity to market their creations. By affording these rights to those who create intangible assets, such as musical compositions, software or drug formulas — people will invent more useful new things.

Development of a new medicine is risky and costly. Consider that scientists have

CORRECTION

An article on Wednesday about restaurant apps misstated the surname of a Maryland restaurant owner. He is Ashish Alfred, not Arnold. □

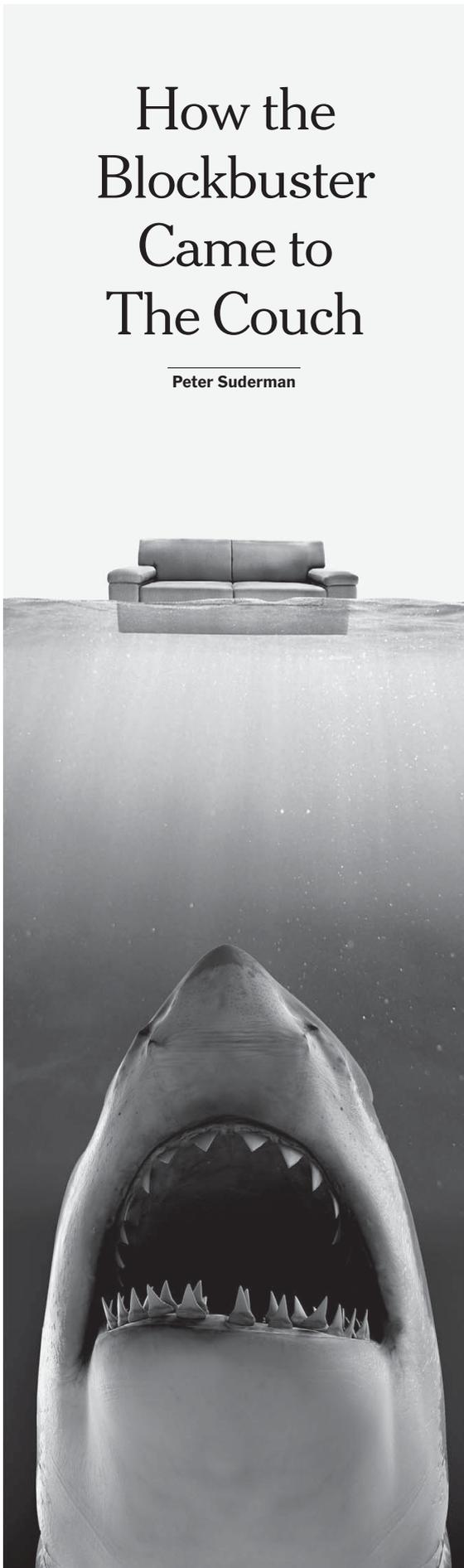


ILLUSTRATION BY ADAM MAIDA; PHOTOGRAPHS BY SEBASTIAN KAULITZKI AND ANTHONY PAZ, VIA GETTY IMAGES

How the Blockbuster Came to The Couch

Peter Suderman

buster Video educated a generation of VHS-obsessed cinephiles in the 1990s, the next generation will grow up with streaming libraries of studio back catalogs.

And as the blockbuster moves from the theater to the couch, it will inevitably reshape itself to the contours of that format. Serialized, on-demand viewing is likely to result in studios putting greater emphasis on intricately plotted serialized stories that play out over the course of years.

These kinds of stories were almost impossible in the era of network television, when viewers had to catch shows precisely at the moment they aired. But at home, when you can watch at your leisure, filmed narratives can play out over multiple seasons and dozens of hours. Theatrical blockbusters were already sliding in this direction — witness the interconnected, workplace-comedy-like structure of Marvel's superhero films, or the sprawl of the "Harry Potter" movies — but there are limits to what can be accomplished in a two- or three-hour time frame, where viewers expect a clear resolution and can't pause when they go to the bathroom. Streaming dissolves those limits.

To some extent, the shift is already happening. The Disney+ streaming service recently announced an ambitious new slate of content — 10 new "Star Wars" TV series as well as a new film, and at least another 10 superhero series from Marvel. Arguably, this year's biggest blockbuster wasn't a movie at all but a TV show airing on Disney+: "The Mandalorian," a delightful and occasionally profound adventure series set in American pop culture's most enduring fictional universe that manages to improve on the recent movies in nearly every possible way. Big-name directors like Ridley Scott and David Fincher have transitioned to streaming services, bringing their grim signature obsessions (despair, robots, serial killers, despair) with them and further blurring the lines between movies and television.

That's because blockbusters aren't just big, expensive movies that involve superheroes, magic wands or laser swords: They are also so-

The next generation will grow up streaming movies.

cial flash points, touchstones in cultural conversation, common references for how America thinks, perceives and talks about itself. From the original "Star Wars" to "Jurassic Park" to "The Avengers," each blockbuster is a sign of its times, a shorthand for an era and its obsessions, a way of remembering and reflecting what caught our attention way back when.

The biggest and most successful of these films achieve a virtually unmatched kind of cultural penetration. It can seem as if everyone has seen them, and even those who haven't have somehow developed an osmotic sense of what they were about. "Game of Thrones" was a couch-era blockbuster — you could see it in your living room. Like all great blockbusters, it gave us more than just something to watch. It gave us something to talk about, a platform for argument and exploration, a mirror onto our own life and politics — and, OK, some pretty incredible twists.

For better and for worse, the next generation of blockbusters is likely to look more like "Game of Thrones" and less like "Tenet." It will give us expansive worlds and interwoven stories and systems that demand time and attention to understand, or at least explain.

And the next era of blockbusters is likely to include works that aren't even, strictly speaking, movies or TV shows, like Cyberpunk 2077, the year's most anticipated video game, which stars Keanu Reeves. It, too, has been surrounded by great hope and greater hype.

But for those of us still stuck at home, both Cyberpunk 2077 and "Wonder Woman 1984," in their own disparate ways, offer the same tantalizing promise as all blockbusters: They're communal experiences, even from the couch. And who knows? They might even live up to their hype. □

PETER SUDERMAN is the features editor at Reason.

spent billions of dollars working on Alzheimer's treatments, but still have little to show for it. The investors that fund research shoulder so much risk because they have a shot at a reward. Intellectual property rights underpin the system that gives us all new medicines, from psychiatric drugs to cancer treatments.

In trying to defend these rights, the drug industry has made mistakes in the past that have lost people's trust. More than 22 years ago, for example, a group of drug companies sued the South African government for trying to import cheaper anti-AIDS drugs amid an epidemic. With price standing between patients and survival, the suit, which the companies even-

billion doses of its vaccine for low- and middle-income countries.

Companies can afford to license patents for free, or sell drugs at cost, precisely because they know that their intellectual property will be protected. That's not a flaw in the system; it's how the system ensures that pharmaceutical research will continue to be funded.

Eroding patent protections has far-reaching consequences.

Take "messenger RNA," the technology platform that supports the vaccines from Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna. Ozlem Tureci and Ugur Sahin, the team at the helm of BioNTech, began exploring the use of mRNA more than 25 years ago. Theoretically, mRNA can instruct the body to engineer proteins, including ones that increase immunity against infectious pathogens, cancers and rare genetic conditions. But the Covid-19 vaccines are the first truly successful applications of this technology. Scientists eager to explore future uses of mRNA will struggle to find investment if intellectual property protections are snatched away when others deem it necessary.

Critics of intellectual property rights cite public investment in research as a reason to waive patent protections. They correctly point out that governments bankroll important, early-stage research across the sciences. It's true that without public funds from agencies like the U.S. Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority or the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research, global drug companies might not have developed Covid-19 vaccines so quickly. But here, the funding principally helped reduce risk and accelerate production timelines — the research and development were still driven by scientists in the private sector. Further, governments have neither the money nor the risk tolerance to take over the role of businesses in de-

Innovation in medicine needs robust intellectual property protections.

tually dropped, was a terrible misjudgment. The current situation is not parallel.

Several major drug companies, including AstraZeneca, GlaxoSmithKline and Johnson & Johnson, have pledged to offer their vaccines on a nonprofit basis during the pandemic. Others are considering differential pricing for different countries. As of last month, four major pharmaceutical companies had already agreed to eventually produce at least three billion vaccine doses for low- and middle-income nations, according to one analysis.

In South Africa and India, pharmaceutical companies are already working with local partners to make their vaccines available. Johnson & Johnson has entered into a technology transfer partnership for its candidate vaccine with South Africa's Aspen Pharmacare, and AstraZeneca has reached a licensing agreement with the Serum Institute of India to develop up to 1

veloping pharmacy-ready medicines.

There is no available substitute for private funding in bringing new medicines to market. Directing government labs to manufacture medicines, for example, would politicize drug development, empowering political appointees to decide which research lines were worth funding.

There is also no reason to fear a Covid-19 vaccine monopoly. According to the World Health Organization, there are 214 Covid-19 vaccine projects around the world; 52 are in clinical trials, with 13 in the most advanced phase of testing. Seven have been approved for emergency or limited use in various countries. In short, we are rapidly headed for a competitive marketplace, the opposite of a monopoly.

There are, to be sure, serious obstacles to distributing Covid-19 vaccines quickly and fairly. But they have nothing to do with intellectual property. The challenge, rather, is speedy manufacturing. A study from the U.S. Defense Department estimated that it would cost \$1.56 billion over 25 years to build and operate a facility producing three vaccines. Facilities cost less in developing countries, but only marginally. The equipment required to manufacture vaccines — bioreactors, centrifuges, cold storage and the like — is expensive everywhere. That's why Covid-19 vaccine production is taking place almost exclusively in existing facilities.

Dismantling patent protection would do nothing to expand access to vaccines or to boost global manufacturing capacity. Research scientists develop vaccines in record time because they have the security and resources that come with a robust system of protection for their intellectual property. That system is crucial to allowing companies to create the vaccines we need for wide distribution. □

THOMAS CUENI is director general of the International Federation of Pharmaceutical Manufacturers and Associations.



L'Orange de Noël



-HERMÈS-
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MADE IN FRANCE

A top House Democrat urged the incoming administration to re-engage in discussions with the European Union.



How to combat fake debts that show up on your credit report, before they have all-too-real ramifications.



The Columbus Crew nearly left Ohio. The team will try to thank its fans by winning the M.L.S. Cup on its home field.

Business

The New York Times

Months of planning by carriers, and lots of dry ice, will be brought to bear on sending coronavirus vaccine worldwide.



An Air Rescue's Goal: Billions of Doses

SEBASTIAN HIDALGO FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

By NIRAJ CHOKSHI

Months before anyone knew which of the coronavirus vaccine candidates would pull ahead or when they would be available, airlines were trying to figure out how to transport doses around the world.

American Airlines, Delta Air Lines and United Airlines spoke over the summer with government officials, pharmaceutical companies and experts to understand where vaccines might be produced, how they would be shipped and how best to position people and planes to get them moving. More recently, they have flown batches of vac-

United Airlines' cargo facility at O'Hare International Airport in Chicago, where the airline is planning to receive doses of the Pfizer vaccine from Brussels.

cines for use in trials and research or to prepare for wider distribution.

The industry will play a vital role in moving billions of doses aboard hundreds of flights in the months ahead, putting underused planes and crews to work while circulating the very medicine that airlines hope will get people to book tickets again. But the flights are just one segment of a global relay race in which airlines will have to be ready to move at a moment's notice.

"When a request comes in, it's going to be urgent and we have to act immediately," said Manu Jacobs, who oversees

shipments of pharmaceuticals and other specialty products for United.

An expert panel of the Food and Drug Administration on Thursday recommended granting emergency authorization of a vaccine developed by Pfizer and BioNTech. Another vaccine, produced by Moderna, is expected to secure approval soon. Once the agency authorizes the vaccines, shipments are expected to begin in earnest.

One of the biggest challenges for airlines has been ensuring that vaccines are transported at frigid temperatures. Pfi-

CONTINUED ON PAGE B5

States Stepping In to Keep Small Businesses Afloat

By BEN CASSELMAN

With the economic recovery faltering and federal aid stalled in Washington, state governments are stepping in to try to help small businesses survive the pandemic winter.

The Colorado legislature held a special session last week to pass an economic aid package. Ohio is offering a new round of grants to restaurants, bars and other businesses affected by the pandemic. And in California, a new fund will use state money to backstop what could ultimately be hundreds of millions of dollars in private loans. Other states, led by both Republicans and Democrats, have announced or are considering similar measures.

But there is a limit to what states can do. The pandemic has ravaged budgets, driving up costs and eroding tax revenues. And unlike the federal government, most states cannot run budget deficits.

"We have done what we can do to pump money into small businesses so that people can continue to work," said Gov. Mike DeWine of Ohio, a Republican. "From the jobs point of view and the economy point of view and the workers' point of view and small busi-

nesses, we've got to get that help from the federal government. That's the only place we can get it."

After months of false starts and on-again-off-again negotiations, there are signs of progress in Washington. Top Democrats last week embraced a \$908 billion plan proposed by a bipartisan group of moderate senators. That plan would include nearly \$300 billion in aid for small businesses, as well as smaller sums for unemployed workers, state and local governments and other groups. On Tuesday, the White House proposed its own \$916 billion plan, which would include more than \$400 billion for small businesses.

But Democrats and Republicans still disagree on important issues, including aid for state and local governments and liability protection for businesses. Even if the two sides do reach a deal, it could be weeks before money starts flowing.

Many small businesses say they can't wait that long. A survey from the National Federation of Independent Business on Tuesday showed optimism falling and uncertainty rising as the nation-

CONTINUED ON PAGE B4

Jobless Aid Became a Debt Out of the Blue

By GILLIAN FRIEDMAN

Unemployment payments that looked like a lifeline may now, for many, become their ruin.

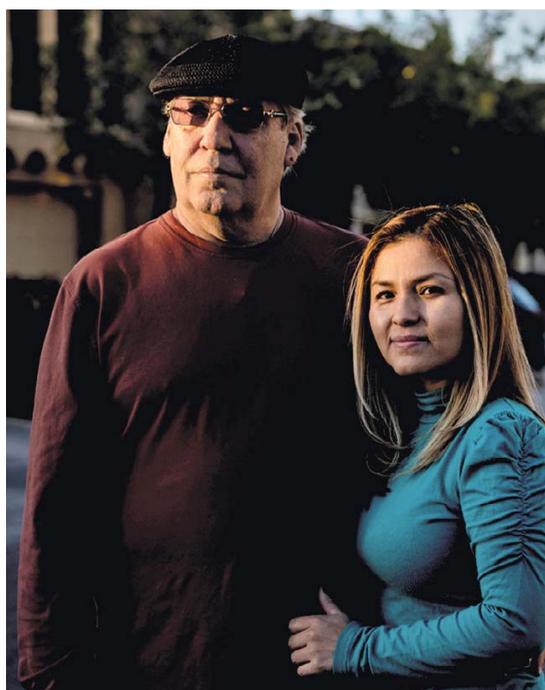
Pandemic Unemployment Assistance, a federal program that covers gig workers, part-time hires, seasonal workers and others who do not qualify for traditional unemployment benefits, has kept millions afloat. The program, established by Congress in March as part of the CARES Act, has provided over \$70 billion in relief.

But in carrying out the hastily conceived program, states have overpaid hundreds of thousands of workers — often because of administrative errors. Now states are asking for that money back.

The notices come out of the blue, with instructions to repay thousands or even tens of thousands of dollars. Those being billed, already living on the edge, are told that their benefits will be reduced to compensate for the errors — or that the state may even put a lien on their home, come after future wages or withhold tax refunds.

Many who collected payments are still out of a job, and may have little prospect of getting one. Most had no idea that they were being

CONTINUED ON PAGE B4



BRIDGET BENNETT FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

William and Diana Villafana, who ran a car rental business in Henderson, Nev., before the pandemic, learned in October that they had been overpaid.

Biden's Picks Show Focus On Climate

By JIM TANKERSLEY and LISA FRIEDMAN

WASHINGTON — The video rollouts of President-elect Joseph R. Biden Jr.'s pick for Treasury secretary, Janet L. Yellen, and National Economic Council director, Brian Deese, began biographically. But they quickly shifted to focus on an issue that could distinguish Mr. Biden's core economic team from its predecessors: climate change.

Ms. Yellen promised an agenda to promote "investments that will create jobs and address the tremendous challenge of climate change." Mr. Biden introduced Mr. Deese by calling him the first N.E.C. director who is a "true expert on climate policy."

Both were clear signs that, even as Mr. Biden confronts the immediate task of accelerating the pandemic recovery, he has placed the longer-running climate challenge at the center of his administration's economic priorities.

That climate focus is expected to influence the incoming administration's initial plans to support the economic recovery. Ms. Yellen, Mr. Deese and Neera

CONTINUED ON PAGE B3

The Digest

ECONOMY

With Demand Suppressed, Inflation Is Not a Factor

Wholesale prices in the United States edged up just 0.1 percent in November with the economic disruption from the pandemic continuing to suppress demand and keeping inflation at extremely low levels.

The increase in the producer price index followed bigger gains of 0.3 percent in October and 0.4 percent in September, the Labor Department reported on Friday. "The trend in inflation in the

near term is likely to be subdued given ample excess capacity and renewed pressure on demand from new restrictions to contain a resurgence of Covid-19 outbreaks," said Rubeela Farooqi, chief U.S. economist at High Frequency Economics.

"Inflation remains in check and high frequency data suggests households are still hesitant to spend at pre-virus levels, signaling that price dynamics will continue to undershoot the Fed's 2 percent target in the near-term," said Mahir Rasheed, an economist with Oxford Economics. ASSOCIATED PRESS

LABOR

Exxon Mobil to Cut 700 Houston-Area Jobs

Exxon Mobil Corp will lay off more than 700 workers in the Houston area, according to a notice posted to the Texas Workforce Commission on Friday.

The largest U.S. oil producer had previously said it would cut its global workforce by about 15 percent, or around 14,000 jobs, including deep cuts in the U.S.

Exxon and other oil companies have been slashing costs due to a collapse in oil demand due to the coronavirus pandemic and ill-timed bets on new projects.

The layoff date is Feb. 2, according to the notice. The 700 jobs are part of around 1,900 U.S. cuts anticipated, which the company has said would come mainly from its Houston-area campus.



LOREN ELLIOTT/REUTERS

Exxon last month said it would write down the value of natural gas properties by \$17 billion to \$20 billion, its biggest ever impairment, and slash project spending next year to its lowest level in 15 years.

Exxon had about 88,300 workers, including 13,300 contractors at the end of last year. REUTERS

AUTOMOBILES

Ferrari's C.E.O. Resigns For Personal Reasons

Luxury sports car maker Ferrari says its chief executive, Louis Camilleri, has resigned for personal reasons.

Chairman John Elkann will take over until a successor is named, Ferrari said in a statement late Thursday.

Camilleri, who took over as C.E.O. in 2018 following the death of longtime C.E.O. Sergio Marchionne, is also stepping down as

chairman of Philip Morris International, one of Ferrari's main sponsors.

When he took over as C.E.O., Camilleri unveiled a business plan that included reviving iconic models embedded with Formula One technology and expanding Ferrari's electric-gasoline hybrid powertrain offerings.

Ferrari, which is based in the Emilia Romagna region that has been one of the hardest-hit by the coronavirus in Italy, reported flat third-quarter profits as a result of Italy's production shutdown. ASSOCIATED PRESS



S&P 500 INDEX
-0.13%
3,663.46



DOW JONES INDUSTRIALS
+0.16%
30,046.37



NASDAQ COMPOSITE INDEX
-0.23%
12,377.87



10-YEAR TREASURY YIELD
0.90%
-0.02 points



CRUDE OIL (U.S.)
\$46.57
-\$0.21



GOLD (N.Y.)
\$1,839.80
+\$6.20

Wall St. Retreats Amid Wait for Virus Aid

By The Associated Press

U.S. stock indexes pulled further away from their recent highs on Friday as prospects for another aid package from Washington faded while a surge in coronavirus cases threatens to inflict more damage on an already battered

STOCKS & BONDS

economy. The S&P 500 slipped 0.1 percent, its third-straight decline since it set a record high on Tuesday. The benchmark index ended the week 1 percent lower after two weeks of solid gains. Losses in financial, technology, health care and other sectors outweighed gains in communication services stocks, industrial companies and elsewhere. Treasury yields fell broadly, a signal that traders were seeking to lessen their exposure to riskier holdings.

The latest bout of selling, which eased toward the end of the day, came as investors continued to hope for Washington to come through with another financial lifeline for struggling people, businesses and state governments affected by the pandemic. But an emerging \$900 billion aid package from a bipartisan group of lawmakers has essentially collapsed because of continued partisan bickering.

"We still don't have a deal in Congress for a rescue package," said Randy Frederick, vice president of trading and derivatives at Charles Schwab. "If it doesn't happen, the market could struggle."

The S&P 500 slipped 4.64 points to 3,663.46. The index had been down 34 points in the early going. The Dow Jones industrial average got a boost from Disney, which hit a new high. The index rose 47.11 points, or 0.2 percent, to 30,046.37. The tech-heavy Nasdaq lost 27.94 points, or 0.2 percent, to 12,377.87.

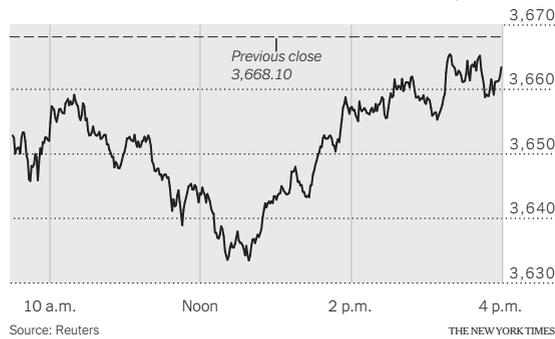
Small-company stocks, which have been making solid gains this month, also fell. The Russell 2000 small-cap index gave up 11.01 points, or 0.6 percent, to 1,911.70.

Technology companies and banks led the decline. Apple fell 0.7 percent and Bank of America dropped 1.9 percent.

Disney jumped 13.6 percent, a record high and the biggest gain in

The S&P 500 Index

Position of the S&P 500 index at 1-minute intervals on Friday.



Source: Reuters

THE NEW YORK TIMES

Producer Prices

Index of finished goods prices and services, 2009=100, seasonally adjusted.



Source: Labor Department

THE NEW YORK TIMES

the S&P 500, after giving investors an encouraging update on subscriber growth and future plans for its Disney Plus streaming service.

Stocks have been climbing over the last few weeks as advances in vaccine development raised hopes that the pandemic could be tamed in the coming months and set the global economy on a path to normalcy.

"The excitement over the vaccine has already been priced in and the market is fairly overbought, based on where we are in the economy right now," said Kenny Polcari, managing partner at Kace Capital Advisors.

The U.K. has already started vaccinating people with Pfizer

and BioNTech's vaccine. A U.S. government advisory panel on Thursday endorsed widespread use of that vaccine, putting the country just one step away from launching an epic vaccination campaign.

Widespread vaccination will take months and the virus pandemic is prompting tighter restrictions on businesses. An already slow economic recovery appears to be stalling in the wake of the latest surge and unemployment is rising.

Mr. Polcari said markets were simply churning and consolidating following a strong November and that he expected that to remain the case through December as stimulus talks continue. Wall Street is also waiting for the Jan. 5 special election in Georgia, which could potentially switch the balance of power in the U.S. Senate.

European stocks slipped over the increased possibility that the U.K. and the European Union will fail to strike a deal on a new economic relationship heading into next year. Britain left the E.U. on Jan. 31 but has continued to follow the trading bloc's rules during a transition period that lasts until year's end. A no-deal split would bring overnight tariffs and other economic barriers that would hurt both sides.

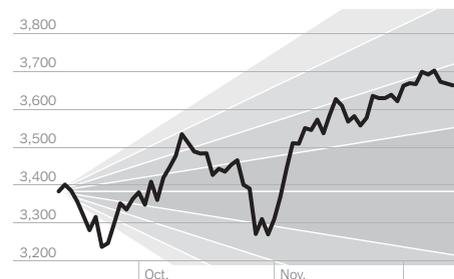
The yield on the 10-year Treasury fell to 0.90 percent from .92 late Thursday.

European markets ended lower, and Asian markets closed mixed.

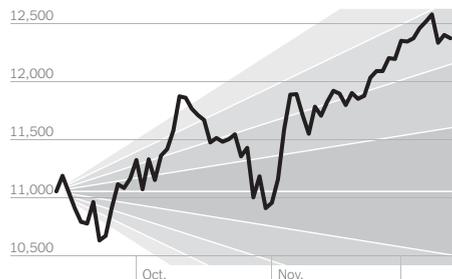
What Happened in Stock Markets Yesterday

POWERED BY REFINITIV

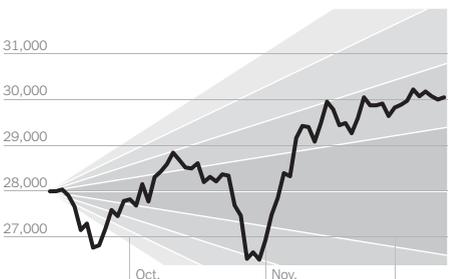
S&P 500 3663.46 ↓0.1%



Nasdaq Composite Index 12377.87 ↓0.2%



Dow Jones Industrials 30046.37 ↑0.2%



Best performers

S&P 500 COMPANIES	CLOSE	CHANGE
1. Walt Disney C (DIS)	\$175.72	+13.6%
2. ETSY Inc (ETSY)	170.02	+2.9
3. Equifax Inc (EFX)	188.14	+2.6
4. United Parcel (UPS)	168.40	+2.5
5. Bio Rad Labor (BIO)	567.26	+2.2
6. Invesco Ltd (IVZ)	17.86	+2.0
7. Tractor Supp (TSCO)	138.66	+2.0
8. Copart Inc (CPRT)	116.98	+1.9
9. Pool Corp (POOL)	337.79	+1.9
10. Oracle Corp (ORCL)	60.61	+1.9

Worst performers

S&P 500 COMPANIES	CLOSE	CHANGE
1. Qualcomm Inc (QCOM)	\$144.28	-7.4%
2. Expedia Grou (EXPE)	123.02	-5.7
3. American Air (AAL)	17.05	-5.2
4. Royal Caribbe (RCL)	76.46	-5.2
5. Borgwarner In (BWA)	36.52	-4.6
6. Carnival Corp (CCL)	21.32	-4.5
7. Skyworks Sol (SWKS)	139.24	-4.3
8. Corning Inc (GLW)	35.64	-4.1
9. DXC Technolog (DXC)	23.93	-3.7
10. Cabot Oil & G (COG)	17.00	-3.7

Most active

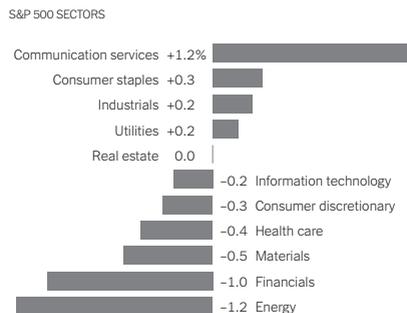
S&P 500 COMPANIES	CLOSE	CHANGE	VOLUME IN MIL.
1. American Air (AAL)	\$17.05	-5.2%	106.4
2. General Electr (GE)	11.16	-1.4	88.9
3. Walt Disney C (DIS)	175.72	+13.6	87.4
4. Apple Inc (AAPL)	122.41	-0.7	86.9
5. Ford Motor Co (F)	9.02	-1.1	73.3
6. Pfizer Inc (PFE)	41.12	-1.5	60.4
7. Carnival Corp (CCL)	21.32	-4.5	52.4
8. Bank of Ameri (BAC)	28.57	-1.9	40.5
9. AT&T Inc (T)	31.01	+1.0	31.5
10. Microsoft Co (MSFT)	213.26	+1.3	31.0

World Stocks

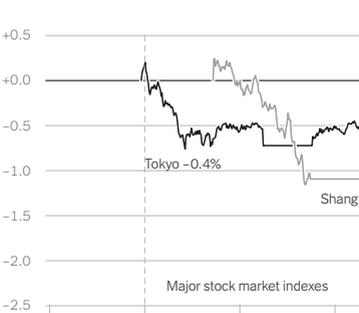
	TOTAL RETURN 1 YR	TOTAL RETURN 5 YRS	TOTAL ASSETS IN BILL.
1. Vanguard Total Intl Stock Index Inv(VGTSX)	+11.5%	+8.9%	\$173.7
2. American Funds Capital Income Bldr A(CAIBX)	+4.3	+6.7	61.5
3. American Funds New Perspective A(ANWPX)	+32.7	+16.0	55.8
4. American Funds Capital World Gr&Inc A(CWGIX)	+16.0	+11.3	55.1
5. Vanguard International Growth Adm(VWILX)	+59.5	+21.1	54.3
6. Dodge & Cox International Stock(DODFX)	+4.2	+6.6	39.9
7. American Funds SMALLCAP World A(SMCWX)	+34.4	+16.2	31.0
8. Fidelity International Index(FSPSX)	+7.7	+7.6	29.7
9. DFA International Core Equity I(DFIEX)	+7.1	+7.6	28.5
10. American Funds Europacific Growth A(AEPGX)	+23.5	+11.5	27.0

Source: Morningstar

Sector performance



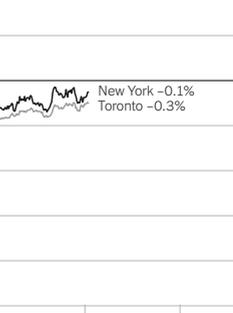
How stock markets fared yesterday in Asia ...



... in Europe

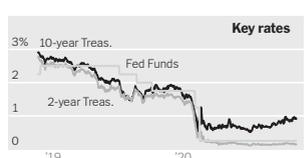


... and in the Americas.



What Is Happening in Other Markets and the Economy

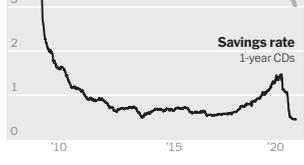
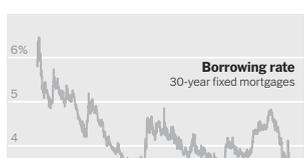
Bonds



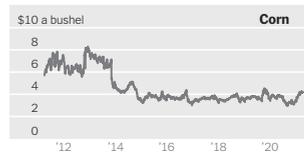
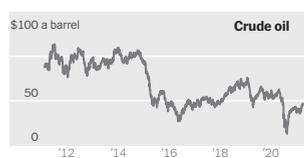
Currencies



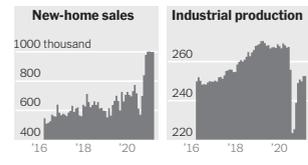
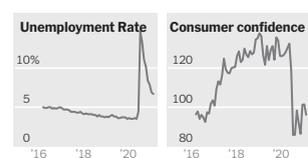
Consumer rates



Commodities



Economy



CLIMATE | TRADE

Biden's Selections Indicate Emphasis On Climate Policy

FROM FIRST BUSINESS PAGE
Tanden, the nominee to head the White House Office of Management and Budget, are preparing to weave efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and accelerate clean energy production into the economic stimulus legislation that his team is crafting. It is also expected to play a heavy role in a broader infrastructure initiative that could be one of Mr. Biden's best hopes for a major bipartisan bill in his first year in office.

Climate is also expected to influence his economic approach more broadly, with his team preparing to use the government's vast regulatory powers to advance a climate agenda through financial regulations that could further accelerate the deployment of wind and solar energy, electric cars and other initiatives to reduce emissions — an approach that Mr. Biden's team insists will create jobs.

Those close to Mr. Biden, who has pledged to take a "whole of government" approach to climate change, said he is purposefully putting what scientists believe is the world's largest looming crisis at the heart of the agencies most responsible for promoting the country's economic security.

"Historically, we have looked at climate change as an environmental issue," said Christy Goldfuss, a former head of the White House Council on Environmental Quality under President Barack Obama, where she worked with Mr. Deese on a so-called green team that helped negotiate the multinational Paris agreement on climate. What Mr. Biden has done, she said, "is center climate policy in his economic team."

Ms. Goldfuss and other climate and economic policy experts said they expected Mr. Biden's economic team, led by Ms. Yellen, to continue sounding the alarm about the growing costs of not reducing emissions.

According to a 2018 government assessment, natural disasters and other extreme weather events driven by a warming planet could cost the United States 10.5 percent of its gross domestic product by 2100. This year alone, according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, there were 16 billion-dollar weather and climate disasters across the country from January to September. That figure did not account for the wildfires that raged across the West, which caused an estimated \$10 billion in damage.

"Climate change is going to touch every part of our economy,

and climate change policy is going to require us to change the way we power and fuel every part of our economy," said Joseph E. Aldy, a Harvard University economist who was a special assistant to Mr. Obama on energy and environment.

Several of Mr. Biden's early economic picks are longstanding voices for emissions reduction as an economic imperative. In 1998, Ms. Yellen, then the head of President Bill Clinton's Council on Economic Advisers, asked Congress to "consider the costs of inaction," warning of "catastrophic risks" to the United States amounting to billions of dollars annually because of impending extreme weather events.

"To what extent are we willing to take such chances with our planet?" she asked lawmakers during one of the more than half-dozen trips she made to Capitol Hill that year testifying in favor of the Kyoto Protocol, the first global agreement to curb planet-warming greenhouse gas emissions, which the Senate ultimately rejected.

She was less vocal about climate risks in her highest-profile economic policy position, as chair of the Federal Reserve; after her departure from the job in 2018, she called for climate action, including a tax on carbon earlier this year.

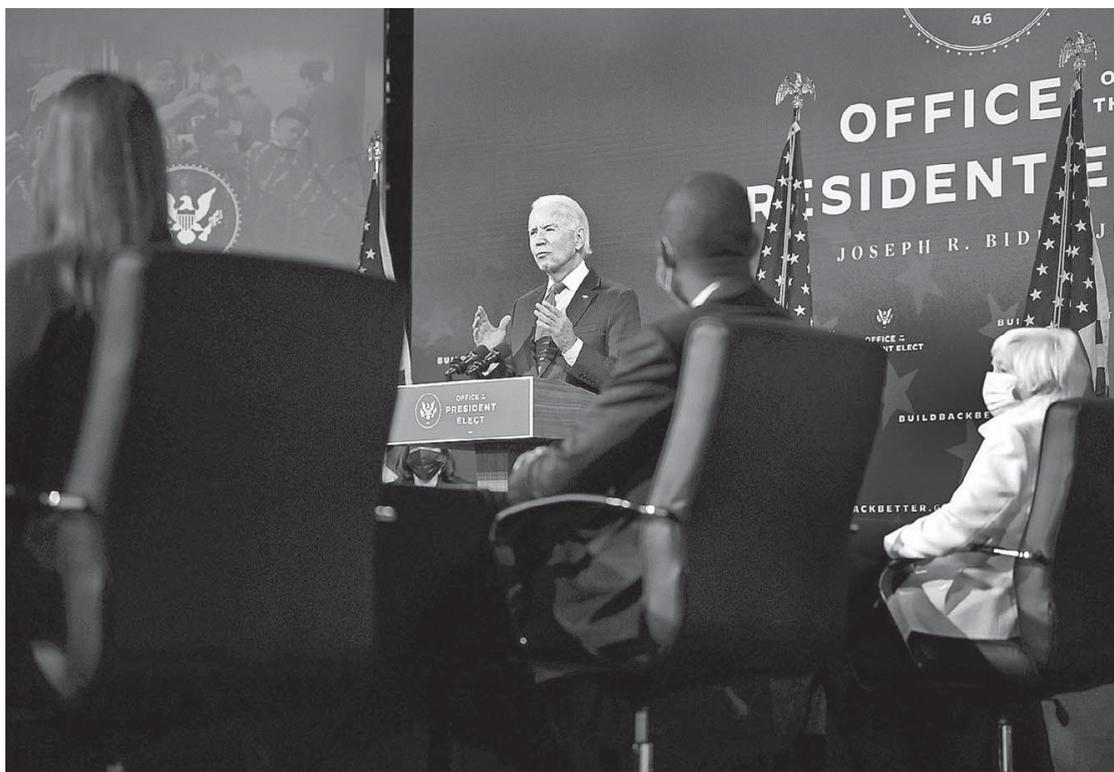
Mr. Aldy and others say they expect a Yellen-led Treasury to focus on a wide range of regulations touching climate issues, including the insurance industry's consideration of climate change and how rising global temperatures could affect the solvency of Medicare and Social Security.

Perhaps most important, they expect Treasury and other financial regulatory agencies to lean on investors and the business community to manage climate risks.

Justin Guay, the director of global climate strategy for the Sunrise Project, an environmental group based in Australia that focuses on pushing financial institutions to address climate change, said that would be a key step in helping companies pursue decarbonization targets, and financiers to shift investments away from fossil fuels. But he also called it a minor one.

"That will look night and day compared to the Trump years," Mr. Guay said. Still, he noted, most major companies are doing that kind of work, so "it's a low bar for action."

He and other progressive climate activists said they hoped to see Mr. Biden's economic team use the levers of the 2010 Dodd-



President-elect Joseph R. Biden Jr.'s economic team nominees are preparing to weave climate policies into economic stimulus legislation.

Frank legislation, which created a batch of new regulations and other efforts meant to reduce risk in the financial system, to address climate change. They are pushing the new administration to follow the logic of recognizing the financial risk posed by climate change and enact regulations to prevent banks, asset managers and other financial institutions from financing coal, oil and gas projects.

Some other specific financial regulations that experts said could come early, and which Mr. Biden campaigned on, include requiring public companies to disclose the climate risks and greenhouse gas emissions in their operations and supply chains.

"Climate is the granddaddy of all risk, and the Biden administration wants to shine light on it. The next logical step would be to regulate that," Mr. Guay said. No matter what the ultimate makeup of the Senate, he added, "They have enormous regulatory powers under Dodd-Frank to curtail speculative activities that could lead to the next financial meltdown."

That trend is already somewhat underway. Several major American banks and international banks have announced policies over the past year prohibiting or limiting investment in new oil and gas projects in the Arctic, including the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. Bank of America recently joined them. The Trump administration, which has been openly

hostile to climate science and promoted fossil fuel development, has sought to force banks to continue lending to fossil fuel infrastructure.

The most immediate area in which the climate expertise on Mr. Biden's economic team is likely to come into play is in whatever co-

Voices for controlling emissions as an economic imperative.

ronavirus stimulus relief package and subsequent infrastructure package Mr. Biden is able to move through Congress in the early months after inauguration.

Extending and expanding tax credits for wind and solar power is one priority, but moving to allow the Department of Energy to fund "green" banks to support clean-energy infrastructure is probably also on the table. Officials at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce urged Mr. Biden and Congress to include clean energy components in an infrastructure package in a news briefing earlier this year.

"That could be a big piece in the stimulus negotiations," said Tim Profeta, director of Duke University's Nicholas Institute for Environmental Policy Solutions and an author of a set of recommendations called "Climate 21" that former Obama administration cli-

mate officials released recently.

Another influential set of climate recommendations, under the heading of a "100 percent clean future," was published in 2019 by Ms. Goldfuss and her colleagues at the liberal Center for American Progress think tank in Washington, where she is senior vice president for energy and environment policy. The president of that think tank, and a champion of that report, is Ms. Tanden, the nominee for budget office director.

The Biden administration could also advance recommendations that the Commodity Futures Trading Commission issued earlier this year. It called for bank regulators to roll out climate stress tests, and for a repeal of a Trump administration rule that bars retirement investment managers from considering environmental consequences in their financial recommendations.

The C.F.T.C. also called for a tax or other means of enacting a price on carbon emissions, which economists have described as the most effective way of driving down planet-warming pollution but is fiercely opposed by conservatives and some liberal groups. Several economists who favor a carbon tax said they are not optimistic about the Biden administration supporting it.

Asked about the likelihood of Mr. Biden making a strong push on climate change in a stimulus package, Senator John Barrasso,

Republican of Wyoming, said he worried about liberal Democrats "taking him much further to the left than he ever would have chosen by himself."

Much of the task of crafting a stimulus package with climate elements could fall to Mr. Deese. He served as a senior adviser to Mr. Obama on climate change and helped to coordinate domestic policies like limits on power-plant emissions, before most recently working for the asset management giant BlackRock as its sustainability director.

Mr. Deese helped the Obama administration carry out the economic stimulus package that passed in 2009, in the midst of a recession set off by financial crisis. Environmental groups and others credit that package, which included several enticements for low-carbon energy production, with helping to rapidly cut the cost of wind and solar power production over the course of a decade.

Ms. Goldfuss called that bill "the most successful climate policy to date in this country" and said the next stimulus package must go further, to promote electric vehicles, advanced batteries and other emissions-reducing technologies.

"Every one of those requires creating jobs, if you do it right," she said.

Jeanna Smialek and Emily Cochrane contributed reporting.

Ways and Means Chairman Pushes for Reopening Trade Talks With E.U.

By ANA SWANSON and EMILY COCHRANE

WASHINGTON — The chairman of the powerful House Ways and Means Committee urged the incoming administration to renew trade negotiations with the European Union, countering a pledge by President-elect Joseph R. Biden Jr. to postpone any new trade talks until after the United States has made significant domestic investments.

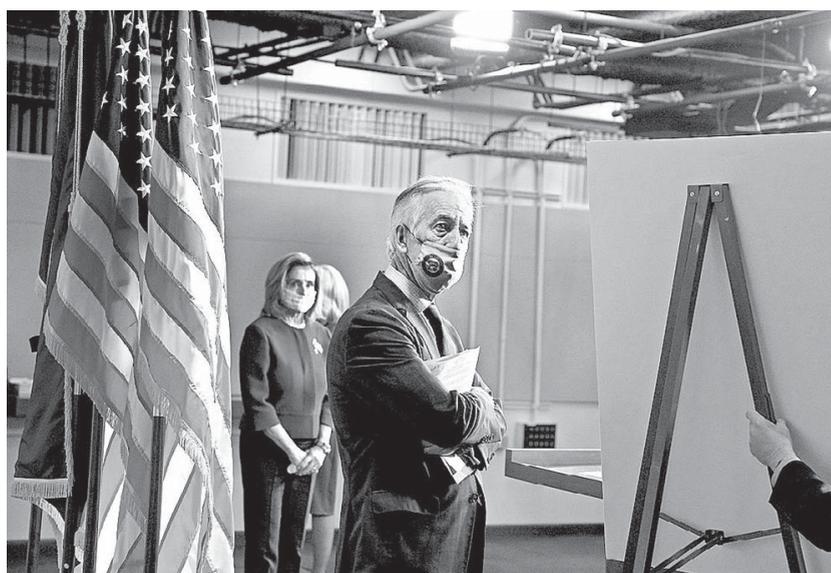
The statement on Friday, from Representative Richard E. Neal, Democrat of Massachusetts, raises the question of whether congressional pressure could persuade the Biden administration to take a more aggressive approach to trade negotiations with close allies.

Mr. Biden has downplayed expectations for new trade negotiations early in his term, saying he wants to first wrest control of the pandemic and make substantial investments in American industries like energy, biotech and artificial intelligence.

"I'm not going to enter any new trade agreement with anybody until we have made major investments here at home and in our workers," Mr. Biden said in a New York Times interview last week.

But since congressional opposition would be one of the main obstacles to any new trade agreement, the support of key Democrats could be strong motivation for initiating talks.

In an interview, Mr. Neal suggested that reaching a trade



Representative Richard E. Neal said that a trade deal with the European Union would help to restrain China.

agreement with the European Union would help deal with the rising economic threat from China, which has used hefty subsidies, state-owned companies and other practices to dominate industries and challenge the trade rules long embraced in the West.

Mr. Neal called Mr. Biden's approach "fine and fair," but argued that pursuing E.U. trade negotiations "is part of a foreign policy

challenge as it relates to China's expansionist activities."

"I think that we should, right now, be preparing to match the aggressive nature of what China's doing in the world," he added.

Mr. Biden would need the support of Mr. Neal and others to cement such a deal. So-called trade promotion authority, a statute that sets out guidelines for the executive branch as it negotiates trade

deals and streamlines the approval process, is set to expire in July; any deals submitted to Congress after that could face a more difficult path to ratification. It's not yet clear whether the Biden administration will petition Congress to renew the authority.

Despite deep historic ties, the United States and Europe have not always had an easy trading relationship. The governments have

argued for decades over tariffs, farm subsidies and food safety standards, and efforts to reach a comprehensive trade pact under both the Obama and Trump administrations were ultimately scrapped.

But Mr. Biden has often spoken of the importance of strengthening American alliances, and he and his advisers have been eager to remedy ties with Europe that have been strained by President Trump's confrontational trade approach. They also see much common ground with the European Union on issues like climate change, labor standards and consumer protections, as well as countering China's growing geopolitical power and trade practices.

Both governments appear eager to make progress on trade issues that have festered under the Trump administration, including spats over subsidies to the aircraft industry and plans by European countries to tax American technology giants.

Those discussions would be led by Mr. Biden's trade representative, Katherine Tai, whom the president-elect introduced on Friday as his nominee for the post. Ms. Tai is on Mr. Neal's staff as the Ways and Means Committee's chief trade lawyer.

Mr. Neal declined to elaborate on conversations he'd had with Ms. Tai about pursuing trade deals with the European Union, but said, "I think we're in broad agreement on the nature of the

challenge."

Mr. Neal pointed to the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement as a "blueprint" for new trade pacts. The accord, the successor to the North American Free Trade Agreement, was negotiated by Mr. Trump and revised by congressional Democrats, including Mr. Neal and Ms. Tai, before going into force this year.

"What we were able to do with U.S.M.C.A. in terms of environment, labor standards, enforcement — I think we have some momentum," Mr. Neal said. He said he was continuing to work to drum up support for using a Euro-

Strengthening alliances that have been strained.

pean trade deal to counter China's influence around the globe.

In his statement on Friday, Mr. Neal said pursuing a trade deal with the European Union would be a "strategically sound choice" as the United States tried to compete economically with China and rebuild its economy from the pandemic recession.

He urged the Biden administration to engage with allies in Europe and elsewhere to "formulate a strategic, far-reaching, forward-looking, robust package of programs and investments to defend against anti-competitive, anti-democratic influences of China's policies."

The New York Times

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VIRUS FALLOUT

Jobless Aid Gave Relief, Then Turned Into a Debt Out of the Blue

FROM FIRST BUSINESS PAGE
overpaid.

"When somebody gets a bill like this, it completely terrifies them," said Michele Evermore, a senior policy analyst for the National Employment Law Project, a nonprofit workers' rights group. Sometimes the letters themselves are in error — citing overpayments when benefits were correctly paid — but either way, she said, the stress "is going to cost people's lives."

The hastily conceived Pandemic Unemployment Assistance program has presented other troubles, including widespread fraud schemes and challenges with processing. As a result, states only recently had enough resources to start sending out overpayment notices. In the meantime, people have been collecting — and spending — sometimes thousands of dollars in what they understood to be legitimate benefits.

Olive Stewart, a 56-year-old immigrant from Jamaica, worked part time as a sous-chef at a cafeteria at a Jewish school in Philadelphia, earning \$16 an hour for roughly 25 hours a week. But when the pandemic hit and schools shut down, she was laid off.

Ms. Stewart applied for Pandemic Unemployment Assistance and began receiving \$234 a week. It was not quite enough to cover the \$650 in rent, \$200 electric bill and \$200 internet bill for the house she shares with her 12-year-old daughter, her retired mother and her sister, who has a disability that prevents her from working. To make ends meet, Ms. Stewart started dipping into her savings.

Then, on Oct. 6, she got a notice saying that Pennsylvania's unemployment insurance vendor, Geographic Solutions, had overpaid her by accident. The overpayment included funds from Pandemic Unemployment Assistance and from a \$600 federal supplement to unemployment insurance. In total, she was told, she would have to pay back nearly \$8,000.

To collect the debt, the state began to withhold more than half of her unemployment payments, leaving her just \$105 a week. In early November, the state began taking all of her unemployment benefits, leaving her with no income. She has yet to pay her December rent.

"The state should be paying attention to what they are sending out," Ms. Stewart said. "It was



William and Diana Villafana were told they had received over \$7,000 in excess relief. To collect the debt, Nevada is keeping all of his benefits and paying her \$73 a week. "I don't think they understand that unemployment benefits are for survival," Mr. Villafana said. "Or if they do understand it, they don't care."

their mistake, and I've already spent all the money on food and rent. How am I going to pay it back?"

Geographic Solutions made duplicate payments for 30,000 Pennsylvania claims because of a system problem, a \$280 million mistake, the State Department of Labor and Industry said. (The company says the problem arose from a one-day error that was immediately reported.) Overpayments can also occur if an applicant makes a mistake on a form, as ProPublica reported, or if a state determines that a recipient should not have been eligible.

As of Sept. 30, about 27 percent of those approved for Pandemic Unemployment Assistance in Ohio had been overpaid, about 162,000 claims. In mid-November, the figure in Colorado was about 29,000; in Texas, it was over 41,000.

Many states waive overpayments on regular unemployment insurance when no fraud is involved, or when paying the money back would cause someone signif-

icant hardship. But the federal rules for Pandemic Unemployment Assistance prohibit forgiveness. Even if the state is at fault, the recipient is on the hook.

States often start collecting the overpayment automatically, by withholding a portion — from 30 to 100 percent — of future unemployment benefit payments.

Many overpayments arose because state unemployment systems are designed to calculate benefits using W-2 forms, employer records, pay stubs and other documents associated with traditional jobs. But because gig workers and part-timers had different sorts of documentation, states had to adapt quickly to a new method of processing and approving claims.

Mistakes in the rollout were inevitable, said Behnaz Mansouri, a senior attorney for the Unemployment Law Project, a nonprofit legal aid organization in Seattle.

"For a new system to have such a punitive response when the system itself fails seems overly harsh and draconian," Ms. Mansouri

said.

Gina Jones, 29, was furloughed in March from her part-time job at a breakfast bar at a Quality Inn in Spokane, Wash., and began receiving \$750 a week from the pandemic program, which allowed her to pay for rent, food and necessities for her two daughters, ages 1 and 5. She was called back to work in July, and now works about 28 hours a week at \$13.50 an hour.

Then, in mid-November, she checked her unemployment portal online and saw a message that she had been overpaid by nearly \$12,500. She fears that the state will start garnishing her wages to collect the debt.

"I already used that money to support my family," Ms. Jones said. "It's all gone, and I can't afford to pay it back."

Asking people to pay back unemployment funds can undermine the unemployment system's goal of stabilizing the economy, said Philip Spesshardt, branch manager for benefits services at the Colorado Division of Unemployment Insurance.

If a person's unemployment checks are reduced each week because of an overpayment, the recipient will have less cash to pay bills and patronize local businesses. "Ultimately that has a cascading effect on many of those small businesses, causing them to close permanently and further adding to the unemployment rate," Mr. Spesshardt said.

While overpayments under the federal program cannot be waived, applicants can appeal demands for reimbursement after the notice is issued. But the time allowed for appeal can be as little as seven days. After that, the process can be slow, confusing and cumbersome.

Colorado has taken steps to address the hardships of reimbursement. In October, after the state noted the large number of overpayments, it determined that the application form was confusing because it did not specify whether the person filing was supposed to provide gross or net income. It decided to "write off" cases where the recipients had submitted

earnings and tax documentation that would have allowed the correct benefit to be calculated.

Asked how the policy squared with the federal prohibition against forgiveness, a spokeswoman for the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment cited "the administrative burden that it would create for us to collect on these overpayments given competing priorities."

House Democrats have called for renewed pandemic relief to in-

Overpayments caused by administrative mistakes.

clude a provision allowing states to waive overpayments when workers cannot repay them without severe hardship. The provision would apply to previous and future cases. A separate House bill, with bipartisan sponsorship, provides for forgiveness if the overpayment was not the recipient's fault and "such repayment would be contrary to equity and good conscience."

But the possibility of a remedy is not much consolation to those wondering how they will pay rent and put food on the table in the meantime.

William and Diana Villafana, 55 and 34, who before the pandemic ran a car rental business in Henderson, Nev., were told in late October that between them, they had been overpaid by more than \$7,000. To cover that debt, the state is taking all of Mr. Villafana's benefits, and giving Ms. Villafana \$73 a week. They are using credit cards for their \$2,000 monthly rent, as well as utilities, food and other necessities.

"I don't think they understand that unemployment benefits are for survival," Mr. Villafana said. "Or if they do understand it, they don't care."

Mr. Villafana worries about how he will continue to provide for their son and daughter, ages 6 and 7. When his daughter recently asked for a paintbrush set and an easel, he didn't know what to tell her.

"It's kind of hard to explain to them, 'Look, you can't do this' or 'I can't buy you that,'" he said. "I have no idea what we're going to do about Christmas."

Sheelagh McNeill contributed research.



DA'SHAUNAE MARISA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Kirk Meurer, above left, has a company that installs office furniture in the Cleveland area. In the spring, his business dried up practically overnight; as the pandemic stretched on, the company's survival is in jeopardy. A combination of loans, donations and a shift in strategy toward online sales has gotten the San Francisco gallery and boutique of Eden Stein, above right, this far, though she isn't sure how much longer she can continue.



CHRISTIE HEMM KLOK FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

With Federal Aid Snarled, States Are Keeping Small Businesses Afloat

FROM FIRST BUSINESS PAGE

wide surge in coronavirus cases leads governments to reimpose restrictions and consumers to pare their spending. Separate data from the Census Bureau shows an increasing share of small businesses cutting jobs, and other surveys have shown large numbers of businesses in danger of failing.

If that happens, it could be a disaster for both state economies and state budgets. Local businesses are major sources of tax revenue — both directly and through their employees — and major drivers of economic activity. If they fail in large numbers, it will slow the economic recovery once the pandemic is over.

"It becomes almost a death spiral if you can't keep these businesses running," said Tim Goodrich, executive director of state government relations for the National Federation of Independent Business.

Kirk Meurer was on track to have one of his best years ever in his business installing office furniture in the Cleveland area. But when companies began sending their workers home last spring, his business dried up practically

overnight.

"Even though we didn't have to shut down like the restaurants and bars and the travel industries, it didn't matter," he said. "The business wasn't there."

After some delays, Mr. Meurer got money through the federal Paycheck Protection Program, which he thought would be enough to sustain him until business rebounded. But as the pandemic dragged on and offices pushed back their reopening dates to the summer, then to the fall, then into next year, it became clear the company would need more help to survive.

"It's amazing how fast you can burn through money when you've got nothing coming in and all the overhead to maintain," Mr. Meurer said.

In recent weeks, his company, Modular Systems Technicians, received a \$10,000 grant from a new state fund to help small businesses. He also got money under a program that refunded \$8 billion from the state workers' compensation fund.

"It helped," Mr. Meurer said. "It's not nearly enough, but they did what they could."

The money for the Ohio grant

program, and from some other recent state aid efforts, actually came from the federal government. As part of the \$2.2 trillion CARES Act last spring, Congress created a \$150 billion fund that states could tap in responding to the virus. They were given wide latitude in using the money — as long as they did so before the end of the year.

States are limited and cannot run budget deficits.

As the pandemic has flared anew, however, it has become clear that the economic crisis will last well into next year, by which point the federal money will be gone and state budgets will be unable to pick up the slack. So states are racing to use what's left of the CARES Act money to shore up their economies and build a buffer for the winter.

"I think they're terrified," said Joseph Parilla, a fellow at the Brookings Institution who has studied state responses to the

pandemic. "If they're paying attention, they should be."

Gov. Jared Polis of Colorado, a Democrat, recalled the legislature for a special session late last month to pass several relief measures, including a \$57 million grant program for small businesses. In an interview, he cited Colorado's slow recovery from the last recession a decade ago, when the failure to contain the foreclosure crisis left lasting scars on the state's economy. Without further assistance — including federal aid — he fears a wave of business failures that would set off an equally damaging chain reaction, he said.

"If we don't help them get through this, will it ever come back?" Mr. Polis asked. "Sure, but it means years of boarded-up stores and restaurants on Main Streets across America if Democrats and Republicans can't come together now to act."

Some states are trying creative ways to stretch resources. California last month established a "rebuilding fund," which will use a comparatively small amount of public money to provide loan guarantees to encourage for-profit and nonprofit lenders to make low-interest loans to small busi-

nesses.

The California program is aimed at the smallest businesses — most with fewer than 10 employees — and those in low-income and minority neighborhoods. Many were left out of the federal aid programs like the Paycheck Protection Program, which primarily helped somewhat larger employers.

"PPP never really served these kinds of businesses very well," said Laura D. Tyson, an economist at the University of California, Berkeley, who helped design California's program. "More and more of them are boarding up and closing down, and it's a real hit to the community, a real hit to the quality of life in these communities."

Ms. Tyson said the loans should help businesses make investments to adapt to life during the pandemic — like investing in online ordering technology or outdoor dining — or to position themselves for the post-pandemic world. But the state can't afford to cover day-to-day expenses the way the federal government did in the spring.

Seccession Art & Design, a gallery and boutique in San Francisco, has survived the first nine

months of the pandemic through a combination of loans, donations from customers and an aggressive shift in strategy toward online sales, which had been only a small part of the business.

But Eden Stein, who owns the 13-year-old business, said she wasn't sure how long that could continue. California is reimposing restrictions on retail businesses, which could hurt sales during what she calls a make-or-break holiday season. Her lease is up in the spring, and she hasn't decided whether to renew it.

Ms. Stein is thinking of applying for a rebuilding loan from the state but is nervous about taking on more debt. She is applying for a grant under a separate state program, but that won't be enough to sustain the business. She doesn't know what the local economy will look like after the pandemic, she said, but it is essential for small businesses to have enough confidence to renew leases and plan for the long term.

"I'm not concerned about how hard I can work, how I can connect with my customers or my community," Ms. Stein said. "I am concerned that I will eventually run out of money."

VIRUS FALLOUT

Virus Digest

CURRENCY

British Pound Tumbles As Brexit Deadline Nears

As Britain approaches yet another new deadline to strike a trade deal with the European Union on Sunday, the pound is closing out its worst week in three months. It took a sharp turn lower against the euro on Thursday, and sunk further on Friday, as traders grappled with the prospect that Britain's trade talks with the European Union could really fail.

"The markets tend to think as long as they are talking there is hope. I've been really cautious about that," said Jane Foley, a strategist at Rabobank. "There may not be a deal but there will be disruption, even if there is a deal. And there will be political fallout."

All of which is bad for the currency. In just under three weeks, the Brexit transition period will end and, if no agreement is reached, Britain will be forced to do business with its largest trading partner on World Trade Organization terms, meaning tariffs would be introduced on goods and there would be less chance of future cooperation between services industries. So far three issues — fishing rights, business competition rules and how a deal will be enforced — have stalled the talks.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson went to Brussels on Wednesday night to dine with the European Commission president, Ursula von der Leyen, to try a breach the impasse. By time the fish dinner was over, there were reports that the outlook for a deal was even more gloomy. A new deadline was set for Sunday.

Then on Thursday, the European Commission laid out its plans for what it would do if there was no deal. And Mr. Johnson said an agreement was "not yet there at all" and that there was a "strong possibility" of no deal.

The perpetual optimism of the financial markets has been tested many times before. Innumerable Brexit deadlines have come and gone. But this time, there is serious concern about how an agreement, if one is reached, could be ratified into law before Jan. 1. The British Parliament is preparing plans to work until Christmas, but the European Union will have a harder time gathering 27 nations over the holiday period.

This week has been the worst for the pound since early September, when traders got spooked that Boris Johnson would thwart a trade deal by introducing a new bill that clashed with the E.U. withdrawal agreement and break international law.

Even before the end of the transition period, Britain got a glimpse at the type of disruption that occurs when trade isn't running smoothly, when Honda shut down its assembly plant in England this week because parts were stuck in transit.

The economic impact of more trade disruption in the new year once customs checks begin will weigh on a British economy attempting to scratch out a recovery during a second wave of the pandemic. Data on Thursday showed that gross domestic product increased 0.4 percent in October, a slowdown before England went into a monthlong lockdown in November. *ESHE NELSON*

DINING

A Surprise Savior of Pubs In Britain: Scotch Eggs

England's recent lockdown has led to an unlikely surge in sales of an oval, somewhat greasy and crumbly item of British gastronomy: the Scotch egg.

Makers of Scotch eggs are reporting huge jumps in sales to pubs because, by serving them, many establishments can also serve beer and other drinks to customers.

Scotch & Co., a supplier to pubs across Britain, saw a 25 percent increase in Scotch egg sales last week, to 7,500, and expects more as Christmas approaches, said Mark Davidson, a co-founder of the company.

Scotch eggs have rarely garnered this much attention. Typically composed of a boiled egg encased in sausage meat and bread crumbs and then fried or baked, often big enough to fill your hand and not especially light, they ranked among Britons' least loved foods, according to a YouGov survey (alongside pork pie and bubble and squeak).

But their star turn arrived with the latest lockdown rules, which are divided in three tiers according to the severity of the coronavirus's spread. Under Tier 2, the category that covers London and most of England, pubs cannot provide alcohol for consumption on the premises "unless with a substantial meal, so they are operating as a restaurant."

Scotch eggs, once relegated bar snacks with sausage rolls if they were even served at all, are now turning up on the menu at pubs. And customers know they can legally sit and enjoy their pint if they order a Scotch egg, too. *GENEVA ABDUL*



KRISTON JAE BETHEL FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

At Philadelphia International Airport, American Airlines built a 25,000-square-foot warehouse for cold storage of medicine. It can store shipments as low as minus 4 degrees Fahrenheit.

Air Rescue's Goal: Billions of Vaccine Doses Worldwide

FROM FIRST BUSINESS PAGE

zer's must be stored at an incredibly low minus 94 degrees Fahrenheit. Moderna's can be kept at a more easily managed minus 4 degrees.

For its vaccine, Pfizer designed special cooler containers that can be stuffed with dry ice, which is solid carbon dioxide. But the aviation authorities limit how much dry ice can be carried on planes because it turns to gas, making the air potentially toxic for pilots and crews.

After running tests that showed it was safe, United asked the Federal Aviation Administration last month to raise the limit so it could fly the Pfizer vaccine from Brussels International Airport to Chicago O'Hare International Airport, according to an F.A.A. letter. The agency agreed, allowing the airline to carry up to 15,000 pounds of dry ice aboard a Boeing 777-224, compared with the previous limit of 3,000 pounds, according to the letter. A single 777 can carry up to one million doses, the airline said.

American and Delta are also working with the agency to increase dry ice limits for vaccine shipment. And Boeing said it had been working closely with passenger and cargo carriers and global regulators to help safely transport as much of the vaccines as possible. In service letters, on-line symposiums and calls, the airplane manufacturer has shared its own findings on dry ice emission rates and important safety procedures. Boeing also said it was

'We believe it's going to take every single player in this industry.'

Jessica Tyler, president for cargo for American Airlines.

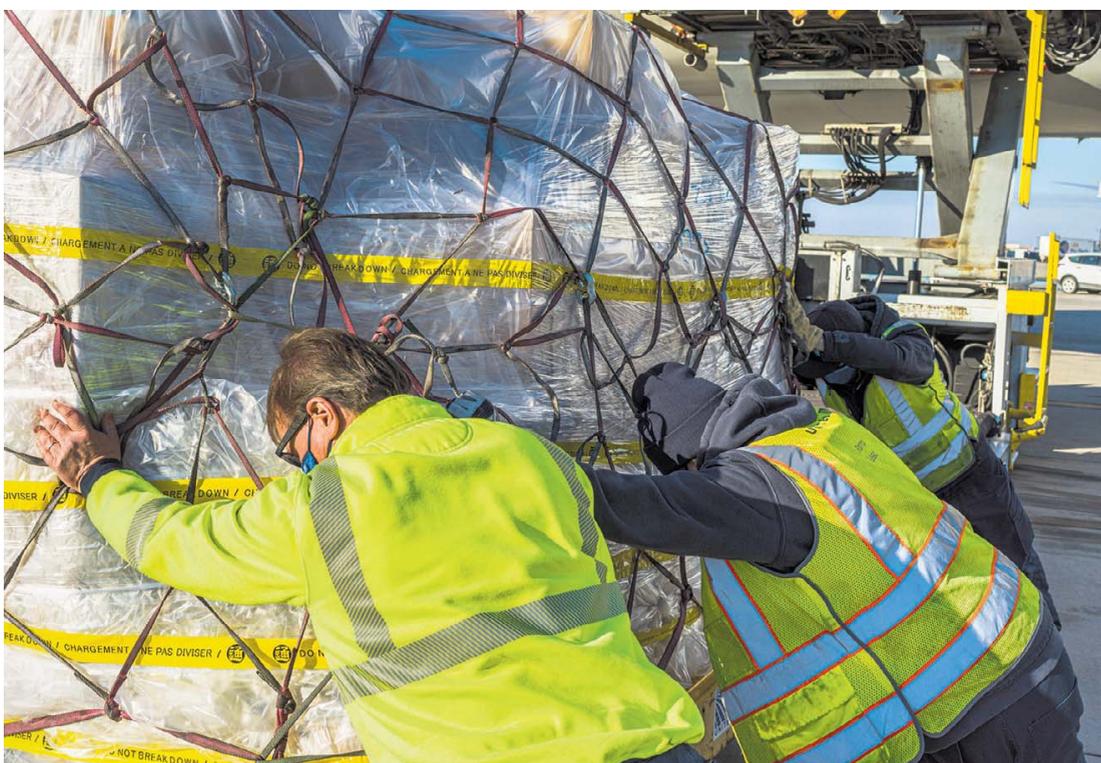
working with other aerospace companies on guidance they could provide to airlines.

United declined to comment on its work with Pfizer, but said it had been laying the groundwork to ship vaccines since the summer, an effort that involved marshaling teams from across the company and the world.

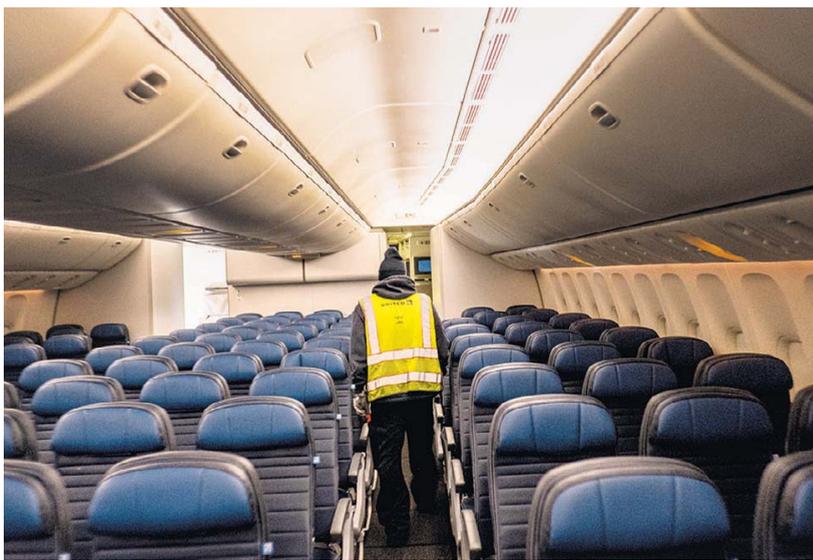
"We decided very quickly that we needed to bring some bright people together to think about how to prepare," Mr. Jacobs said.

The scale and urgency of circulating the coronavirus vaccine are unlike anything airlines and other logistics companies had seen before. UPS has been installing ultralow-temperature freezer farms — able to keep goods as cold as minus 112 degrees Fahrenheit — near its air cargo hubs in the United States and Europe. The company's health care arm has also increased production of dry ice, with U.S. facilities able to make as much as 1,200 pounds an hour. FedEx has added ultracold freezers throughout its U.S. network, too. And both companies have enormous fleets of cargo planes that will help ferry the vaccines.

In normal times, about half of all air cargo is transported by air-



PHOTOGRAPHS BY SEBASTIAN HIDALGO FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES



Unloading a United shipment at O'Hare. With the number of passengers greatly diminished during the pandemic, carriers have had many cargo-only flights, laying the groundwork for the transport of vaccines.

warders," middlemen who organize shipping on behalf of clients like pharmaceutical manufacturers and distributors. With the vaccine, carriers expect to work directly with those customers in some cases, because of the urgency of getting the vaccine to where it is needed.

American and Delta are working with McKesson, a major medical supplier, which the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention this summer assigned to serve as a sort of centralized distributor for coronavirus vaccines. Each major vaccine manufacturer, except for Pfizer, has said it will use McKesson to distribute its product in the United States, according to Rob Walpole, vice president of Delta Cargo.

Since August, Delta has ferried vaccine trial shipments, test kits and other products within the United States and from Belgium and Latin America into America, Mr. Walpole said on a call with reporters this month. The airline has also created a dedicated "vaccine control tower" to track and coordinate shipments.

While the influx of dry ice has posed a challenge for airlines, so has the speed with which the vaccines have arrived, he said.

"Like many things this year, there's kind of an unprecedented intensity and amount of change that's happened in the last two months," Mr. Walpole said. "That's tested everyone that's associated with this."

lines, often beneath the feet of passengers. The steep decline in flights this spring removed much of that capacity, but the urgent need for masks, gloves and ventilators created a big opportunity for cash-starved carriers, allowing them to recapture at least some of that lost business. Many airlines, including United, American, Lufthansa and Virgin Atlantic, began running flights only to haul cargo, and some have gone so far as to belt boxes and goods into the seats where passengers normally sit.

Now, airlines are preparing to run vaccine-only flights: planes that are chock-full of freezer boxes or coolers, with a skeleton crew.

In mid-November, American

Airlines conducted a series of trial flights from Miami to South America to put thermal packaging and its own handling procedures to the test. It has also already transported shipments for vaccine trials around the world. Other preparations, though critical, are more mundane. Those include lining up the certifications and authorizations to transport the goods, ensuring that handoffs of the vaccine will be perfectly timed, and making sure that the planes needed are in the right place at the right time.

"We believe it's going to take every single player in this industry — not just the airline industry, but really the supply-chain logistics industry — to pull this off," said Jessica Tyler, president for cargo

for American Airlines.

Airlines have experience transporting the flu vaccine, and the industry has pursued more pharmaceutical business in recent years. In 2015, for example, American built a 25,000-square-foot warehouse at its Philadelphia International Airport hub dedicated to cold storage of pharmaceuticals. That warehouse, which is monitored around the clock, can store shipments as low as minus 4 degrees Fahrenheit, and is the largest of a handful of such facilities that the airline operates at a half-dozen airports in the United States and Europe. Delta and United operate similar cold storage networks.

When it comes to cargo, airlines typically work with "freight for-

Personal Finance

For M.B.A. Students, Key Disconnections

With classes largely being held remotely, the chance meetings important for networking are fewer.

Wealth Matters

By PAUL SULLIVAN

Getting a master's in business administration is about a lot more than book learning.

It's about the conversations in class and the chance meetings before and after the lecture. It's about joining clubs that promote a professional or personal interest. Above all, it's about the networking with fellow students as well as with the corporate recruiters and successful alumni who come to campus — all in the hope of receiving a career boost.

It's not about sitting alone in your apartment and staring at a video call screen for classes, networking and socializing. Another virtual happy hour, anyone?

And all this comes with a substantial tab. Many of the top business schools calculate the total annual cost — counting tuition, room and board — at more than \$100,000, with some closer to \$120,000. That doesn't include the cost of not working for two years. And the schools have not reduced their tuition in the pandemic.

Students in the M.B.A. class of 2021 have been hit particularly hard. They began their program in fall 2019, and all went as usual until midway through the spring semester, when classes went virtual and the long-planned international trips that typically populate the semester were canceled. The lucky ones kept their summer internships, albeit remotely. For others, internships were canceled. And this school year has been more of the same.

As to their job prospects at the end of all this? Students who want to work with large companies in traditional fields like consulting, finance and technology have generally fared the best. Those who had hoped to join a start-up are still waiting, while those who had planned to go into fields that were disrupted by the pandemic — real estate, hospitality, even health care — are facing an uncertain spring.

"Is it worth \$200,000, plus what I could have been making?" asked Terence Mullin, who worked in investment banking and private equity in Chicago before enrolling at the Haas School of Business at the University of California, Berkeley, where all the classes are online and the only approved interaction is via Zoom. "No."

Mr. Mullin is one of those students who had hoped to change careers — to online gaming, in his case — and he has yet to receive an offer.

The cost of business school has long been high. Haas, as part of a public university, is on the less expensive end of top programs, with tuition under \$70,000 a year. Columbia University's



David Arteaga-Caicedo, in his second year at Yale's School of Management, said the option of attending class in person was not worth it.

graduate program at its business school costs \$77,000 a year, with total costs over two years estimated at \$235,000.

"The M.B.A. is a high-touch program, and covering our costs means we charge pretty high tuition," said Jonah Rockoff, an economist and senior vice dean for curriculum and programs at Columbia Business School. "I always teach my students the biggest cost of the M.B.A. is the opportunity cost of giving up two years of income and career advancement."

Academics, which students in the past would often say was the least of their reasons for going to business school, are the area where the schools have had the most control in translating in-person learning to virtual or hybrid models. Students said the effectiveness depended as much on the course as how it was delivered. Mr. Mullin said his negotiations class at Haas was probably better online, because it involved just two students in a video breakout room. But larger, core classes have been tough.

"Keeping your concentration going for three hours on Zoom, particularly if you have other classes, is hard," said Vishesh Garg, a second-year student at Columbia who moved from India to attend class in person whenever it was offered, he said.

Yale University's School of Manage-

ment adopted a hybrid model, where students could attend class on alternating days or just go virtual. David Arteaga-Caicedo, also in his second year of the program, opted to attend virtually, even though he is living in New Haven, Conn.

"Part of the beauty of going to class was the serendipitous encounters," he said. "Here, you'd go to class and then have to leave immediately."

Those spontaneous encounters are something that even the top-tier institutions cannot recreate virtually.

"The pandemic has taken the bulk of it away," said Kerwin Charles, dean of Yale's business school. "I've said to second years that we will do all we can in a remote context or a remote mechanism to carry on those activities. But they're not chance encounters."

As to traveling for class work or with classmates, which many students cite as crucial to their selection of a business school, that is not happening. Nor are the interactions with international students — many of whom went home in the spring and have struggled to return.

Mercedes Li, who was working in health care consulting before going to Columbia Business School, said she was most disappointed about missing out on the international programs.

"I was hoping to take advantage of international connections and the travel

programs our school offers," she said. "I don't see any of those happening before I graduate in the spring."

Megan Reichert said she had chosen Haas over other business schools for two classes: international business development and extreme leadership, which ends with a hiking trek in the Andes. Neither has happened.

But she said she had gained some unexpected skills as one of the leaders of the spring project for her international business development class, in which the students advised a Chinese corporation.

"I was in a position to say this is not what I or anyone on our team signed on for, but nor was it what the corporation had signed on to," Ms. Reichert said. "I just reshaped the project entirely around what people needed. It was a very unique opportunity to lead through what was very disappointing, frustrating news."

Students who went to business school to change careers are, in some cases, finding that the pandemic has put up new challenges. Students who took offers from larger companies last fall for their summer internships may end up in a better position than those who waited until the spring, when smaller companies and start-ups usually come calling.

Mr. Arteaga-Caicedo had been trading metal derivatives in New York

before going to Yale. He wanted to go into consulting and secured an internship before the pandemic hit. He did an internship at a consulting firm virtually and has already accepted a job offer for next year.

"I feel very fortunate," he said. "The pandemic has forced me to think about my priorities as well. I've been able to step back and pause and ask, 'What do you really want to do?'"

Ms. Reichert had the opposite experience. She interned at Chewy, a pet food website, this past summer, but she did so from her parents' house in Spotsylvania County, Va. — 1,000 miles from Chewy's headquarters in Dania Beach, Fla.

Networking is a big part of the M.B.A. experience. It's the component that could pay the most dividends far after graduation. But in a virtual or socially distanced world, it has been stunted.

"The social component has been disappointing," said Emma Finkelstein, a second-year student at the University of Virginia's Darden School of Business. "If I'm a floating head on Zoom, I'm going to have a different relationship with my professors and classmates than if we were in social situations."

Mr. Garg, who describes himself as introverted, said he had pushed himself to get out.

"It's a lot about being proactive," he said. "I've been grabbing coffee with people. It takes a lot of effort. There are some days you don't want to do it. But then you realize you've been home for three days and haven't seen anyone."

And it's not only less outgoing students who have been feeling excluded from the social aspect of business school. International students who haven't been able to return to the United States and students from under-represented minority groups have also been affected.

"Certainly, I would say the consequences of the pandemic for the types of informal networking that occurs on our campus could be more impactful for students who felt, for whatever reason, less included among their M.B.A. peers," said Dr. Rockoff of Columbia. "These lost opportunities for networking and connections will have a significant impact on them."

He said Columbia had plans for networking activities for the class of 2021 after it had graduated and the pandemic was under control.

For Mr. Arteaga-Caicedo, who is a Colombian-American and gay, being at Yale during the pandemic has opened his eyes.

"In real time, it made me see how something as huge as a pandemic can affect so many different people in such different ways," he said. "I'll carry that into my next year. I want to keep that awareness in mind."

The Debt Is Fake. The Harm Can Be Real.

Watch out for invalid entries from collectors on your credit report that can blemish a loan application.

Your Money Adviser

By ANN CARRNS

Consider this unnerving situation: You apply for a loan, only to learn that your credit report is marred by a delinquent debt — one that you have already paid or maybe don't recognize.

You could be a victim of unscrupulous debt collectors who have placed invalid or fake debts on your consumer credit reports to coerce you to pay them. The tactic is called illegal "debt parking," or sometimes "passive debt collection."

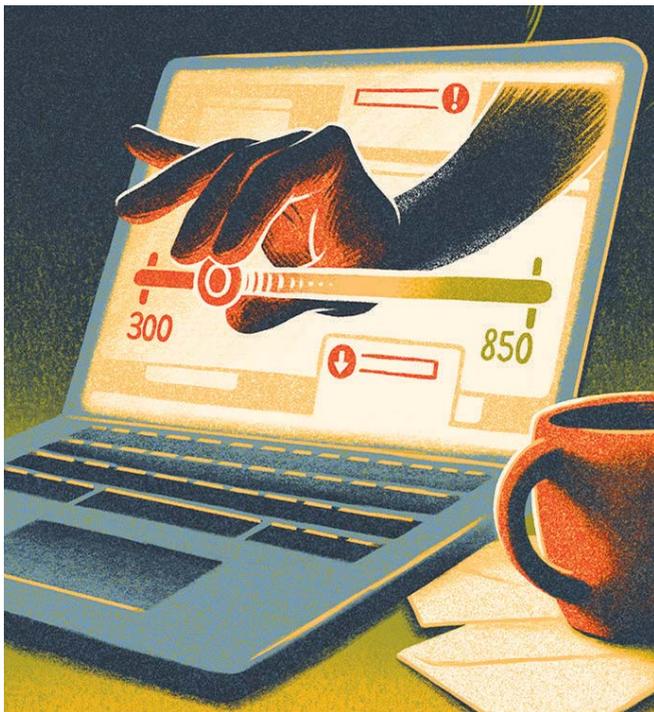
The Federal Trade Commission recently took action against a Missouri collection company and its owners, alleging that they collected more than \$24 million from consumers, largely by placing "bogus or highly questionable" debts on their credit reports.

"The defendants used this illegal 'debt parking' to coerce people to pay debts they didn't owe or didn't recognize," Andrew Smith, director of the F.T.C.'s bureau of consumer protection, said in prepared remarks about the agency's settlement with the company, Midwest Recovery Systems. The F.T.C. said in a related blog post that the case was its first legal challenge to debt parking under the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act.

In debt parking cases, collectors don't contact the consumer before reporting the debt to credit bureaus. That means people learn about the debt only when it is flagged as they are applying for a mortgage or a car loan or even a job. Because they don't want to lose the loan or the job offer, consumers may feel pressured to pay off the "bad" debt quickly.

Midwest Recovery received thousands of complaints from consumers each month, the F.T.C.'s complaint said. When the company investigated the complaints, it found that as many as 97 percent of the debts were inaccurate or not valid, the agency said.

That's not surprising, according to the F.T.C., because many of the debts that Midwest Recovery was pursuing had been obtained from other companies, including payday lenders, that the



BRIAN BRITTIGAN

agency has previously sued for illegal practices. (Debts are often sold, sometimes multiple times, to different collection agencies.)

The debts that Midwest Recovery sought to collect included payday loans, some of which were "fabricated from consumers' sensitive financial information," the complaint said.

The debts also included "significant quantities" of medical debt, which often causes confusion because of the complex system of insurance coverage and cost sharing associated with health care bills. More than 43 million people have medical debts on their credit reports, and medical debts make up more than half of the debts reported by collection companies, the F.T.C. said.

In one example cited in the complaint, a consumer applying for a mortgage was told that a \$1,500 medical debt placed on his credit report by Midwest Recovery had lowered his credit score, putting his loan approval at risk. The borrower contacted the hospital and learned that he owed just an \$80 co-payment, which he then paid. Despite the finding, the F.T.C. said, Midwest Recovery refused to remove the larger debt and threatened the consumer with a lawsuit if he didn't pay.

In some cases, the company appears to have rereported debts that it had removed from the consumer's credit reports — sometimes after the borrower paid the company and was as-

Q. and A. About Debt Collection

How can I protect myself against debt parking?

Check your credit report regularly, said Chi Chi Wu, a lawyer with the National Consumer Law Center.

If you find items that appear to be incorrect, contact the lender or collection agency listed on your report, as well as the credit bureau that issued the report.

A report by the Federal Trade Commission in 2012 found that one in four consumers identified errors in credit reports that might affect scores, and 5 percent had errors that could result in less favorable terms for loans.

The F.T.C. advised checking your report before applying for a loan or a job to avoid surprises.

sured that the debt would be struck from the credit report.

The settlement with the F.T.C., filed in U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Missouri, prohibits Midwest Recovery and its owners from debt parking and from pursuing consumers for debts without a "reasonable basis." Midwest Recovery must also contact the credit reporting bureaus, which maintain consumer credit reports, and ask that all debts reported by Midwest Recovery be deleted.

Midwest Recovery and its owners, Brandon M. Tumber, Kenny W. Conway and Joseph H. Smith, "neither admit nor deny" the allegations in complaint, according to the settlement. A lawyer representing the company and Mr. Tumber didn't respond to a request for comment. Attempts to reach the owners at a phone number listed for Midwest Recovery were unsuccessful.

The settlement includes a financial judgment of \$24.3 million, but the payment is partly suspended because of Midwest Recovery's "inability to pay," the F.T.C. said, so the company must pay about \$57,000. One of the owners must also sell his stake in another debt collection company and pay that amount to the F.T.C. If the defendants are found to have misrepresented their

How do I check my credit report?

You can get free credit reports from Equifax, Experian and TransUnion at [annualcreditreport.com](https://www.annualcreditreport.com).

Normally, you can get just one free report from each bureau once a year. But because of the pandemic, the bureaus are offering free weekly reports through April.

How can I dispute a debt that I believe is incorrect?

It is best to dispute the debt in writing to the collection agency and the credit bureau that provided the report, Ms. Wu said.

The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau website offers letter templates and other tips for dealing with debt collectors.

ability to pay, the full judgment is due.

The settlement will be final when the judge officially enters the order, an F.T.C. spokesman, Jay Mayfield, said. A court conference is scheduled for next week.

Rohit Chopra, one of the trade commission's five members, voted against the settlement and criticized it as inadequate. In a statement, he said he disagreed with the terms because the defendants were not barred from working in the debt collection industry and consumers "will receive almost no help whatsoever."

Mr. Chopra said he would like to see the F.T.C. work closely with the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau on such cases because that could help victims qualify for compensation from the bureau's civil penalty fund.

Also, he said, a "systemic fix" for debt parking probably requires the major credit-reporting bureaus — Equifax, Experian and TransUnion — to take action to cut off debts submitted by problem collection firms.

The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau is expected to publish a second round of debt-collection rules this month to address debt parking, among other issues.

Sports Saturday

The New York Times

College Sports Has Reported At Least 6,629 Virus Cases.



RON JENKINS/ASSOCIATED PRESS



KEN RUINARD/USA TODAY, VIA REUTERS



CARLOS OSORIO/ASSOCIATED PRESS



HANNAH FOSLIEN/GETTY IMAGES

There Are Many More.

This article is by Alan Blinder, Lauryn Higgins and Benjamin Guggenheim.

More than 6,600 college athletes, coaches and staff members have tested positive for the coronavirus this year, a dispiriting measure of the pathogen's reach across the United States and its spread among some of the country's most closely monitored people.

At least 6,629 people who play and work in athletic departments that compete in college football's premier leagues have contracted the virus, according to a New York Times analysis. The vast majority of those infections have been reported since Aug. 15, as players, coaches and staff prepared for and navigated the fall semester, including football season.

The actual tally of cases during the pandemic is assuredly far larger than what is shown by The Times's count, the most comprehensive public measure of the virus in college sports. The Times was able to gather complete data for just 78 of the 130 universities in the National Collegiate Athletic Association's Football Bowl Subdivision, the top level of college football.

Covid spreads despite stringent safety protocols.

Some of those schools released the statistics only in response to requests filed under public records laws.

The remaining schools, many of them public institutions, released no statistics or limited information about their athletic departments, or they stopped providing data just ahead of football season. This had the effect of drawing a curtain of secrecy around college sports during the gravest public health crisis in the United States in a century. No athletic department that shared data reported any deaths associated with the virus, the spread of which the N.C.A.A. did not track at its member schools.

"We felt there was nothing to hide," said Barry Alvarez, the athletic director at Wisconsin, which recorded at least 112 cases in athletics, missed back-to-back football games during an outbreak and had a third game — against Minnesota — canceled because of cases within its program. "We felt that it was in our best interest and

Reporting was contributed by Jordan Allen, Barbara Harvey, Danielle Ivory, Alex Lemonides, Alex Leeds Matthews, Cierra S. Queen and Mitch Smith.



STACEY WESCOTT/CHICAGO TRIBUNE, VIA ASSOCIATED PRESS

In August, the parents of Iowa players protested when it appeared the Big Ten would postpone football until the spring.

everyone else's best interest to put out accurate information, particularly if we had to cancel a game, so you wouldn't have rumors or misinformation."

Although the cases in athletic departments are only a fraction of those in a country that has recorded more than 15 million infections — the most of any nation — they collectively demonstrate how the virus can intrude on programs even when they have stringent safety protocols, including widespread testing. The Big Ten Conference, which required its athletes and coaches to submit to daily testing, had the most known cases of any top league and saw some of the worst outbreaks in college sports.

Raw numerical figures like the ones universities have provided cannot reveal the origins of any single infection or cluster of cases. An athlete could have easily contracted the virus from a friend or relative rather than a teammate. And experts believe that virtually none of the infections in college sports are linked to the games themselves. Rather, they are far more often traceable to meetings, meals, travel or nonathletic activities that then seed cases.

But it is also true the college sports industry, partly hampered by disjointed governance that is particularly acute in football, has developed only so much of a shared strategy to combat the pandemic's risks.

Testing standards vary from one conference to the next. So do league policies on matters like whether spectators can attend games, how to reinstate players who are sidelined by the virus and when teams can postpone or cancel games. The N.C.A.A. has health guidelines, but many are only recommendations.

A survey the National Athletic Trainers' Association released in September found that not even half believed that coaches and staff members across college sports were "fully compliant" with safety protocols related to the virus. And university leaders have routinely hidden their deliberations and debates from public view.

The N.C.A.A., whose often limited power over its leagues and schools has been conspicuous during the pandemic, said in a statement to The Times that "medical data is governed by a variety of federal and state regulations and, for that reason, access and use are determined at the institutional level."

It said more than a dozen members shared information with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention "for the purpose of better understanding resocialization as it pertains to quarantine and testing."

The data gathered by The Times shows at least some of the consequences and risks of a porous, multibillion-dollar athletic

Limited Data Disclosure From Schools



Coronavirus Cases in College Athletic Departments

Conference	CASES	DATA DISCLOSED	CASES	DATA DISCLOSED	
Big Ten	1,850		Mountain West	577	
Minnesota	336	Complete	Boise State	160	Complete
Iowa†	330	Complete	Utah State	140	Complete
Michigan†	201	Complete	Wyoming	134	Complete
Michigan State	185	Complete	Colorado State	75	Complete
Indiana	171	Complete	New Mexico	48	Complete
Penn State†	167	Complete	San Jose State	8	Complete
Purdue	147	Complete	Hawaii	6	Complete
Maryland	142	Complete	U.N.L.V.	4	Limited
Wisconsin	112	Complete	Fresno State	2	Limited
Rutgers	30	Limited	Air Force	—	None
Illinois	20	Limited	San Diego State	—	None
Nebraska	6	Limited	Nevada-Reno	—	None
Ohio State	3	Limited			
Northwestern	—	None	Sun Belt	535	
			Georgia Southern	185	Complete
Big 12	1,357		Louisiana-Monroe	124	Complete
Oklahoma	266	Complete	Appalachian State	124	Complete
Texas Tech	223	Complete	Georgia State	77	Complete
Oklahoma State	171	Complete	Arkansas State	10	Limited
Kansas	166	Complete	Louisiana	7	Limited
Baylor	145	Complete	Texas State	5	Limited
West Virginia	141	Complete	Troy	3	Limited
Texas	108	Complete	Coastal Carolina	—	None
Iowa State	81	Complete	South Alabama	—	None
Kansas State	56	Complete			
Texas Christian	—	None	Mid-American	424	
			Toledo	115	Complete
Conference USA	939		Western Michigan	99	Complete
Florida Atlantic	183	Complete	Ohio	77	Complete
Louisiana Tech	138	Complete	Eastern Michigan	68	Complete
Charlotte	122	Complete	Buffalo	33	Complete
Marshall	119	Complete	Miami (Ohio)	27	Complete
North Texas	99	Complete	Ball State	5	Complete
Florida International	83	Complete	Akron	—	None
Middle Tenn. State	78	Complete	Bowling Green	—	None
Texas-El Paso	42	Complete	Central Michigan	—	None
Rice	28	Complete	Northern Illinois	—	None
Old Dominion	23	Complete	Kent State	—	None
Texas-San Antonio	17	Complete			
Western Kentucky	6	Limited	American	362	
Southern Mississippi	1	Limited	East Carolina	151	Complete
U.A.B.	—	None	Memphis	104	Complete
			Tulane	71	Complete
Atlantic Coast	809		Southern Methodist	13	Limited
Clemson	216	Complete	Tulsa	8	Complete
Louisville‡	174	Complete	Houston	7	Limited
N.C. State	108	Complete	Central Florida	3	Limited
Virginia	103	Complete	South Florida	2	Limited
Georgia Tech	70	Complete	Cincinnati	2	Limited
Notre Dame‡	52	Complete	Temple	1	Limited
North Carolina	37	Limited	Navy	—	None
Duke	26	Complete			
Syracuse	14	Complete	Pac-12	362	
Boston College‡	5	Complete	Washington State	125	Complete
Florida State	2	Limited	Washington	56	Complete
Wake Forest	1	Limited	Stanford	32	Complete
Miami	1	Limited	Southern California	30	Complete
Virginia Tech	—	None	U.C.L.A.‡	30	Complete
Pittsburgh	—	None	Oregon State	28	Complete
			California	25	Complete
Southeastern	587		Utah	13	Complete
Missouri	219	Complete	Arizona	8	Complete
Florida	170	Complete	Colorado	6	Limited
Tennessee	99	Complete	Arizona State	4	Limited
Auburn	58	Complete	Oregon	—	None
Kentucky	24	Complete			
Mississippi State	8	Limited	Independent schools		
Texas A&M	2	Limited	Connecticut	107	Complete
Alabama	2	Limited	New Mexico State	80	Complete
Mississippi	2	Limited	Massachusetts	12	Complete
Arkansas	1	Limited	Army	6	Complete
Georgia	1	Limited	Liberty	2	Limited
South Carolina	1	Limited	Brigham Young	1	Limited
Vanderbilt	—	None			
Louisiana State	—	None			

†College reports only positive tests and may count duplicate cases.
‡College did not clarify whether data includes duplicate cases.
Note: Data shown for the 130 schools in the National Collegiate Athletic Association's Football Bowl Subdivision. Colleges and government agencies report this data differently, so exercise caution when comparing institutions. Case totals include confirmed positive cases and probable cases, where available. In most instances, case data was confirmed by university officials. For Army, case information was confirmed by an official with knowledge of the situation who was not authorized to speak publicly.

network centered on college campuses. Although five members withheld complete data, schools in the Big Ten, which includes 14 universities, acknowledged at least 1,850 infections, the most of any league.

Minnesota reported 336 cases in its athletic department, more than any other school in the F.B.S., including 176 in November alone. Iowa, also a Big Ten member, has disclosed 330 positive tests.

Although the Big Ten struggled with the virus, especially as the pandemic raged through its Midwest-centric footprint, the data shows at least the partial extent of the struggles in other leagues' athletic departments.

Athletic departments in the Big 12 Conference, which has 10 schools, for instance, reported at least 1,357 cases. And although most members of the Southeastern Conference, the college football league that many people fear, respect and revile in equal measure, refused to provide complete data, The Times found at least 587 cases in its athletic departments.

Members of the Pac-12 Conference — last of the Power Five conferences to start its football season — reported 357 cases within athletics, and Atlantic Coast Conference schools disclosed 809.

A handful of athletic departments reported only the number of positive tests, not unique cases, meaning it is possible that some individuals were counted multiple times. Other schools did not specify whether they were counting tests or cases. The Times excluded all numbers from those schools — nearly 1,400 positive tests — from its national total.

The ranks of the infected have included some of the most prominent figures in college athletics. In football, the coaches Nick Saban of Alabama and Ryan Day of Ohio State tested positive and spent days in isolation. Tom Izzo, the men's basketball coach at Michigan State, tested positive, as did Jim Boheim of Syracuse and Scott Drew of Baylor. At least three of the Southeastern Conference's athletic directors tested positive.

Universities have rarely identified players who contracted the virus, as Clemson did when it announced that Trevor Lawrence, a quarterback who could be one of the most coveted players in next year's N.F.L. draft, had tested positive.

Clemson is among the schools that have proactively released regular tallies of cases within its athletic programs. "We understand there is public interest in our department's results, and felt that in this matter of public health, transparency was the best way to operate," Jeff Kallin, a spokesman for the athletic department, said in an email.

Clemson's opponent in the

From left, Texas Tech taking the field; Clemson's Travis Etienne; Michigan State's Tom Izzo; Minnesota fans.

Dec. 19 A.C.C. championship game, Notre Dame, also issued regular updates about cases.

"We have nothing to hide," Brian Kelly, the football coach at Notre Dame, said in October. "We're fighting through this coronavirus like everybody else."

He added: "We felt like if we were going to hide numbers, there would be a sense of distrust, and we didn't want to start with that. We wanted to start with transparency and get the numbers out there and let everybody know that we would."

Dozens of schools did not. By late July, The Times had found at least 630 cases in athletic departments on 68 campuses. The University of North Carolina had reported 37 infections, for instance, and Western Kentucky University said it had six.

But those schools were among the 13 that stopped releasing statistics about cases within their athletic programs. Some schools changed their approaches as football season neared, abruptly citing privacy laws to justify withholding the very data they had provided for weeks or months. A handful offered no explanation at all.

Others, like North Carolina, said they had opted to disclose cases only through campuswide counts. Those tallies could not be used to assess the reach of the virus exclusively within athletic departments.

The University of Central Florida merged its athletics data with broader campus counts, a change it made after players worried that infected students would be easily identified on game day, said Danny White, the athletic director.

"We're trying to listen to our student-athletes," White said in an interview with The Orlando Sentinel.

Nineteen universities, including Coastal Carolina, Louisiana State and Northwestern, declined or ignored requests for information, and The Times could not locate any case data released by those schools. Many that explicitly rejected requests offered no explanations.

Alvarez was unsurprised that some schools had held back. As a former football coach, he said he understood. But he also said he and others at Wisconsin had concluded that ordinary hesitations should not always apply in 2020.

"I think coaches are reluctant sometimes to give out a scouting report, et cetera," Alvarez said. "That's old school. A lot of coaches are paranoid — that comes with the business — but we felt this was more serious."



POOL PHOTO BY MATT CASHORE

Trevor Lawrence, Clemson's quarterback, missed action after testing positive for the coronavirus earlier this season.

MIXED MARTIAL ARTS

COLLEGE FOOTBALL

SEC and Disney Reach TV Deal Worth \$3 Billion

By KEVIN DRAPER and ALAN BLINDER

The broadcast rights to the Southeastern Conference's biggest football games, like the annual Iron Bowl matchup between Alabama and Auburn, have been purchased by Disney, meaning that all of the league's games will appear on its networks including ABC and ESPN for 10 years starting in 2024.

The agreement, announced Thursday evening by the ESPN chairman Jimmy Pitaro at Disney's investor day, will end the SEC's nearly three-decade association with CBS, and give Disney ownership of all of the SEC's lucrative, and accordingly expensive, media rights.

ESPN will pay the SEC around \$300 million annually for the rights, according to two people with knowledge of the agreement who spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not permitted to speak publicly. That is nearly a sixfold increase from the \$55 million annually CBS currently pays.

ABC will show Saturday afternoon SEC games, "as well as selected Saturday primetime football games" according to an SEC news release. That is in addition to other SEC football games that will appear across ESPN cable channels and the ESPN+ streaming service.

"We will be able to schedule games on any network in any of the windows, which will allow for flexibility in that regard vis-à-vis teams that would prefer to be at night and afternoon," said Burke Magnus, an ESPN executive, at a news conference.

Greg Sankey, the SEC's commissioner, indicated that Disney's scheduling flexibility across times and networks was a key consideration in the conference's sale of the rights to it.

"One of our primary goals was to improve the television scheduling process in ways that will benefit our students, coaches, alumni and fans," Sankey said in the news release.

The new deal, worth at least \$3 billion in total, adds on to Disney's existing foothold in the SEC.

CBS has been the signature television home of SEC football since 1996, and of the conference's championship game since 2001. Even after ESPN signed a \$2 billion agreement with the SEC in 2008, and then created the SEC Network in 2013 and extended its agreement with the conference through 2034, CBS retained the rights to one SEC football game each week.

Importantly, CBS also got the first choice of games each week. The network's 3:30 p.m. Eastern slot was effectively appointment television on autumn Saturdays, and CBS also had some SEC doubleheaders and the league championship game.

The SEC and CBS signed a 15-year rights agreement in 2008, just before an explosion of television money reached college sports. Even after the SEC expanded and created the SEC Network with ESPN, the financial terms of its agreement with CBS remained unchanged — and ultimately became a fantastic bargain for CBS.

With the new agreement, the SEC could overtake the Big Ten Conference as the richest league in college sports.

The SEC, home to 10 of the last 14 national champions in football, swaggers more than any other league in college football, with a slogan — "it just means more" — that elicits as many knowing nods as sneers and jokes. The conference, which is based in Birmingham, Ala., and includes powerhouse schools like Alabama, Florida, Georgia and Louisiana State, distributed more than \$624 million to its 14 schools for the 2018-19 fiscal year, the most recent year for which data is available.

Only a decade earlier, the SEC, then with a dozen members, paid out \$132.5 million to its universities.

And while the league can credit ESPN for much of its recent financial rise, CBS has remained an integral part of college football culture in the South. Many fans referred to the long-time announcers Verne Lundquist, who retired from SEC football in 2016, and Gary Danielson by their first names.

It became apparent a year ago that the SEC's relationship with CBS would conclude at the end of the contract, if not sooner, as conferences struck ever-richer deals. Sports Business Journal reported last December that CBS had pulled out of bidding on an extension of the agreement.

CBS will still show SEC football for the next three years. While there has been some speculation that Disney will buy out the remaining years of the CBS agreement, ESPN's Magnus said, "We are open to that possibility, but obviously it would have to be a circumstance that works for all involved."

ric. That isn't the case with, say, Subway sandwich makers or computer programmers. While their labor has value, it is almost impossible to tie directly to a company's overall revenue.

The high-profile nature of the lawsuit makes it a prime example in the growing call for more robust antitrust enforcement. On Wednesday, the Federal Trade Commission and more than 40 states sued Facebook over antitrust concerns, and in October the Department of Justice filed an antitrust lawsuit against Google.

"I do agree this case is part of a general reopening of the public discourse about monopoly power, as well as a redirection of that concern more specifically to upstream harms to competition, including in labor markets," said Steinbaum, the economist.

If the U.F.C.'s expected appeal of class certification fails, and the judge doesn't grant summary judgment, the U.F.C. will be highly motivated to settle the case, said Brian Fitzpatrick, a professor at Vanderbilt University Law School. "It will be too risky to go to trial," he said in an email, "the \$5B would hang over their head like the Sword of Damocles."

So would the potential changes to the U.F.C.'s business model. In many antitrust cases, it is only a portion of a company's conduct that is under scrutiny. In a price fixing case, for instance, a business might have an illegal agreement with a competitor to set prices, but the vast majority of what the company does is not under scrutiny.

Not so in this case. The U.F.C.'s core business model — how it signs fighters, how much it pays them and how it maintains leverage over them — is being challenged in this lawsuit.

What could a settlement cost? According to Fitzpatrick, the best study on antitrust settlements found they average 19 percent of single damages, a little over \$300 million here. But many of the included cases were different types of antitrust cases, and it is difficult to determine what each side would agree to in a settlement.

Since taking control of the U.F.C., Endeavor has mitigated risk in other parts of the business. The U.F.C. sold its long-term television rights to ESPN in 2018, and the next year sold ESPN the right to exclusively distribute U.F.C. pay-per-view events domestically. That gave the U.F.C. revenue certainty, but also a ceiling on the financial upside of strong selling pay-per-view events.



ISAAC BREKKEN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Fighters accused the U.F.C. of suppressing pay, and it could be forced to pay them nearly \$5 billion.

paid more.

"Fighter comp was the most asked question by financing sources, and it is a critical cost that we must actively manage" read the document.

At a hearing in September, lawyers for the U.F.C. indicated they would appeal any ruling granting class action certification. The U.F.C. has also filed a motion for summary judgment that the judge must rule on, essentially arguing that the fighters have no case and that the suit should be thrown out.

The judge did not publish his written order Thursday, but said he would likely do so by Monday.

Taking six years just to reach a point that is still a long way from a trial is typical of class-action antitrust lawsuits, according to experts. But they also said that there were a handful of unusual factors in this case that could result in it having an outsized impact beyond the world of cage fighting.

This case mostly concerns monopoly power, the lesser known cousin of monopoly power. The fighters say the U.F.C. is a monopoly, which is when there is one dominant buyer of a particular good or service — in this instance, the U.F.C. buying fighting services. So few monopoly cases reach trial that each one is almost by definition precedent-setting.

"This is an entirely novel case as far as I'm aware of," said Mar-

shall Steinbaum, an economics professor at the University of Utah. Most labor-related antitrust lawsuits concern things like anti-poaching agreements or disputes between companies, not workers suing employers. "There's no generally accepted precedent about what constitutes damages arising from labor market monopsony," Steinbaum said.

This case could also hinge on

About 1,200 athletes could be part of a lawsuit over pay.

the definition of damages. Rather than look at an individual fighter and argue that illegal conduct by the U.F.C. suppressed his or her wages, the economic experts for the plaintiffs looked at the entire group of fighters and said the U.F.C.'s conduct suppressed their overall share of U.F.C. revenue.

While wage share is commonly used in professional sports, the U.F.C. argues this is because unions representing athletes choose to bargain based on it, not because there is any legal right to a specific share of wages. As the U.F.C. has grown, so has fighter income, the company's lawyers say, showing

that fighters have benefited from the company's conduct. If the judge allows the plaintiffs to make a wage share argument, it will open the floodgates to class-action lawsuits across the country on this basis, they warn.

"Whether in the sports industry or in other industries, the courts — with good reason — are not in the practice of telling market participants what percentage of revenue they must assign to compensation," William A. Isaacson, a partner at Paul, Weiss and the lead counsel for the U.F.C., wrote in an email. He added that doing so would "serve as a harmful disincentive to ingenuity, risk-taking, and investment" and that former fighters being unhappy with their compensation "does not equate to an antitrust violation nor is it sufficient to demonstrate antitrust injury."

Other lawyers disagree. Hiba Hafiz, a professor at Boston College Law School who worked for the plaintiffs earlier in the case, said the U.F.C.'s suggestion that wage share is novel was simply "a litigation strategy."

Sports labor markets are different from most other labor markets, she said. In sports, "a direct relationship can be measured between athlete performance and revenue generated by the sports organization," said Hafiz, making wage share an appropriate met-

PRO BASKETBALL

Fighters Win Ruling in Case That Could Upend U.F.C.

By KEVIN DRAPER

A federal judge said on Thursday that he would make an important procedural ruling in favor of a group of mixed martial artists who are suing the Ultimate Fighting Championship, accusing it of abusing monopoly power to suppress fighter pay. The lawsuit, which will be granted class action status, could eventually cost the U.F.C. billions of dollars, fundamentally alter the world of mixed martial arts and establish new antitrust case law.

The lawsuit was filed against the U.F.C.'s parent company, Zuffa, in 2014 by Cung Le and a handful of other former U.F.C. fighters. The ruling by the judge, Richard Boulware, means every fighter who competed in the U.F.C. between late 2010 and 2017 — around 1,200 fighters — will be a part of the lawsuit unless they opt out.

However, in a small victory for the U.F.C., Boulware declined to allow a smaller part of the lawsuit go forward, choosing not to grant class action status to the fighters' claims that the U.F.C. also suppressed earnings from their image rights.

The U.F.C. could be forced to pay the fighters almost \$5 billion. At an evidentiary hearing in 2018, one expert for the plaintiffs said fighters were deprived of \$1.6 billion in pay because mixed martial arts lacks a competitive labor market, and in antitrust cases damages are tripled. The \$1.6 billion was determined by a formula comparing the U.F.C., where less than 20 percent of total revenue has historically been paid to fighters, to major team sports like the N.B.A. and N.F.L., where the athletes receive around 50 percent of total revenue.

The fighters are also seeking structural remedies, like a ban on long-term contracts, that could make it easier for potential challengers to the U.F.C. to arise. While there are other professional mixed martial arts organizations, like Bellator, the U.F.C.'s dominance has been undisputed since it bought and folded at least five competitors beginning in 2006.

Controlling fighter pay is key to the U.F.C.'s business. It was bought in 2016 by Endeavor, a Hollywood-based entertainment, sports and media conglomerate backed by private equity money, for \$4 billion. According to an internal document from the time evaluating the purchase, which was made public as part of the lawsuit, bankers Endeavor spoke with were worried about what would happen if fighters were

Sign Here, Please! For Bucks' Antetokounmpo It's Not That Simple

By SCOTT CACCIOLA

When the Milwaukee Bucks showed up for training camp on Sunday, Khris Middleton presented his teammate Giannis Antetokounmpo with a gift for his 26th birthday: a pen. Antetokounmpo did not understand its significance at first.

"Then I was thinking about it, and I realized he was wanting me to sign the contract," he said.

Antetokounmpo got the joke. He thought it was funny. But as more teammates arrived and they continued to bestow him with pens, he apparently stopped laughing.

"It got a little bit old," he said. "I've got 20 pens here in my locker."

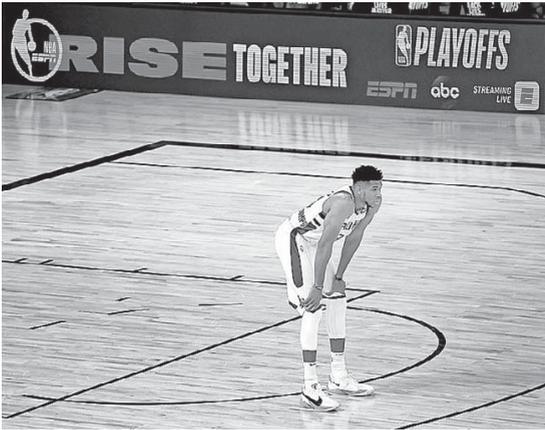
The problem is that Antetokounmpo has not used any of them for their intended purpose. He has until Dec. 21 to sign a so-called supermax contract extension that would be worth about \$227 million and would run through the 2025-26 season. Barring that, or a more modest extension, he would become an unrestricted free agent next summer.

Waiting is the hardest part in Milwaukee, which has gone 49 years since the Bucks won their only N.B.A. championship and now has no shortage of Greek Freak agita. Fans have watched Antetokounmpo blossom from a spindly-limbed teenager into one of the league's most dynamic forces, a back-to-back winner of the N.B.A.'s Most Valuable Player Award.

Now, as the days pass and the deadline to resolve his contract situation comes into sharper focus, Antetokounmpo is holding the city in a state of suspense.

Frank Madden, a management consultant and longtime Bucks fan who has written and co-hosted podcasts about the team, noted how a cloud had been hanging over the franchise in recent months because of the uncertainty surrounding Antetokounmpo, a cloud that had darkened in the wake of another early exit from the playoffs.

"But now we've reached this inflection point where it's not just



KEVIN C. COX/GETTY IMAGES

Giannis Antetokounmpo has lifted the Bucks, who have gone 49 years since their only N.B.A. title, to new levels of popularity.

about the national media saying, 'Does he want to leave?'" Madden said in a telephone interview. "It's also Giannis opening the door to that — or at least not slamming it shut by signing the extension."

Much of that feeling stems from comments that Antetokounmpo made — or chose not to make — on Wednesday at a virtual news conference. In addition to revealing that he had a new collection of unused pens, Antetokounmpo was noncommittal about his extension. He said he was leaving it up to his agents.

"I'm just focusing on basketball," he said. "I do what I love. What I love is playing basketball. What I love is improving. What I love is helping my teammates. What I love is winning games. And off the court, about agents and contracts, I'm not focusing on that. Not that I don't care about it. Obviously I care about it. It's a very big decision in my life, and probably one of the biggest decisions I'm going to make. But I just let my agent focus on that."

Antetokounmpo has options. He could sign the supermax deal by Dec. 21. He could sign a short-term contract — there is no deadline for that style extension — for less money. Or he could opt

not to sign anything at all, which would not necessarily preclude him from signing a supermax extension next summer.

But it would also lead to several more months of questions and communal hand-wringing — for fans and for the Bucks' front office, which would need to weigh whether the team would be willing to risk letting him walk away next summer without seeking any compensation for him in a trade.

"For a guy who says he just wants to focus on basketball, it would be such a distraction," Bart Winkler, the host of a morning sports-talk radio show in Milwaukee, said in a telephone interview. "I think we'd all been assuming, whether it was going to be a short contract or a super max, that somehow, somehow, he would sign his next contract to stay in Milwaukee. And now, for the first time, there's some real concern that he might not."

Other cities have gone through similar ordeals with marquee players. Consider Oklahoma City's fractured relationship with Kevin Durant after he decided to jump to the Golden State Warriors as a free agent in 2016, or Cleveland's more nuanced ties to LeBron James, who paralyzed that

city more than once as he weighed his future.

"I think it kind of comes with the territory of being a fan of a team that has an elite player," Madden, the management consultant, said, "and doubly so if you're following a small-market team. Unfortunately, when your team has a superstar, there's this double-edged sword of expectations and rumors about where they may go next on the N.B.A. roulette wheel, especially given how transaction-centric the league has become. But as Bucks fans, we haven't had to go through this pre-Giannis."

Or at least not since 1975, when the Bucks fulfilled Kareem Abdul-Jabbar's request to be traded. Abdul-Jabbar had led Milwaukee to a championship in 1970-71 but grew frustrated by the small market.

Antetokounmpo is beloved in Milwaukee and across Wisconsin. The sports landscape there is still dominated by the N.F.L.'s Green Bay Packers, but Antetokounmpo has helped lift the Bucks to new levels of popularity since the team drafted him with the 15th overall pick in 2013.

Beyond his talent, Antetokounmpo instantly endeared himself to fans with his charm, his humor, his community outreach and his seeming innocence. As a rookie, he delighted in tasting his first fruit smoothie. "MAN GOD BLESS AMERICA," he wrote on Twitter, complete with a smiley face emoticon.

Now, he has his own signature sneaker line with Nike. His rags-to-riches story is being made into a motion picture for Disney. And by extending his contract negotiations and deflecting questions about them, he is finally treating basketball like something other than a game: He is, in his own way, acknowledging that it is a business.

The stakes could not be higher. The Bucks have finished each of the past two seasons with the league's best regular-season record while falling short in the playoffs. In September, they were dominated by the Miami Heat in their Eastern Conference semifinal series. That was the moment

when the city's collective concern

led from a simmer to a boil. During an abridged off-season, the Bucks improved their backcourt by acquiring Jrue Holiday, one of the league's best two-way guards, from the New Orleans Pelicans. As a part of the deal, the Bucks sent the Pelicans three future first-round picks. Holiday is a terrific player but the Bucks overpaid to get him, mortgaging a big

Gifting a star pens in hopes he'll agree to a contract extension.

chunk of their future because they were determined to build out their roster around Antetokounmpo and, by extension, make him happier.

"The bottom line for Bucks fans is we know if we don't win a title with Giannis, we won't have one here for a long, long time," Winkler said. "That's why everyone is so tense."

Complicating matters, the Bucks appeared to bungle a deal to land Bogdan Bogdanovic, a forward who wound up with the Atlanta Hawks.

"Nobody wants to win a championship more than me," Antetokounmpo said. "I can guarantee you that."

Now, as he mulls his contract, some fans face decisions of their own. Matt Aleithe, a small-business owner from just outside Milwaukee, said he was nearing a deadline to renew his season tickets for 2021-22, when arenas would presumably welcome fans back. Aleithe said he was pleased with the Bucks' off-season moves — "The team's better than they were at the end of last season," he said — but he could not help but wonder whether Antetokounmpo would still be playing for them in a year.

"It's kind of a big commitment, being a season-ticket holder," Aleithe said. "There's just a little more angst among fans these days."

SOCCER

The Crew Nearly Left Ohio. Now It's Playing for a Title.

By ANDREW KEH

The Columbus Crew is not supposed to be here right now.

Not "here," as in Major League Soccer's championship game, M.L.S. Cup, against the Seattle Sounders on Saturday night — though for some fans that feels unlikely enough.

But here, in Ohio, they said. The team's home. Their home.

Their path to Saturday's final begins in October 2017, when Crew fans received the nauseating news that the owner of their beloved team — an M.L.S. original that began play in the city in 1996 — was angling, with the support of the league office, to uproot the entire operation and move it to Austin, Texas.

It was a devastating revelation, precisely because Crew fans knew how these things often go: rich owners, omnipotent leagues — in American sports, they tend to get their way. In Ohio they knew this all too well. Just look at what happened to the Cleveland Browns, they said.

But the self-pity lasted only a moment. Then came anger and determination and, soon, organization. Keeping their team in Columbus, in defiance of the wishes of wealthy and powerful forces, felt like a long shot. But they would try.

Their energies coalesced behind a simple slogan — Save the Crew — but the campaign was more than just a hashtag. Behind the scenes, a group of almost two dozen longtime fans assembled itself into a leadership team that had the energy, and long hours, of a buzzy start-up.

The group included graphic designers, public relations specialists, lawyers and anyone else who had an angle they could work. Their message traveled far. Fans of opposing teams extended their sympathies. Some even flew the Crew colors in solidarity. If it can happen to them, other fans said, it can happen to us.

In time, public officials and community leaders in Ohio took up the cause, exercising whatever leverage they could muster. Twelve thousand fans signed a pledge to purchase tickets if the team stayed in the area. The pressure points on the owner behind the move, Anthony Precourt, and the league increased. Slowly the tide began to turn.

In October 2018, the parties began working on a deal to transfer ownership of the Crew to an investment group that included Jimmy and Dee Haslam, the own-



Columbus Crew fans celebrated at the groundbreaking for the M.L.S. team's new stadium last year.

ers of the Browns, and Pete Edwards, the longtime Crew team doctor. The new owners pledged to keep the club in Columbus, an announcement that set off a volcanic blast of joy and relief that in some ways has yet to settle.

The fight to save the Crew, still fresh in everyone's memory, has made the team's unlikely ascent to the championship game this season that much sweeter.

The goal is to win the match, of course. But in some sense, maybe more than the average sports fan, they're all just happy to be here. In Columbus. Still home.

DAVID MILLER, 31, joined the leadership group of Save the Crew, helping out with communications.

I was angry. I didn't sleep well. And the next day I was still angry. Within the following week or so I saw this movement had been started, a website, a Twitter handle. I was following media clips. My wife kept telling me, if you keep getting angry, you're going to have to do something about it.

People who had skills kept popping up. We needed an attorney, and an attorney appeared. We needed someone who could submit records requests, and someone came out of the blue who was good at that. It's amazing that all these volunteers came out of the woodwork and were interested in fighting the machine and came prepared.

"Save the Crew" was seen in Columbus as a battle between good and evil. That's a motivating story for a lot of people, how the fans, the community, banded together to fight the millionaires and billionaires.

KAREN CROGNALE, 55, is a longtime fan of the Crew, a former club employee and the mother of a former Columbus player.

This is a closer-knit community compared to Ohio State. You could run into Crew players at the grocery store, at the mall. They were approachable. And it still feels that way.

When we found out the team was going to be saved, I was by myself. I sat on my bed and sobbed. Over a sports team! It seems crazy. But that was the emotional toll it took on us all year.

Fans can recall Frankie Hejduk's header for a goal in 2008. I can't recall moments. It's never been about the team or how well it did or if we made the playoffs. For me, it was the place my kids grew up, where we raised our family, the friends we made in the stadium, the parking lot. It was not about the game of soccer. It was about everything outside the pitch. And if the team leaves, that's what we lose.

FRANKIE HEJDUK, 46, a beloved former player who was still working for the team, had to walk a fine line during the Save the Crew campaign.

I like to focus on the positive, but it was tough. I couldn't say much during it. I was employed by the club. So I had to do what I had to do. But the fans, I think, know how I felt. I think they felt for me, whether they knew or not. And if they didn't, I was going to have a beer with them after the game and tell them. But openly I couldn't say much.

When they saved the team, that was probably the seventh-best moment of my life. I have four kids and a wife. So those are top five. The sixth is winning the M.L.S. Cup in 2008 with the Crew. I've played with the national team. I've been in the Olympics. I've won other M.L.S. Cups. But that might have been No. 7.

JOHN ZIDAR, 33, used his design skills to help with the branding of "Save the Crew" movement.

We would get my dad season tickets for his birthday slash Christmas, and he would alternate taking me or my brother or my sister. I met most of my closest friends through the team. I go with my brother now, still. It permeates every part of my life.

During "Save the Crew" my dad passed away, and he didn't get to see that we saved them. So having them here now is nice, like I still have a piece of him that I can enjoy. It means the world to me, possibly in ways I can't necessarily put into words.

RANDI LEPLA, 36, has had



David Miller and his wife, Ellie. Miller was part of the leadership group of Save the Crew.

Crew season tickets since 2009.

We've seen relocations all the time. It's based on money. You have to account for that. But that's not how soccer works anywhere else in the world. There is an identity to teams, and their identity is the community.

Save the Crew jerseys, yard signs, stickers, bumpers stickers — they were everywhere. Local businesses were putting things up in their shops. It was a very quick turnaround from, 'Oh no this is so sad,' to, 'What are we going to do to fight this?'

We weren't supposed to have a team this year, and here we are. Winning would be a fairly tale ending for us. It'd be quite a way to close out a two-year victory lap, if you will.

DEE HASLAM, 66, was a newcomer to soccer when she and her husband, the Cleveland Browns owner Jimmy Haslam, bought the team.

We're really excited for Columbus and for our fans, with them having gone through the process of almost losing a team. Cleveland lost a team. We obviously came in much later into that story, but you still hear the stories. It was a crushing thing. So when we heard about the Columbus Crew and that they might leave Ohio, we were just like: "That can't happen. There's terrible for a community."

Standing on the field for the conference championship [last weekend], it was like, Oh my gosh, we're really here. We're in the finals. It's the M.L.S. Cup. We haven't slept, really. When you lose, there's a lot of tension and a lot of stress. When you win, and you're expecting to win, the stress is even worse.

SCOREBOARD

Table with columns for Football, N.F.L. Standings, American Conference, National Conference, and various team records.

BASKETBALL

Table with columns for N.B.A. Preseason Schedule, Friday, Dec. 11, and various game results.

SOCCER

Table with columns for M.L.S. Playoff Schedule, M.L.S. Cup, and various game results.

ENGLISH PREMIER LEAGUE

Table with columns for Team, GP, W, D, L, GF, GA, Pts and various game results.

COLLEGE FOOTBALL

Navy Hopes to Find a Highlight for Its 2020 Season, at Army

By JULIET MACUR

Cameron Kinley, one of the captains of the Navy football team, read the text on his phone in late October and refused to believe it.

A friend at the United States Military Academy had written that the Army-Navy game this year would not take place in Philadelphia, as usual. Instead, for the first time since World War II, Navy was going to play Army at the Black Knights' home stadium in West Point, N.Y. The last time the game was not played at a neutral site was 77 years ago, in 1943.

Kinley, a starting cornerback and president of the Naval Academy's senior class, felt confused and thought, no way.

This couldn't happen in his senior year, which was already filled with unrealized opportunities brought on by Covid-19. This just couldn't be, when he and his teammates had targeted the Army-Navy game in Philadelphia, in front of 70,000 fans, as something they could look forward to at the end of this long, dark 2020 tunnel.

But it was true: Academy officials had moved the game — which takes place on Saturday on the banks of the Hudson River — because Pennsylvania has restricted large gatherings during the coronavirus pandemic. Army got the game because it was its turn to be labeled the home team.

The only spectators inside the 38,000-seat Michie Stadium will be the traditional dueling groups of Navy's brigade of midshipmen and Army's corps of cadets, each 4,300 strong and socially distanced, and a limited number of V.I.P.s, including President Trump.

"I was a little upset at first," Kinley said, explaining that it seemed unfair that Navy would have to play on its archrival's home field. "But then I kind of shifted my mind-set."

The Navy team had no option but to pivot from feeling sorry for itself to feeling confident, because the players know a win against Army can turn around a season. Even a season like this one, when Navy's record is 3-6 compared with 7-2 for Army. Even one marred by strict quarantines and postponed or canceled games, and 28 straight days without a game — a drought that lasted nearly all of November.

And now the Navy players are heading into the game that means the most to them, by far, after only a week of preparation instead of the usual three. Two of its games were rescheduled from early November to the weeks before the Army game, after the coronavirus hit the Navy program and a multitude of players were caught up in contact tracing.

It's a good thing then that Kinley, 21, and others on the team are exceptional motivators and leaders. Navy football has needed them in this uncertain and depressing year.

Navy Coach Ken Niumatalolo said he wouldn't be surprised if



Cameron Kinley, a senior and starting cornerback, leading Navy players onto the field before a game against Tulsa last week.

Kinley became superintendent of the Naval Academy someday. Kinley, though, has bigger plans: to be president of the United States. He already has his future mapped out. Myles Fells, a senior slotback, is included in the plans. They both want to run for local office and rise in the political ranks before meeting again.

"When the time is right, we do plan on getting back together and making a push for the national ticket," Kinley said.

This year has been good preparation for what might lie ahead. Kinley has taken the initiative with some fellow seniors to call team meetings to discuss issues like the need to wear masks and to socially distance. He helped organize talks about this summer's nationwide racial unrest and police brutality. His takeaway from 2020 will be summed up in his graduation speech in the spring.

The theme will be "get comfortable with being uncomfortable," a mantra that he remembers hearing during his grueling plebe summer and that is particularly applicable to this psychologically challenging year.

"We've been living in an uncomfortable environment for months because of Covid, and we can't control that," said Kinley, the first football player to be president of the senior class in about 30 years. "We've just got to find a way to make things work."

Kinley, who is from Memphis, and the other Midshipmen were

said, adding that the team did some things just to get the players outside so they could feel the sun on their faces.

Kinley felt so boxed in at one point that he texted his family on their group chat with the words, "Free Cam!"

"He felt trapped," his mother, Candace Kinley, said. "We just told him that he could do this. It would soon be over. Better safe than sorry. That's all we could do from so far away."

This year, Kinley said, was much harder than even his worst struggles in previous years, when at times he would call home crying because he didn't think he was tough enough to make it to graduation. He called this year "the toughest time that I've experienced in my life."

"I've been depressed and sad, all mixed emotions," he said. "But being there for other people and knowing I'm not going through this alone has helped."

Knowing that obstacles and distractions are not insurmountable also helped, Candace Kinley said. Cameron overcame a stutter, realizing he was good at public speaking in sixth grade. The title of a speech that wowed the crowd then? "Navy Athletes and Why They are Unique." His mother shared a copy of it.

"When a teammate makes a bad play, they do not go to the player and get mad," he wrote for the teacher, Mrs. Gibson. "Instead they invigorate him by saying, 'You will get the next play.' That is showing maturity."

Maturity is also being able to walk through the gates at West Point, head held high and feeling confident, though Navy is the underdog in more ways than one. It is trying to regain the upper hand in the rivalry after its 14-game winning streak against Army ended in 2016. The Midshipmen have won only one of the last four Army-Navy games.

Kinley can't forget how it felt to win last year's game. It was his greatest moment at the Naval Academy, he said, other than when he passed his 400-meter swim test. He is looking for a similarly glorious way to end this trying year.

"Simply put, beating Army heals all the pain," he said.

A rivalry won't be at a neutral site for the first time in 77 years.

Real estate listings from The New York Times Classifieds, including properties in Brooklyn, Virginia, Connecticut, and Florida.

Real estate listings from The New York Times Classifieds, including properties in Florida and other locations.

Norman Abramson, a Pioneer Behind Wireless Networking, Is Dead at 88

By STEVE LOHR

Norman Abramson, the leader of a group of scientists and engineers who pioneered the development of wireless computer networks, died on Dec. 1 at his home in San Francisco. He was 88.

The cause was skin cancer that had metastasized to his lungs, his son, Mark, said.

Professor Abramson's project at the University of Hawaii was originally designed to transmit data to schools on the far-flung Hawaiian islands by means of a radio channel. But the solution he and his group devised in the late 1960s and early '70s would prove widely applicable; some of their technology is still in use in today's smartphones, satellites and home Wi-Fi networks.

The technology they created allowed many digital devices to send and receive data over that shared radio channel. It was a simple approach that did not require complex scheduling of when each packet of data would be sent. If a data packet was not received, it was simply sent again. The approach was a departure from telecommunications practices at the time, but it worked.

"It was an incredibly audacious idea, real out-of-the-box engineering," said Vinton Cerf, a computer scientist at Google and the co-author, with Robert Kahn, of the technical standards for linking computer networks on the internet.

The wireless network in Hawaii, which began operating in 1971, was called ALOHAnet, embracing the Hawaiian salutation for greeting or parting. It was a smaller, wireless version of the



Norman Abramson in the mid-1970s, when he headed a group that developed the ALOHAnet, an early wireless data network.

better known ARPAnet, the precursor to the internet, which allowed researchers at universities to share a network and send messages over landlines. The ARPAnet was led by the Pentagon's Advanced Research Projects Agency, which also funded the ALOHAnet.

"The early wireless work in Hawaii is vastly underappreciated," said Marc Weber, an internet his-

torian at the Computer History Museum in Mountain View, Calif. "Every modern form of wireless data networking, from Wi-Fi to your cellphone, goes back to the ALOHAnet."

Professor Abramson has been called the father of wireless networking. But it was a shared paternity. The project included graduate students and several faculty members, notably Frank Kuo, a

former Bell Labs scientist who came to the University of Hawaii in 1966, the same year Professor Abramson arrived.

His deepest expertise was in communication theory, the subject of his Ph.D. thesis at Stanford University. The fundamental design ideas behind ALOHAnet were his. In a 2018 oral history interview for the Computer History Museum, Professor Kuo recalled, "Norm was the theory and I was the implementer, and so we worked together pretty well."

ALOHAnet owed a lot to surfing. Professor Abramson was presenting a paper at an academic conference in Tokyo in the days when flights from San Francisco to Tokyo had to stop midway in Honolulu. Professor Abramson, who was raised in Boston, had not been to Hawaii before and decided to spend a few days there on the way home.

He rented a surfboard. "I got on, I learned how to surf, and I said, Boy, I could stand some of this," he recalled in 2013 in an oral history interview with the Computer History Museum.

Within a year, after the University of Hawaii offered him a tenured professorship, he and his family moved to Hawaii. "My father was really wrapped up in his work, but he surfed nearly every day," Mark Abramson said.

That the ALOHAnet technology became so widely used was partly because Professor Abramson and his team had shared it freely and welcomed other scientists to Hawaii.

"We had done no patenting, and ALOHA was published in scientific papers," putting their work in

the public domain, Professor Abramson said in the oral history, adding: "And that was fine with me. I was too busy surfing to worry about that sort of thing."

Norman Manuel Abramson was born in Boston on April 1, 1932, to Edward and Esther Abramson. His father was a commercial photographer, his mother a homemaker. Norman and his sister, Harriet, grew up in the Dorchester neighborhood, home to mostly Jewish immigrants, like his parents, at the time. His father was from Lithuania, his mother from Ukraine.

Norman was educated in Boston's public schools, at the

'I was too busy surfing to worry about that sort of thing,' he said of patenting.

elite Boston Latin School and the English High School, where he excelled in math and science. He went on to Harvard University, where he took a course taught by Howard Aiken, a mathematician and early pioneer in computing. It was a computer course long before the discipline of computer science existed, and he enjoyed his first taste of programming.

Professor Abramson majored in physics at Harvard, then earned a master's degree in physics from the University of California, Los Angeles, and his doctorate in electrical engineer-

ing from Stanford, in 1958. He briefly worked in industry and had postdoctoral teaching stints before he went to Hawaii. He retired from the University of Hawaii in 1994.

In addition to his son, Mark, he is survived by his wife, Joan Abramson; his sister, Harriet Schannon; and three grandchildren. His daughter, Carin Wethington, died in 2014.

Some of the data-networking techniques developed by Professor Abramson and his Hawaii team proved valuable not only in wireless communications but also in wired networks. One heir to his work was Robert Metcalfe, who in 1973 was a young computer scientist working at Xerox PARC, a Silicon Valley research laboratory that had become a fount of personal computer innovations.

Mr. Metcalfe was working on how to enable personal computers to share data over wired office networks. He had read a 1970 paper, written by Professor Abramson, describing ALOHAnet's method for transmitting and sending data over a network.

"Norm kindly invited me to spend a month with him at the University of Hawaii to study ALOHAnet," Mr. Metcalfe recalled in an email.

Mr. Metcalfe and his colleagues at Xerox PARC adopted and tweaked the ALOHAnet technology in creating Ethernet office networking. Later, Mr. Metcalfe founded an Ethernet company, 3Com, which thrived as the personal computer industry grew.

"Norm, thank you," Mr. Metcalfe concluded in his email. "Aloha!"

Phil Linz, 81, Yankee Player Known for Harmonica Tale

By RICHARD GOLDSTEIN

Phil Linz played on three World Series teams with the Yankees in the 1960s and spent seven seasons in the major leagues.

But he was remembered mostly for playing the harmonica.

Linz was usually a fill-in at shortstop, third base or second base, and occasionally in the outfield, bringing him the nickname Supersub. But in the summer of 1964 he briefly became a baseball celebrity of sorts.

On the afternoon of Aug. 20, the Yankees were on the team bus heading to O'Hare Airport in Chicago for a flight to Boston to play the Red Sox after losing four straight games to the White Sox while in a tight pennant race.

Linz was sitting at the rear of the bus practicing on a harmonica he had bought earlier in the road trip.

It came with a learner's sheet, and the first tune was "Mary Had a Little Lamb."

Manager Yogi Berra, seated up front, was hardly in the mood for frivolity in view of the Yankees' slump and shouted toward the back of the bus, "Shove that harmonica up!"

"I wasn't sure what he said," Linz told USA Today in 2013.

So he sought help from Mickey Mantle, who was sitting across from him. "I asked, 'What did he say, Mickey?'"

Mantle, quick to seize an oppor-

tunity for a practical joke, told him that Berra had said, "Play it louder."

So Linz played on.

Berra charged toward Linz, who either flipped his harmonica toward him or had it swatted away by Berra; accounts differ.

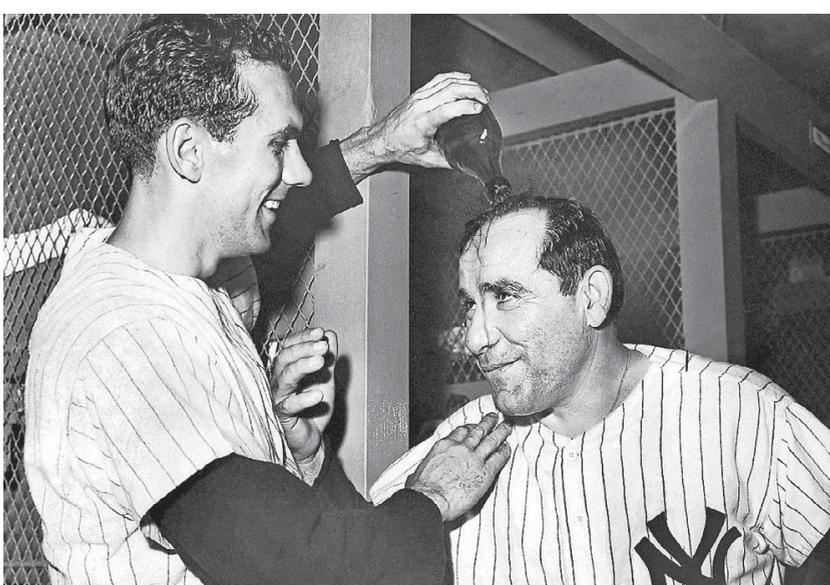
"I went in and apologized to Yogi the next day, told him it was disrespectful, shook hands and promised it would never happen again," Linz remembered. "Yogi said, 'I still got to fine you.' He fined me \$250. It was all right. I was making \$14,000."

By then, the New York sportswriters who were on the Yankee bus had filed stories describing the episode, and The Associated Press had spread its account to newspapers throughout the country.

Two weeks later, Hohner, the company that had manufactured the offending harmonica, offered Linz \$10,000 to endorse its brand. Linz gladly accepted.

Linz's son, Philip, said he died on Wednesday at a rehabilitation center in Leesburg, Va., where he was being treated for Parkinson's disease and dementia. He was 81.

After the harmonica incident, the Yankees went on to post a 22-6 record in September, their pitching buttressed by the arrival of Mel Stottlemyre, who went 9-3 following his August call-up from the minors, as well as by Whitey Ford's recovery from a bruised



ERNE SISTO/THE NEW YORK TIMES

Phil Linz, left, celebrated with his manager, Yogi Berra, after the Yankees clinched the American League pennant in 1964. Relations between the two had not always been quite so cordial.

heel and the September acquisition of the Cleveland Indians' Pedro Ramos, who was credited with eight saves.

With a rotation that also included Jim Bouton and Al Downing, the Yankees won the American League pennant, finishing one game ahead of the White Sox.

Linz — who often played shortstop that season in place of Tony Kubek, who was limited by back and neck injuries and then sprained a wrist — started against

the St. Louis Cardinals in every game of the World Series. He hit two home runs, one off the intimidating Bob Gibson, but the Yankees lost to the Cards in seven games.

Berra, the longtime Yankee catcher who was a future Hall of Famer and a beloved figure in the baseball world, was fired as manager the day after the Series ended and replaced by Johnny Keane, the Cardinals' manager. Ralph Houk, the Yankees' general

manager, gave no reason for the stunning moves. (The Yankees, heading into some lean times, would not appear in another World Series for 12 years.)

Philip Francis Linz was born on June 4, 1939, in Baltimore, the son of Ben and Frances Linz. His father was a mechanic for Bethlehem Steel. He was signed by the Yankee organization out of high school and made his debut with the team in April 1962.

The Yankees traded Linz to the

A practical joke by Mickey Mantle that spread to newspapers across the country.

Philadelphia Phillies after the 1965 season. The Phillies sent him to the Mets in July 1967 (by then Berra was a coach for the Mets), and he retired after the 1968 season with a career batting average of .235 and 11 home runs.

In addition to his son, Linz is survived by his wife, Lynn (Parker) Linz, a former flight attendant, and a grandson. Two sisters died before him.

After his playing days, Linz joined with Shamsky, his former Mets teammate, as owners of a popular restaurant and night spot, Mr. Laffs, at First Avenue and 64th Street on Manhattan's Upper East Side. He kept the business going for more than 20 years.

"It became the postgame destination for Knicks and Rangers and all those who basked in their reflected glory," Sports Illustrated recalled in 2005.

Linz also sold insurance in Manhattan while living in Stamford, Conn. He appeared at baseball shows over the years to retell the story of an ordinary ballplayer and his famous harmonica.

When the Yankees' 1965 yearbook came out, Linz had an encore for Yankee fans. In an advertisement paid for by Hohner, he was depicted on the back cover in his Yankee uniform with a harmonica. The caption read, "Play It Again, Phil."

Deaths

Block, Elizabeth; Carlstrom, Martha Einiger, Roger; Hertz, Marlene; Lister, Marion; Prober, Joan; Righter, Julie; Safra, Joseph

BLOCK—Elizabeth.

September 29, 1944—December 8, 2020. Elizabeth passed away in London from complications of breast cancer. She grew up in New York, was educated at Wellesley and University of Chicago, and worked as a writer and publicist. She traveled extensively and maintained an extraordinary network of friends across the globe. She will be remembered for her kindness, her love of life, and her fierce political opinions. She is survived by her brother, Fred, sister-in-law, Carole, nieces, Miriam and Jude, step-sisters, Elinor Gollay and Anita Støpen, and many devoted friends. Pamela Edwards and Robert Wallis managed her care in the last year of her life. There will be a Zoom memorial in a few months.

CARLSTROM—Martha.

Martha Carlstrom (Muffy) of Huntington, NY passed away peacefully on November 21, 2020. Born Martha Meredith Moffitt on January 10, 1939 to Martha Moore, a descendant of Benjamin Moore, and Walter V. Moffitt, a Wall Street financier. Muffy was a graduate of Chatham Hall and Wheaton College. Survived

by her children, Edward Osterhus (Stephanie) and Elizabeth Osterhus; by three grandchildren, Eric Osterhus, Theodore Fleuette and Margaret Fleuette. Predeceased by second husband, Robert Carlstrom. Devoted mother and fundraiser, her passions included tennis, volunteering and giving back in countless ways. Muffy spent more than 35 years on the Huntington Hospital Board of Trustees and was a passionate advocate for the CSH Fish Hatchery among other conservation groups. A devout Christian, she was active at St. Johns Church and then Central Presbyterian Church. Her spirited and loving presence will be greatly missed. A memorial will be announced on a later date. In lieu of flowers, contributions to Huntington Hospital, 270 Park Avenue, Huntington, NY 11743.

EINIGER—Roger W.

of New York, NY, age 73, died peacefully at home on December 9th after a courageous 2½ year battle with pancreatic cancer. Devoted husband of 51 years to Carol, loving father to Josh and Julie,

Deaths

adoring grandfather to Jacob. Son of the late Glory and Jack Einiger, Roger is also survived by his loving sister and brother-in-law, Ellen and Mitch. Roger spent over 30 years at Oppenheimer & Co. and its successor companies, ultimately serving as Executive Vice President, Chief Administrative Officer and Vice Chairman. He began a second career in 2001, devoting the majority of his time to serving on the boards of non-profit organizations important to him, helping to strengthen their finances and advance their missions. At the time of his passing, Roger served as Chair of the Board of the Albert Einstein College of Medicine, as Trustee of Montefiore Medicine and Montefiore Health System and as Director of UJA-Federation of New York. His previous board service included Chair of the Finance Committee and member of the Executive Committee of UJA-Federation of New York; Trustee and member of the Executive Committee of Big Brothers Big Sisters of New York City; member of the Board of Overseers of the University of Pennsylvania School of Design; member of the New York Regional Board of the Anti-Defamation League; Trustee of The Washington Institute; and Director of FOJIP Service

Deaths

Corporation, Network Advantage Insurance Ltd., NDS Group plc and AV Homes, Inc. Roger earned his BS in Economics from the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania and his MBA from the New York University School of Business. He was awarded the honorary degree of Doctor of Humane Letters by the Albert Einstein College of Medicine and was honored by The Washington Institute and the American Jewish Committee, among others. Services will be private. Donations in Roger's memory can be made to the Cancer Center at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine.

EINIGER, Roger W.

The Board of Trustees of Albert Einstein College of Medicine mourn the loss of our Chairman, Roger Einiger. Roger joined the Board in 2005 and his talents, good judgment, and leadership skills were evident from the start. After serving as chair of the budget, finance and executive committees, he became Board Chairman in 2015. Roger was the kind of leader who was a team player. He had excellent relationships with every board member and made it his business to keep everyone informed on the happenings at the medical school and at Montefiore. He enjoyed interacting with the medical students and attended every ceremony and

Deaths

every graduation. We send our deepest sympathy to his wife Carol, son Joshua, daughter-in-law Julie, and grandson Jacob and the entire Einiger family.

HERZIG—Marlene.

Thank you for sharing so many good times. You will live forever in our memories. Helaine and Fred Gould

LISTER—Marion.

Died peacefully on November 29, 2020 at the age of 91. Born in Karlsruhe, Germany to parents Karl Hess and Ilka Hess (Hochherr). Predeceased by her husband, Walter Lister, and survived by her daughter Wendy Root (Jason), and four beloved grandchildren: Megan, Griffin, Kyle and Lindsay. jiffh.com.

PROBER—Joan.

91, died peacefully at Greenwich Hospital on Sunday, December 6th. Born in New York to Louis and Minnie Berman. She was sister to Harold (1985); wife to Harvey (2003); much loved mother to Jonathan, Jory (Julia), Jamian (Roberta) and Jeremy; cherished grandmother to Benjamin, Samuel, Sara and Michael. Gifts in her memory may be made to the Annual Fund for Greenwich Hospital.

Deaths

RIGHTER—Julie Hattersley. died peacefully on December 4, 2020. Beloved wife of Brewster, she is survived by her daughters Lindsay, Amy, Lucy, Nina and Lisa, grandchildren Alaina, Hannah, Brewster, Michael, Ari and Violet, and great-grandchildren Jonas and Hattie Mae.

SAFRA—Joseph.

Our dear friend Jo was an extraordinary man who appeared to be oil business but was in fact strong, kind and caring with a great sense of humor. Dear Vicki and children, we were among the privileged to know him and we share the profound sense of loss of his many friends everywhere.

Marion Wiesel, VP The Ellie Wiesel Foundation for Humanity New York

In Memoriam

ALKOFF—Jerry. 12/12/37-10/11/14 Home is the sailor, home from the sea. Happy Birthday. We miss you so much, every day. Rene, Rose, Flora, Gay

MILLER—Robert.

6/21/1923-12/12/2016. Miss you and will love you forever and a day. Always in our hearts. Your wife Son and family.

In Memoriam

UNDERWEISER—Beatrice Jonina, 85, of Scarsdale, NY passed away a year ago on December 12, 2019. She was the beloved wife of the late Irwin Philip Underweiser to whom she was married for 59 years. Loving mother of Rosanne (Ira Siflin) Marian (Marc Ehrlich) and Jeffrey (Jennifer) and devoted grandmother of Natalie, Helen, Matthew, Rachel, Ethan and Abigail. Beatrice was the cherished only child of Natalie Wille Kortchmar. She was born in Manhattan and spent her childhood there and in Somerville, NJ. She was in the second coed class to graduate Bronx High School of Science in 1951; she earned her undergraduate degree in European history from Vassar College in 1955 where she was a member of the Glee Club, and her Juris Doctor as a Harlan Fiske Stone Scholar from Columbia Law School in 1958, one of seven women in a class of 390. She had a successful sixty-year legal career first as in-house counsel at corporations such as Coca-Cola and Con Edison; eventually joining her hus-

band in the firm which became Underweiser & Underweiser LLP where she specialized in trusts and estates, tax, land use, planning and administration, and general business law. She was a Trustee of the City University Construction Fund from 1978-80. She also had a long and distinguished career of volunteerism in the Scarsdale community including serving on the Scarsdale Village Board of Trustees from 1980-84 and as Police Commissioner and Deputy Mayor. She served as a committee chair and board member on the Scarsdale Forum for many years. She and her husband Irwin were active members of Westchester Reform Temple in Scarsdale for over fifty years. We miss her today and every day.

ANNOUNCEMENTS OF DEATHS MAY BE TELEPHONED FROM WITHIN N.Y.C. TO (212) 556-9800, OR OUTSIDE N.Y.C. TO TOLL FREE 1-800-458-5522, OR SUBMITTED ONLINE AT ADVERTISING.NYTIMES.COM (SELECT "IN MEMORIAM") FOR THE FOLLOWING EDITIONS: Until 4:30 P.M. the day before for Tuesday through Saturday editions, until 5:00 P.M. on Friday for Sunday's Nationwide Edition, until 12:45 P.M. Saturday for Sunday's New York Region edition, until 2:00 P.M. Saturday for Monday's editions. Photos must be submitted by noon the day prior to publication Tuesday through Friday. Photos for Saturday, Sunday and Monday must be submitted by 12 noon on Friday.

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Helen LaFrance, 101, Who Painted Memories From Her Childhood, Dies

By PENELOPE GREEN

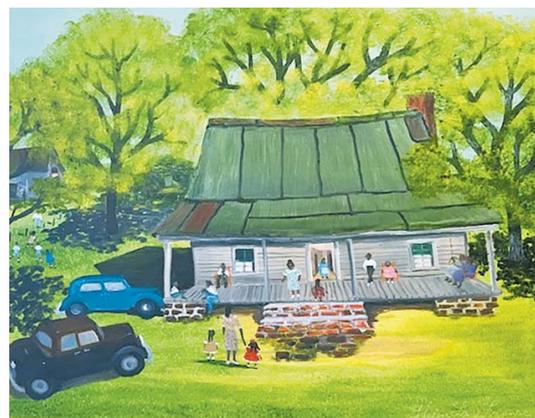
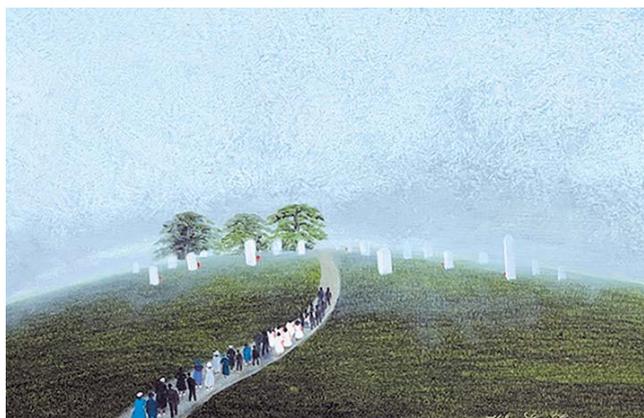
Helen LaFrance, a self-taught artist whose vibrant and intimate “memory paintings” of scenes from her childhood in rural Kentucky brought her renown late in life, died on Nov. 22 at a nursing home in Mayfield, Ky. She was 101.

Her death was announced by Wanda Whittemore-Stubblefield, a longtime friend.

In glowing colors and sharp brush strokes, Ms. LaFrance painted church picnics and river baptisms; tobacco barns; backyard gardens with geese and children racing through them; kitchens with bushels of apples and jars of preserves shining like stained-glass windows. Her exuberant scenes of rural life invited comparisons to Grandma Moses,



PHOTOGRAPHS VIA BRUCE SHELTON/SHELTON GALLERY



Ms. LaFrance's work included, clockwise from above, “Downtown Burning” (1995), “Sunday Supper” (1997) and “Going Home” (1995). “If I do something somebody likes, well, I’m satisfied,” she once said, “but I don’t think it’s important.”



BRUCE SHELTON, VIA ASSOCIATED PRESS

Helen LaFrance during her 100th birthday party last year.

Horace Pippin and other regional painters who drew from their memories to tell stories about a vanished time and place.

“It’s just a way of reliving it all again,” Ms. LaFrance told a television interviewer in 2010. The next year she told another interviewer, “If I do something somebody likes, well, I’m satisfied because somebody liked what I did, but I don’t think it’s important.”

The author Kathy Moses Shelton, who, with the gallerist Bruce Shelton wrote “Helen LaFrance: Folk Art Memories” (2011), called Ms. LaFrance “an American treasure.”

“She’s a self-taught Black artist who paints her memories of a particular time and place,” Ms. Moses Shelton said in a phone interview. “She grew up under Jim Crow. She was 10 when the Great Depression hit.

“Her art doesn’t reflect the pain of that era,” Ms. Moses Shelton continued. “Instead what comes through is joy, and the values of family and work. Her family owned and farmed their own land when sharecropping was the norm, and they were self-sufficient and lived in dignity. Her blend of personal experience, Black American culture and heritage and her skill all come into play to make her work unlike anybody else’s. She’s an authentic American voice.”

Helen LaFrance Orr was born on Nov. 2, 1919, in Graves County, Ky., the second of four daughters. Her parents, James Franklin Orr and Lillie May (Ligon) Orr, known as Bud and Hon, grew tobacco and corn.

Helen did not attend much school. Her parents instructed her in reading and math, and her mother taught her to paint, guiding her hand and helping her mix colors from dandelions, berries and Bluette laundry detergent. She and her sisters worked in their family’s fields, and Helen drew after her chores were done. She recalled loving the smell of the crayons her mother would bring her.

Ms. LaFrance lived and worked most of her life no more than 10 miles from her birthplace. She worked in a tobacco barn and in a hospital as a cook. She also made custom whiskey decanters for a local ceramics company and worked as a retoucher in a photography studio. She owned property, commercial spaces and land.

She always painted, but she did not do it full time until the 1980s, when she started selling her work to neighbors and at local art shows and country fairs. She also made wood carvings and quilts. She lived in a double-wide mobile home and used an old school bus that was parked on her property as a studio before moving into a house in Mayfield.

Gus Van Sant Sr., a Mayfield native and the father of the filmmaker, discovered her there in the early 1990s; about a decade earlier, his wife, Betty had bought him a Helen LaFrance painting of a tobacco barn, and the couple looked her up when they moved back to Kentucky.

Mr. Van Sant was taken with her work and concerned that she was not getting the value she deserved from sales of her paintings. He and a friend reached out to folk art galleries and institutions around the country on her behalf, and helped her set up a bank account so she would be paid directly. Mr. Shelton also began selling her work and last year made a short documentary film about her life.

In 2011, Ms. LaFrance received Kentucky’s Folk Art Heritage Award. Oprah Winfrey, Bryant Gumbel and the collector Beth Rudin DeWoody have all bought her work, which is in the permanent collections of the Saint Louis Art Museum and the Owensboro Museum of Fine Art in Owensboro, Ky.

Soft-spoken, modest and religious, Ms. LaFrance was not giving to long expositions about her

life or her motivations. She liked to say, when pressed for details, “Some things should be left alone.”

She was married five times: twice to Elvis Lynn (back to back, as Ms. Whittemore-Stubblefield, said) and once each to Lynn Rhynon, Burt McCampbell and A.D. Whittemore, a preacher. All the

In her art, ‘what comes through is joy, and the values of family and work.’

marriages ended in divorce. She leaves no immediate survivors.

She was extremely self-sufficient, Ms. Whittemore-Stubblefield said, and not “the soothing homemaker type.” She said that when Ms. LaFrance left her last husband, the preacher, she waited until he had driven to his church on a Sunday, packed up her belongings, and was gone by the

time he returned.

She once told an interviewer: “Think twice, say it once. If you think you’re right, know you’re right before you do something. If you don’t know what you’re doing, ask God about it.”

In addition to domestic and rural scenes, Ms. LaFrance made religious paintings of visions inspired by her knowledge of the Bible. That work was both terrifying and ecstatic, and markedly different in technique from her normal output, more Georgia O’Keeffe than Grandma Moses. While she was happy to elaborate on a painting of her local church’s homecoming picnic, describing how families would come once a year from all over the country, or to tell a tale about getting the spins from chewing tobacco, prompted by a scene she had painted of tobacco drying in a barn, she kept quiet about her religious work.

Mr. Shelton once brought a friend, Eugene Collins, a contractor and businessman from Nashville, to visit her. When he saw her school-bus studio, which she had long complained about — it was as hot as an oven, she said — he

promised to return and build her a proper one, in exchange for some of the religious paintings. “Just keep painting,” he told her. He made her a spacious, airy building, setting it onto a rise on her land.

Ms. LaFrance worked on more than one canvas at a time, a method she developed late in life that allowed her to keep painting instead of waiting for a piece to dry. Mr. Van Sant said she extended her practice further, onto tiny canvases, as a way of using up the paint on her brushes.

“They were really terrific,” he said. “I remember one was a kitchen with ornate wallpaper, maybe four by four inches, and Helen said she was selling it to a person she knew. I asked her what she was going to charge.

“When she would ponder something, she would always let out this huge sigh. ‘Ooh,’ she said. Big sigh. ‘I was thinking about \$20.’ I said, ‘Helen, don’t you let her get out of here without at least \$100.’

“Later,” he continued, “I asked her how much she had sold it for, and there was the sigh. ‘Ooh,’ she said. ‘\$99. I couldn’t say \$100.’”

Suhaila Siddiq, General And Doctor in Afghanistan

By FATIMA FAIZI and THOMAS GIBBONS-NEFF

KABUL, Afghanistan — Suhaila Siddiq, the first woman to hold the rank of lieutenant general in Afghanistan and a renowned surgeon who became a feminist role model in a largely patriarchal society, died here on Dec. 4 at the same hospital where she had treated the wounded through decades of war in her country. She was thought to be 81 or 82.

General Siddiq, who had Alzheimer’s disease, died from complications of the coronavirus at the Sardar Mohammad Daud Khan military hospital in Kabul, said one of her doctors, Amanullah Aman. It was her second bout with the virus this year.

General Siddiq rose through the ranks of the Afghan army during the Cold War and went on to run the Daud Khan hospital during the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in late 1979, the long Afghan civil war and years of harsh rule by the Taliban. She was one of the few women to become an Afghan government minister, overseeing the public health ministry until 2004 under the transitional government led by Hamid Karzai, following the U.S. invasion in 2001.

As health minister she helped carry out vaccinations against polio after the disease had become widespread during years of instability and violence. She went back to her job as a surgeon after she left the government.

General Siddiq “dedicated herself to serving her country,” Mr.

Karzai said in a tribute on Twitter. President Ashraf Ghani of Afghanistan paid his respects in a memorial ceremony at the hospital.

Despite her unassuming manner, General Siddiq was described by those who knew her as self-possessed and un intimidated by people around her, especially men.

In the mid-1980s, at the height of the Soviet-Afghan war, the Communist-backed government in Kabul promoted her to surgeon general of the Afghan army after she saved the lives of hundreds of wounded soldiers and civilians who had poured into the 400-bed Daud Khan hospital. She was known as “General Suhaila.”

Suhaila Siddiq was born in Kabul, probably in 1938. (Sources are unclear on her exact birth date.) She attended high school and Kabul University in the early years of the Cold War. After studying in Moscow on a scholarship, she returned to Afghanistan with her doctorate and became a surgeon at the Daud Khan hospital in the years before the Soviet invasion.

General Siddiq was one of six daughters of a former governor of Kandahar who was supportive of her education. She traced her ancestry to the Barakzai dynasty, which ruled Afghanistan for more than 100 years in the 19th and 20th centuries.

General Siddiq never married. Information about survivors was not immediately available.

After the collapse of the Communist government in 1992, she



MARCO DI LAURO/ASSOCIATED PRESS

Gen. Suhaila Siddiq, left, with Sima Samar in 2001. General Siddiq was health minister and Ms. Samar was women’s affairs minister in the government that formed in Afghanistan that year.

retained her position in the hospital under an interim government that was established at the outset of the Afghan civil war.

Kabul was soon split as competing factions vied for control. The appointed prime minister, Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, ordered incessant rocket attacks on his adversaries in the capital, and as civilian casualties mounted, the defense minister, Ahmad Shah Massoud, personally asked General Siddiq to run the hospital, ac-

ording to Sher Ahmad, a family friend. The city was ultimately torn apart by attacks from all sides, including by Mr. Massoud. “She believed in her job, not in any regime,” Mr. Ahmad said.

When the Taliban took Kabul in 1996, however, they enforced draconian rule under a harsh interpretation of Islamic law, barring women from holding most jobs and requiring them to cover their faces in public. General Siddiq was sent home.

But she and her sister Shafiq, a professor at Kabul Polytechnic University, “were smart and funny, and they weren’t going to be intimidated,” said Kathy Gannon, an Associated Press reporter who wrote an article about General Siddiq at the time.

“Also,” she said, “the Taliban learned quickly that they needed her.”

Taliban officials had within months determined that they needed to retain people with

‘It is a matter of pride for me. I stayed in my country, and I served my people.’

sought-after technical abilities and higher education, so they asked General Siddiq to return to her job at the hospital. There, she tended to wounded Taliban fighters, performing many operations under the flickering light of a lantern, Mr. Ahmad recalled.

“They needed me, and they asked me to come back,” General Siddiq told The Guardian in 2002. “It is a matter of pride for me. I stayed in my country, and I served my people. I never fled abroad.”

General Siddiq and her sister were among the few women who walked around Kabul without face coverings or wearing the long, enveloping burqa. It was a bold statement against the Taliban, but they left her unscathed because of her hospital position.

At the same time, General Siddiq taught medicine to female university students whose academic careers had ended under Taliban rule. On at least one occasion the government tried to crack down on her teaching, but General Siddiq pushed back, said Makai Siawash, a close friend who briefly lived with General Siddiq.

“She was ready to get whipped by them, but she didn’t let the Taliban fighters in,” Ms. Siawash said.

One of General Siddiq’s students was Sayeda Amarkhel, the daughter of General Amarkhel.

“She fought the Taliban for us,” Dr. Amarkhel said. “Today I am a gynecologist, and I owe it to her.”

Earth friendly? Well, maybe.

BY BLAKE GOPNIK

Jazz, with reservations.

BY SARAH BAHR AND SEAN PICCOLI



Bryn Terfel will stream live from Wales for the Met.

BY ZACHARY WOOLFE

Arts

The New York Times

FKA twigs Accuses An Actor Of Abuse

In a lawsuit, the musician alleges that Shia LaBeouf assaulted her in their relationship.

By KATIE BENNER and MELENA RYZIK

Just after Valentine's Day in 2019, the musician FKA twigs was in a car speeding toward Los Angeles. At the wheel was her boyfriend, the actor Shia LaBeouf. He was driving recklessly, she said in a lawsuit filed on Friday, and removed his seatbelt and threatened to crash unless she professed her love for him.

They were returning from the desert, where Mr. LaBeouf, the star of "Transformers," had raged



ANA CUBA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

The musician FKA twigs said she was the victim of domestic violence.

at her throughout the trip, FKA twigs said in the lawsuit, once waking her up in the middle of the night, choking her. After she begged to be let out of the car, she said he pulled over at a gas station and she took her bags from the trunk. But Mr. LaBeouf followed and assaulted her, throwing her against the car while screaming in her face, according to the suit. He then forced her back in the car.

The gas station episode is at the heart of the suit, which says that Mr. LaBeouf, 34, abused her physically, emotionally and mentally many times in a relationship that lasted just short of a year. Her aim in coming forward, she said in an interview, was to explain how even a critically acclaimed artist with money, a home and a strong network of supporters could be caught in such a cycle.

"I'd like to be able to raise awareness on the tactics that abusers use to control you and take away your agency," said FKA twigs, 32, born Tahliah Debrett Barnett.

Mr. LaBeouf responded Thursday to the concerns raised by Ms. Barnett, and a second former girlfriend who has accused him of abusive behavior, in an email that broadly addressed his conduct.

"I'm not in any position to tell anyone how my behavior made them feel," he said in an email to The New York Times. "I have no excuses for my alcoholism or aggression." **CONTINUED ON PAGE C6**



KATRIN STREICHER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

A Dancer and Questions of Color

Chloé Lopes Gomes, who is Black, says she was told to use whitening makeup for a role.

By ROSLYN SULCAS

Chloé Lopes Gomes had done her hair and makeup and fixed the feathered swan head-dress in place before the rehearsal in February. Then, she later recounted, she repeatedly dipped a wet sponge into a pot of white

pancake makeup, applying it carefully to her face, neck and upper body.

Ms. Lopes Gomes, who is French, is the only Black female dancer at the Staatsballett Berlin, and just a few days earlier, she said in an interview, one of the company's ballet mistresses had told her to use the white makeup to color her skin for "Swan Lake."

"I felt humiliated," Ms. Lopes Gomes said in an interview. "But what could I say?" Until fairly recently, it has been common

practice in ballet companies for the female dancers in ballets like "Swan Lake," "Giselle" and "La Bayadère" to apply a whitening makeup in order to look like beings from another world, be they swans, sylphides, spirits or Shades. Since most ballet companies — until relatively recently — included few Black dancers in their ranks, little thought was given to this; it was simply part of the creation of a uniform aesthetic effect. **CONTINUED ON PAGE C5**

Chloé Lopes Gomes, who was formerly with the Staatsballett Berlin.

Jo Ellen Pellman of 'The Prom' Is Fighting for All the Emmas

The star of the new Netflix musical wants to inspire those who identify as L.G.B.T.Q.

By SARAH BAHR

During her second day ever on a film set, Jo Ellen Pellman came face to face with an irate Meryl Streep.

"You owe me a house!" Streep, a three-time Oscar winner snarled, eyes flashing, as she ripped off her blazer and lunged at

the 24-year-old ingénue.

Pellman's eyes widened. "I'm so sorry!" she said, holding up a hand in apology.

"And . . . cut!"

Pellman was playing Emma Nolan, a high school student in a close-minded Indiana town who wants to take her girlfriend to the prom in the Netflix adaptation of the musical "The Prom." Like Emma, Pellman is a Midwesterner who identifies as queer. But unlike her character, the young actress grew up in a supportive environment that **CONTINUED ON PAGE C6**



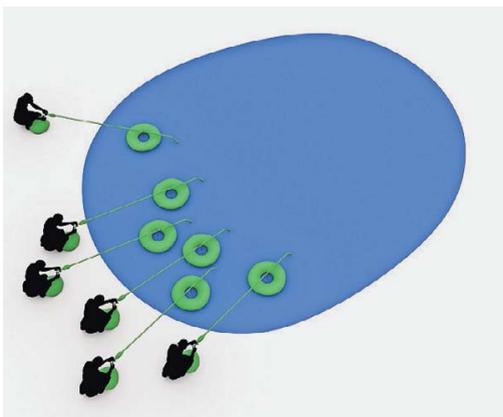
Nicole Kidman, left, and Jo Ellen Pellman in a scene from Ryan Murphy's "The Prom," the Netflix adaptation of the Broadway musical.

MELINDA SUE GORDON/NETFLIX

BLAKE GOPNIK | CRITIC'S NOTEBOOK



ALEXANDER GROVES AND AZUSA MURAKAMI



DUNNE & RABY, VIA MUSEUM OF MODERN ART



KOSUKE ARAKI



HIPPO ROLLER

Clockwise from left: Alexander Groves and Azusa Murakami of Studio Swine created aluminum stools on the streets of São Paulo, Brazil, from cans; Anima, dishware by the Japanese designer Kosuke Araki, is recycled from food waste; rolling water jugs by Pettie Petzer and Johan Jonker; and Algae Digester Foragers, from Dunne & Raby.

Aluminum stools by the British designer Alexander Groves and Azusa Murakami, from Japan, were made right on the streets of São Paulo, Brazil, using a low-tech furnace on wheels. It is meant to let the city's can collectors cast their finds into lovely, botanically-inspired seating that would look great in any modern kitchen.

With their attractive design and green cachet, I'd happily rush across the street to buy such objects in the MoMA store. In this pandemic year, many of us stay-at-homes have been eager to feather our nests as comfortably, and beautifully, as we possibly can; I certainly see the appeal, and even virtue, of designs that let us do that feathering with a minimum of damage to the planet. But the lust that gets inspired by such planet-friendly designs means that, deep down, these objects aren't committed to solving the single, fundamental problem that is threatening our future: Too vast a number of humans want more objects, comforts and pleasures than the planet can provide without breakdown. The message these objects send, just by virtue of being so eminently covetable, is that covetousness is a sin we are almost powerless to resist. They send the faulty message that our species can get out of its existential predicament simply by craving somewhat more earth-friendly goods.

Even the projects in "Broken Nature" that don't offer up buyable wares are often built around the same aesthetics that make modern goods so delicious. Sometimes that's almost accidental, as when a modular artificial reef structure by Alex Goad, meant to go unseen by anyone but fish, happens to have a geometric order that would have pleased the most finicky Bauhauser.

In other cases, modern aesthetics seem to have trumped a project's deeper message. A British firm called Dunne & Raby presents a line of pseudo-products that is deliberately far-fetched: Called "Foragers," it imagines a wearable apparatus that allows humans to eat the cellulose that other animals graze on, thereby freeing us from Big Ag and the meat-industrial complex. That's a fine techno-utopian vision, yet the props that represent that fictional gear are all impeccably crafted from glossy green plastic, like the next line of vacuums from Dyson. The Dunne & Raby conceit has content that is nice and radical; its forms would be right at home in MoMA's store.

In 2020, it's hard to imagine a more worthwhile topic for any exhibition than our planet's fate. Joe Biden, hardly a rabid tree-hugger, has put environmental issues at the center of plans for his presidency. But with "Broken Nature," MoMA's investment in those issues seems less than substantial. It wouldn't have seemed strange to see Ms. Antonelli given an entire floor — hell, the entire museum — to consider humanity's future on our planet. Instead, "Broken Nature" has had to make do with a space smaller even than the shop it looks out on.

Ms. Antonelli first launched her exhibition in 2019, in Milan, where it was a sprawling affair presenting fully 100 works. Here in New York, we have to make do with just 16 projects displayed in the flesh, plus another 20 sharing space on video monitors. Judging from Milan's excellent catalog, Ms. Antonelli had to leave out many of the most ambitious and challenging, and least product-focused, of her original projects and presentations. There was the seating of Martino Gamper, cobbled together from discarded and wildly mismatched chair parts; Gamper proposes a Frankenstein-monster aesthetic that seems perfectly suited to our consumption-scarred planet.

Unlike those elegant stools made from discarded cans, Gamper's furniture forces us to be aware of our discards even as we decorate with what they've become. I'd like to imagine that anyone whose nest gets feathered with a Gamper chair will be forever repairing it, rather than casting it out again on the street where it began life.

In Milan, aesthetics of any kind were pushed almost completely aside in the rolling water jugs by Pettie Petzer and Johan Jonker, which let African women make fewer and easier trips to the well; they suggest that, in our moment of crisis, design in the MoMA-store sense may need to give way to pure engineering.

"Broken Nature," as scaled down for MoMA, feels of a piece with the museum's long tradition of encouraging us to appreciate, and buy, the very best of modern design — which now includes designs that go "green." But the New York exhibition doesn't do enough to make us feel, with our deepest aesthetic instincts, that such consumption is precisely what needs to be overcome.

The Mixed Message of Earth Friendly

'Broken Nature' at MoMA offers up a trove of elegant designs. Will buying such objects help heal the planet?

THE DESIGN STORE of the Museum of Modern Art sits on the south side of 53rd Street in New York, just up from the ritzy shops of Fifth Avenue. It is dedicated to adding more fabulous objects to the vast supply of goods our households — and planet — are bursting with.

MoMA itself sits across the road, where the windows of one of its galleries look out on the store. That streetside gallery, just about retail-size, is now hosting "Broken Nature," an exhibition dedicated to the concept of "restorative design" — objects and projects that hope to heal a world so damaged by humans that it is becoming less liv-

able by the year.

It's a great topic, but there's a problem that "Broken Nature" can't seem to escape, maybe because it vexes just about all of "green" design: A visitor crossing from MoMA store to exhibition, and then back from show to store, wouldn't have much need to shift mental gears. Both spaces are full of sleek objects that delight the eye and tickle the mind; both use delicious modern aesthetics to sell us on the things they want us to buy and the ideas they want us to buy into. A show, and a field, that seems set to push back against our consumerist urges feels almost consumed by them.

Paola Antonelli, senior curator in MoMA's department of architecture and design, has built her exhibition around the idea that humans need to pay environmental "reparations" to a planet long enslaved

to our short-term needs, and that designers can help make the payment. And yet a number of the objects in "Broken Nature" barely throw pennies into nature's begging cup.

The exhibition features the elegant, geometric Anima dishware of the Japanese designer Kosuke Araki. They are made of a glossy black material that evokes the proto-modern ceramics that Josiah Wedgwood pioneered in the 1760s, winning him rights to be the earliest creator in the MoMA collection. Araki's dishes update Wedgwood's by being recycled from food waste.

Cups and decanters from the Dutch designers Eric Klarenbeek and Maartje Dros are lovely, translucent things in biomorphic forms that recall the midcentury modern designs of Alvar Aalto. They are made of plant-based, petroleum-free algae and sugars.

Under the Mask, the Next Batman Will Be Black

In a new story line, one of Lucius Fox's sons assumes the role of caped crusader.

By GEORGE GENE GUSTINES

Fans of DC Comics have been told for months that a new Batman will premiere in January. They were also teased that underneath the costume of the new caped crusader would likely be a person of color. The identity of the new hero was revealed on Thursday when DC released a cover of the second issue of the new comic: He is Timothy Fox, one of the sons of Lucius Fox, a business associate of Bruce Wayne, the original Batman.

Timothy Fox will appear as the title hero in Future State: The Next Batman, a four-

issue series written by John Ridley, the screenwriter of "12 Years a Slave," with art by Nick Derington, Laura Braga and others. The four-issue series will arrive in comic stores in January and February and is part of a two-month event that puts DC's regular series on hold and replaces them with new ones that look to the future of the DC Universe.

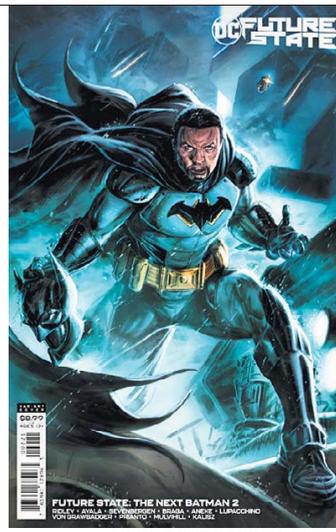
The leap forward has fresh faces taking on the roles of familiar heroes: In addition to Timothy Fox as Batman, Jonathan Kent, the son of the Man of Steel, is Superman, and Yara Flor, who is from Brazil, is Wonder Woman. Some of these future characters are already having ripple effects. Following DC's event, the new Wonder Woman, who was created by the writer and artist Joëlle Jones, will be getting a Wonder Girl series set in the present. The character is also be-

ing developed as a series for the CW.

Timothy Fox originally appeared in Batman No. 313 in 1979. He most recently appeared in October, after the Wayne fortune, which pays for Batman and all his wonderful toys, fell into the hands of Timothy's father, Lucius Fox.

In a recent interview, Ridley talked about the target audience for his Batman story: his sons.

"They appreciate the things that I do," he said. "They're happy for me. They're great supporters. But they would much rather see 'Black Panther' than '12 Years a Slave,' let's be honest. So to be able to write the next Batman, for them to know that this next Batman is going to be Black, everybody else on the planet can hate it, have a problem with it, denigrate it, but I have my audience and they already love it."



The identity of a new Batman has been revealed: He is Tim Fox, the son of a business associate of Bruce Wayne, Gotham's original masked crime fighter. John Ridley, the screenwriter of "12 Years a Slave," is writing the four-issue comic book series.

DOUG BRAITHWAITE AND DIEGO RODRIGUEZ/DC

Incidental Music, for a Few Nights Only

A ban on indoor dining slams shut a window for city clubs that were trying to reopen.

By SARAH BAHR and SEAN PICCOLI

Although most indoor live performances have been banned in New York since the coronavirus began its deadly spread in March, about a dozen people turned up Wednesday night at Birdland, the jazz club near Times Square, for a 7 p.m. performance that was billed as dinner with live jazz. They had reservations.

Among them was Tricia Tait, 63, of Manhattan, who came for the band, led by the tuba player David Ostwald, which plays the music of Louis Armstrong. Until the pandemic hit, it had performed on most Wednesdays at Birdland. She admitted to health worries “in the back of my mind,” but said, “Sometimes you just have to take a chance and enjoy things.”

Birdland, and other jazz clubs and piano bars across the city, were quietly offering live performances, arguing that the performers were playing “incidental” music for diners, and that the music was permitted by the pandemic-era guidelines set by the State Liquor Authority. But the shows will not last long: Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo said Friday that he would close all indoor dining in New York City beginning Monday, citing troubling signs of the virus’s spread.

“We’re going to close,” Ryan Paternite, the director of programming and media at Birdland, said after the announcement. “We’re not going to flout the law.”

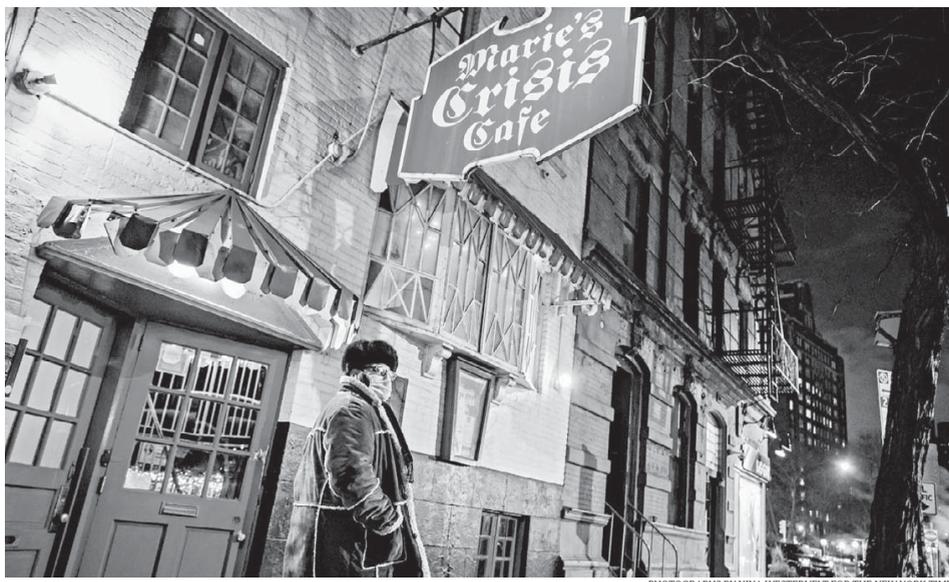
That the performances had been taking place at all was perhaps surprising, given that the number of daily new coronavirus cases in New York City was climbing to levels not seen since April and most other indoor shows were banned.

But the clubs argued that they were following guidelines from the liquor authority, which state that “only incidental music is permissible at this time” and that “advertised and/or ticketed shows are not permissible.” The guidelines continue: “Music should be incidental to the dining experience and not the draw itself.”

That was enough for a number of New York venues that are better known for their performances than their cuisine — including Birdland, the Blue Note and Marie’s Crisis Cafe, a West Village piano bar that reopened Monday with a show tune singalong after declaring itself a dining establishment — to begin offering live music again.

“We think it’s incidental,” Mr. Paternite said of its calendar of performances that included a brass band and a jazz quartet. “It’s background music. That’s the rule.”

The state rules have been challenged in court. After Michael Hund, a Buffalo guitarist, filed a lawsuit in August challenging them, a judge in the U.S. District Court in the Western District of New York issued a



Above, despite the worsening pandemic, Marie’s Crisis Cafe, a West Village piano bar, reopened this week with a singalong. Right, Daniel Wiseman and Rindi Klarberg being greeted by Moni Penda, far right, at Birdland.



preliminary injunction last month preventing the state from enforcing its ban on advertised and ticketed shows. “The incidental-music rule prohibits one kind of live music and permits another,” the judge, John L. Sinatra Jr., wrote in his Nov. 13 decision. “This distinction is arbitrary.”

The state is appealing the ruling.

“The science is clear that mass gatherings can easily turn into superspreader events, and it is unconscionable that businesses would attempt to undermine proven public health rules like this as infections, hospitalizations and deaths continue to rise,” William Crowley, a spokesman for the liquor authority, said Thursday. He noted that a federal judge in New York City had

ruled in another case that the restrictions were constitutional. He said that the state would “continue to vigorously defend our ability to fight this pandemic whenever it is challenged.”

But it is far from clear what, exactly, “incidental” music means. Does that mean a guitar player in the corner? A six-person jazz band like the one that played at Birdland on Wednesday night? The Harlem Gospel Choir, which had been set to perform at the Blue Note on Christmas Day? Mr. Crowley did not respond to questions seeking further clarity on Thursday, or about what enforcement actions the state has taken.

Robert Bookman, a lawyer who represents a number of New York’s live music

venues, said venues interpreted the ruling as allowing them to advertise and sell tickets for incidental music performances during dinner.

So venues had been choosing their words carefully. They were taking dinner reservations, and are announcing calendars of line-ups for what Mr. Paternite, of Birdland, characterizes as “background music during dinner.” Unlike Mac’s Public House, the Staten Island bar that declared itself an autonomous zone and was recently lampooned on “Saturday Night Live,” they have no interest in openly flouting regulations.

Mr. Paternite said that Birdland, after laying off nearly all of its 60 employees in March, came back with what he called a “skeleton staff” of about 10 people.

“It’s a huge risk for us to be open,” he said. “And it only brings in a pittance. But it helps us out in our agreement with our landlord, because to pay our rent over time and stay current on our utilities and taxes, we need to stay open. But we’re losing massive amounts every day.”

Mr. Cuomo, in announcing the pending closure of indoor dining, called for federal aid to help bars and restaurants, and for a moratorium on commercial evictions.

If venues are unable to reopen now, Mr. Paternite fears, they may never do so. The Jazz Standard, a 130-seat club on East 27th Street in Manhattan, announced last week that it would close permanently because of the pandemic. Arlene’s Grocery, a Lower East Side club that hosted the Strokes before they became well known, said it was “on life support” and, without aid, would have to close on Feb. 1.

Randy Taylor, the bartender and manager at Marie’s Crisis Cafe, said the last time the piano bar had served food was probably back in the 1970s — or perhaps earlier. “There’s a very old kitchen that’s totally disconnected upstairs,” he said. Its dining options had been extremely limited: It was offering \$4 bowls of chips and salsa. “We are required to sell them,” he said. “We can’t just give them away.”

Shortly before the indoor dining ban was announced, Steven Bensusan, the president of Blue Note Entertainment Group, said that he hoped it could be avoided.

“I know cases are spiking,” he said. “But we’re doing our best to keep people safe, and I hope we can continue to stay open. We’re not going to be profitable, but we have the ability to give some people work who’ve been with us for a long time.”

Marie’s Crisis Cafe had been livestreaming shows on Instagram and its Facebook group page, but Mr. Taylor said it wasn’t the same. On Wednesday night, 10 customers belted out holiday tunes through masks, some sipping their first drinks at a venue since March.

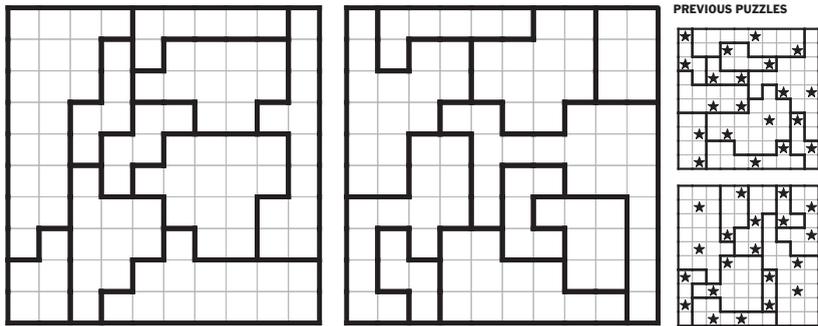
“There have been some tears,” Mr. Taylor said. “People really, really missed us. We can’t see their smiles through their masks, but their eyes say it all.”

Crossword

Enjoy wordplay every day.
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11,000 Expressions That'll Knock Your Socks Off
SO TO SPEAK
ON SALE NOW
“AN ASTONISHING COLLECTION!”
—RICHARD LEDERER, author of *Anguished English*
TILLER PRESS
An imprint of Simon & Schuster
A Random House Company

Two Not Touch



Put two stars in each row, column and region of the grid. No two stars may touch, not even diagonally.
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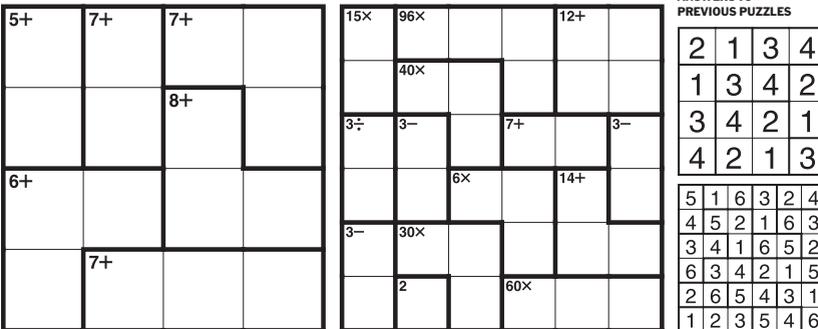
Wit Twister

“I’m faster than a lightning _____,” declared
The _____ to his teammates. “Who’s prepared
To challenge me? No _____? You refuse?
How’s this: You race on blades — I’ll just wear shoes.”

Complete the verse with words that are anagrams of each other. Each underline represents a letter.
PUZZLE BY NANCY COUGHLIN

YESTERDAY’S ANSWER Feud --> duel

KenKen



Fill the grid with digits so as not to repeat a digit in any row or column, and so that the digits within each heavily outlined box will produce the target number shown, by using addition, subtraction, multiplication or division, as indicated in the box. A 4x4 grid will use the digits 1-4. A 6x6 grid will use 1-6.
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Crossword | Edited by Will Shortz

PUZZLE BY SID SIVAKUMAR AND BROOKE HUSIC

ACROSS

- Company with the most U.S. patents per year since 1993
- “Quiet, you!”
- Bench targets, for short
- Profession in Upton Sinclair’s “The Jungle”
- “That said ...,” in a text
- Narrow band of storms
- Country whose flag stripe colors are exactly the same as Guinea’s except in reverse order
- Tilt
- Longtime college basketball coach Kruger
- Tempur-Pedic acquisition of 2012
- What doesn’t require a return envelope?
- Gets ready to throw
- Focus of some celebrity suits
- Suffix with elector
- Representation of the first-born child of “earth mother” and “sky father,” in Hawaiian culture
- Flares
- Part of a campus map
- Sch. with the most applications in the U.S.
- Foundation location
- Thusly
- Fluffy dog, for short
- Latin for “and elsewhere”
- Mustard, for one
- Rafter neighbor
- Put on hold
- Diving spot

DOWN

- Pings
- Pass on after passing on
- “Whoa!”
- They cover all the bases
- “Capeesh?”
- Drink, in a way
- Demands
- Rhythmic pattern in jazz
- I, for one
- Having overhangs, say
- Symbol for elasticity, in economics
- Like cars in a junkyard, maybe
- Story lines
- Luxury wear for showgoers
- Fairy ____
- Order in the court
- Host
- Annual event first held at the Hollywood Athletic Club
- Org. with X-rays
- On the double
- “It’s game over for me”
- Die-hard fan no matter what, in slang
- Amy of “Arrival”
- Alaska, often
- Computer shortcuts
- Hybrid fruit also known as an aprium
- Musical piece with a recurring theme
- Jazzy Jeff, per a 1988 3x platinum album title
- Not so great
- Tapenade discard
- State of being broken
- Flew
- Wins a race against, perhaps
- N as in Nissan?
- Total meltdown
- Heads out, slangly
- Siberian native
- Bumper ____
- Mathematical suffix
- Feel
- Part of San Francisco’s Muni system
- A snap
- Hem, e.g.
- Last word of “America the Beautiful”

ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE

DAMP SNUBS ATRA
OBOE TENET BRAN
WOOT EXTRAPPOINT
DONTGETANYIDEAS
QUORUM ZESTY
SPURT PEREZ
HEATH DERAILED
OAKLAND INONEGO
PREEMIES VAMOS
CLOTH EMOTE
ASAMI JOININ
SCRATCHANDSNIFF
POTTYHUMOR UCLA
ERIE UTERI TEAK
NEED MUSES ESTE

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A Met Return (of Sorts) for Bryn Terfel

The singer, long absent from New York stages, will perform a holiday recital from Wales.

By ZACHARY WOOLFE

The airy studio where Bryn Terfel practices is set a good few yards from the house in Penarth, Wales, that he shares with his wife and two young children. Given his thunderous bass-baritone voice, which has roared through the great roles of Mozart, Puccini, Verdi and Wagner at opera houses around the world over the past 30 years, this is probably essential to family sanity.

A few days before a holiday recital that will be streamed live by the Metropolitan Opera on Saturday from Brecon Cathedral, about 40 miles north of here, Mr. Terfel, 55, was seated at his piano in the room for a video call. Visible behind him was an antique poster advertising a Paris-Wales train route, and another for a production of Verdi's "Falstaff" in Milan, in which he played the jovial title role.

But the opposite wall, he indicated as he



CHRIS LEE



CLEMENTINE SCHNEIDERMAN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES



KEN HOWARD/METROPOLITAN OPERA

Top right, Bryn Terfel in Wales. From top: with Emma Thompson in "Sweeney Todd" with the New York Philharmonic in 2014, and with Deborah Voigt in Wagner's "Ring" at the Met in 2011.

turned the camera, is dominated by his achievements in America: posters for a "Sweeney Todd" opposite Emma Thompson at the New York Philharmonic; his 1996 Carnegie Hall recital debut; and, signed by its cast, Wagner's "Ring" at the Met.

This wall of New Yorkiana was particularly poignant to see, since Mr. Terfel has not appeared in the city since that "Sweeney" in 2014. In a review in The New York Times, Charles Isherwood wrote that Mr. Terfel "may be the most richly gifted singer ever to undertake the title role."

His recent Met history has been a dark comedy of errors. Shortly after arriving to start rehearsals for a much-anticipated new production of Puccini's "Tosca" in 2017, he knew something was wrong with his singing, and dropped out to have a polyp removed from his vocal cords. Then, earlier this year, he fractured his ankle and couldn't appear in another new staging, this time Wagner's "Der Fliegende Holländer."

"These are things that you never expect

to stop you in your tracks," Mr. Terfel said.

The takeaway: He has not appeared at the Met since 2012, so this holiday recital is a return — even if it's from some 3,000 miles away. He remains well-loved by the company's audience for his rich, warm voice, his imposing characterizations — and commanding height — and his relish for the words he sings. Memories are still strong of his barreling through the title role in "The Marriage of Figaro," sneering as Scarpia in "Tosca" and appearing as both the lecherous Don Giovanni and his manservant, Leporello, in Mozart's opera. If his star turn as Wotan in Wagner's "Ring" in 2010-12 felt stunted by the physical limitations on the performers in Robert Lepage's staging, he still exerted a magnetic presence.

He spoke in the interview about his pandemic year and his plans for the Met recital. These are edited excerpts from the conversation.

Do you currently have Met engagements beyond this recital?

In New York, I've performed nearly all the operas I do on a new scale, a new production. Of course, it's such a tremendous strain on your family life to be away that long. That's something that is always difficult in this career, about signing a contract in New York. So I don't currently have any contracts, not really. I'm just booking two years in advance, maybe.

I have certain interesting things with the Royal Opera House in London. And Welsh National Opera, too. I like Vienna and Munich, where you can rehearse two days and do three performances; a week and a half, and you're home. And in a run of "Tosca," you sing opposite maybe three different Toscas, each exceptional.

How did this holiday concert, which is part of the Met's series of livestreamed recitals, come about?

In the summer, Peter Gelb [the Met's gen-

eral manager] rang me at home and offered me a chance to be a part of this series, which I'm incredibly grateful for. It's a wonderful way to finish off your year, knowing a vaccine is being rolled out as we speak. He immediately said I should be doing a kind of Christmas program, so I've had plenty of time to think about it. I wanted something of the birth of Jesus, which comes in "El Nacimiento," a Spanish carol I'm singing. There are a couple of songs by Robat Arwyn, a friend I was in school with. There's "Silent Night," "O Come, All Ye Faithful," "In the Bleak Midwinter" and the Welsh song "Ar Hyd y Nos" ("All Through the Night").

A bard here in Wales, Mererid Hopwood, has written these short texts for me to read between the pieces. The arts is all about teams and collaboration, and I've tried to assemble a very strong team. My wife, Hannah Stone, will be accompanying me on the harp. It's a perfect instrument anywhere, but in the cathedral it really feels like it's come home. I'm so happy to be able to include some young singers, the soprano Natalya Romaniv and the tenor Trystan Llyr Griffiths. And the pianist Jeff Howard, and the folk group Calan. And everyone comes together at the end to start the Christmas spirit.

Silence, serenity and peace — that is what I'm going to try and convey. But what will be on my mind will be the frontline workers, and the losses we have all encountered in every country.

What was the process of picking Brecon Cathedral?

The Met people had this vision they wanted a castle. But in Wales, the castles are either in ruins or the rooms inside are too small. There was the idea of Cardiff Castle, but there's a wedding there this weekend.

Have you been able to perform this year?

There have been some terrific moments. I did a new "Fidelio" in Graz; I did a "Tosca"

in Munich. The arts in Germany is a whole different kettle of fish. It's not just the federal government; it's the city, it's the state of Bavaria. It was important for the opera house in Munich that they brought back audiences very quickly, even if it was just 500 people. It was still bringing the arts to the people who needed nourishment in some musical form.

I've just recorded "Chestnuts Roasting" for a music festival here close to me. (And maybe in a couple of weeks Santa might bring something that might resemble a microphone.) I did a concert in the Barbican [in London], a 50-minute online concert that had to be devised around a set amount of musicians. I did Bach cantatas and English songs.

And I did a little concert to thank the vaccine team in Oxford, with a new carol by John Rutter. The three words at the end: "The angels sing." And that's the hope I think. For our profession now, to bring people back, everyone has to have that confidence. And hopefully by next summer we should have some sense of normality.

What are some of your plans?

I had been supposed to do my first Bluebeard in Bartok's "Bluebeard's Castle" in June, and I hadn't even begun with a coach or language coach. In lockdown, I've been looking at one-act operas a little bit, with a thought what might help opera houses: Puccini's "Gianni Schicchi" and "Il Tabarro"; "The Bear" by William Walton; Donizetti has many wonderful one-act operas; "Bluebeard," of course.

And my constant friend, here on the piano, is Schubert's "Winterreise," which I hope to be recording for Deutsche Grammophon. I've never performed it; the first time I opened the score was during Covid. I was invited many times to hear Jonas Kaufmann sing it, Simon Keenlyside sing it, but I didn't want to hear it until I did it myself.

FILM REVIEWS

GIVING VOICE

CRITIC'S PICK Rated PG-13 for the power of theater. Running time: 1 hour 27 minutes. Watch on Netflix.

The everyday hopes and heartbreaks of African-Americans were dramatized in August Wilson's 10-play Century Cycle. And every year, since Wilson's death in 2005, thousands of students from 12 different cities vie for the chance to perform a monologue from one of his plays in a competition's final round on Broadway. James D. Stern and Fernando Villena's uplifting documentary "Giving Voice" (streaming on Netflix) further explores this competition and explains how the playwright's legacy is inspiring a new generation.

Interviews with the actors Viola Davis, who is one of the



Aaron Guy in "Giving Voice."

film's executive producers, Denzel Washington and Stephen McKinley Henderson (all three starred in the film adaptation of Wilson's "Fences") are interspersed between segments that follow teenagers advancing through the 2018 competition.

This is a film that worships the ways acting can instill determination in young people. Gerardo Navarro, from South Central Los Angeles, says he was unaware a space for Latinx actors existed in theater, but feels seen by Wilson's work. Callie Holley, hailing from Houston, sees her mother, who weathered cancer and the 2008 financial crisis, in the character of Berniece from "The Piano Lesson." And the Chicago high schooler Cody Merridith, who performs from "King Hedley II," innately feels the hurt present in Wilson's work. Not only does Cody come from the Auburn Gresham neighborhood, where poverty is a daily struggle for many of its residents, but his school is without an arts program of any kind.

In addition to hearing themselves in the voices of these characters, the kids hear their aunts, uncles, grandparents and neighbors, too. They hear the timeless struggle of Black America reaching across the generations. They heave the emotional weight of Ma Rainey, Cutler and Hedley with a maturity far beyond their years and come out

empowered. And in capturing these moments, "Giving Voice" becomes as inspirational as Wilson's words, as fulfilling as each teen's declaration of self-worth.

SAFETY

Rated PG. Running time: 1 hour 58 minutes. Watch on Disney+.

They say it takes a village to raise a child, but in "Safety," it takes an entire university campus to do so.

Overly sentimental traps line the plot of the film, streaming on Disney+. But it scores points for giving its lead characters complicated situations, emotional depth and political dimension.

Based on a true story, the movie follows the Clemson University freshman football player Ray McElrathbey (Jay Reeves), affectionately called "Ray Ray" by his peers. The ambitious student athlete has a lot on his plate.

When his mother (Amanda Warren) goes into addiction recovery, he's forced to take care of his younger brother, Fahmarr (Thaddeus J. Mixson), housing him in the dorm. With this new task, Ray Ray's ability to balance family, school, friends and athletics risks being toppled. That's when his coaches and teammates step in.

"Safety" is, for better, neither a strict sports movie nor a rigid tale of adversity. Banal time manage-

ment scenes are enlivened by the director Reginald Hudlin's fun camera swooping and rollicking tumbles as Ray's life grows dizzyingly busy.

Some of the earlier moments in the film, like when Fahmarr hides in increasingly ludicrous spots, have the humor of a heist comedy. And Hudlin intermittently blends in sharp visual gags.

But the film's touchdown is its sincere questioning of what colleges and universities owe to its students and, more broadly, the community around them.

Hudlin transforms a film that would be, in lesser hands, a formulaic hardship-as-aesthetic drama, into an earnest examination of what community means on the field, in the classroom and in our society.

KYLE TURNER

THE BEE GEES

Not rated. Running time: 1 hour 51 minutes. Watch on HBO Max.

"The Bee Gees: How Can You Mend a Broken Heart" pays tribute to the Gibb brothers with a tour of their pop music reign. Grooving through the decades, this entertaining documentary aims to prove that the Bee Gees were more than a hitmaker for nightclubs. Rather, Barry, Maurice and Robin were master songwriters and chameleons, continually reinventing themselves to harmonize with the times.



HBO/SHUTTERSTOCK

From left, the brothers Maurice, Barry and Robin Gibb, in "The Bee Gees."

Working largely off archival footage intercut with interviews — both original and vintage — of the brothers and their collaborators, the director Frank Marshall graphs the band's ups and downs onto a chronology of 1960s, '70s and '80s popular music. At first the Bee Gees, forming at a young age, echoed early Beatles albums. As their warbling harmonies evolved, the brothers' star rose.

In addition to laying out the personality of each member, the film offers a satisfying look at the process of making and marketing music. Barry recalls that he found his trademark falsetto, later flaunted on disco hits like "Stayin' Alive," after a producer urged him to let loose while recording "Nights on Broadway." Barry also confesses that the song was originally "Lights on Broadway"; an executive suggested they change

the lyric to make the band seem more adult.

Once it reaches the disco era, the documentary hits a bump. Interviews with the DJ Nicky Siano and the dance music producer Vince Lawrence detail how disco was born in Black and gay spaces before the music was commercialized and eventually axed in a backlash inflamed by racism and homophobia. The movie implies that the Bee Gees, evermore linked to the genre after "Saturday Night Fever," got swept up in the chaos. Crucially, Marshall fails to explore where the Bee Gees fit into a history of whitewashing and profiting from Black music. For several pesky beats, the film slips into hagiography — like an awkward bridge in a song that, otherwise, makes you want to hit the dance floor.

NATALIA WINKELMAN



VIA STAATSBALLETT BERLIN

A Dancer and Questions of Color

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But as companies have become both more diverse and more sensitive to racial issues, most have stopped the practice, or left it up to individual dancers. The Dutch National Ballet, American Ballet Theater and the Royal Ballet dispensed with the practice more than a decade ago.

But Ms. Lopes Gomes, 29, said that when she joined the Staatsballett Berlin in 2018, she was told by the ballet mistress in charge of the female corps de ballet to use the body makeup. “I said to her, I’ll never look white,” Ms. Lopes Gomes recounted. “She said, well, you will have to put on more than the other girls.”

Ms. Lopes Gomes reported the incident to Johannes Ohman, at that time the co-artistic director, who issued a strict directive that she was not to use the makeup. But after he left the company in January, Ms. Lopes Gomes said she was told to use it again.

This is one of many racially insensitive incidents that Ms. Lopes Gomes said she experienced during her two years at the Staatsballett Berlin. She said she had been too afraid of losing her job to speak out earlier, but has decided to now after being told in September that she was one of 12 dancers whose contracts are not being renewed at the end of this season.

“I really hesitated about this because the ballet world is so small, and I’m scared I will never get another job,” said Ms. Lopes Gomes. “But I want things to change; there are so few Black ballet dancers, and I don’t want small Black girls to think, ballet isn’t for me.”

Christiane Theobald, the ballet’s artistic director, said in an interview that while she believes Ms. Lopes Gomes, she has been unable to corroborate her account. (Ms. Lopes Gomes said that Ms. Theobald, the deputy artistic director at the time, saw her wearing the whitening makeup after the February rehearsal and asked her why she was using it; Ms. Theobald said she has no memory of this encounter.)

‘I really hesitated about this because the ballet world is so small, and I’m scared I will never get another job.’

But several people affiliated with the company confirm they either saw Ms. Lopes Gomes with the makeup applied, or that she told them at the time about the ballet mistress’s directive. All asked to remain anonymous, saying they were afraid they would lose their jobs if they commented publicly.

The practice of female dancers powdering or painting their bodies to look whiter probably dates from the mid-19th century, when romantic ballets like “Giselle” or “La Sylphide” popularized ethereal creatures who were variously ghosts, spirits or enchanted beings — like women who were turned into swans.

Behind the idea is another one that has long been fundamental to classical dance; the idea of aesthetic and stylistic uniformity. The female ensemble in many ballets is a multiplied image of the ballerina — the Swan Princess and the swans, Giselle and the Willis — and the idea of conformity to a specific physical ideal is ingrained in the art form.

Female ballet dancers, in particular, are subject to strict physical requirements regarding height and weight. Individuality is subjugated in a corps de ballet; its very name, “the body of the ballet,” suggests the way in which classical dance often presents dancers as a massed presence in which no single person stands out in the group.

For those who believe in this historical ideal, the act of applying whitening body makeup is simply part of an overall aesthetic and theatrical effect, as much part of the costume as the tutu.

Benjamin Millepied, who stopped the practice of using either whitening paint or blackface during his tenure as director of

the Paris Opera Ballet, said that defenders of these traditions always said that the dancer was simply playing a character. But it was not a valid argument in a context in which one race had oppressed another, he said.

“This armylike idea of everyone in unison, everyone looking identical, is a major problem with ballet,” he said. “It is an incorrect view; what makes the scenes work in ‘Swan Lake’ or ‘La Bayadère’ is great dancing, a sum of everyone’s energy and individuality, not a display of pancaked white people.”

The Paris Opera is waiting for the results of an external inquiry into racial diversity, commissioned by its new director, Alexander Neef, before setting a firm policy. But Aurélie Dupont, the current director of the Paris Opera Ballet, has told dancers not to use whitening makeup in the company’s upcoming production of “La Bayadère.”

Both Ted Brandsen, the director of Dutch National, and Kevin O’Hare, the director of the Royal Ballet, said they felt it was more important for their dancers to feel accepted than to adhere to a traditional idea of uniformity. “It’s really important to recognize that we’re in the 21st century,” Mr. Brandsen said, “and that ballet is an art form performed and enjoyed by people from many cultural backgrounds.”

It is still difficult to be a Black ballerina, said several dancers of color who were interviewed for this article. Most said they often felt they had to work harder than their white peers to prove their capabilities, or to change stereotyped ideas about what they could dance. But none had been asked to use body makeup, and each dancer praised her company’s current efforts to be more conscious of the issues around diversity and inclusiveness. (Several dancers mentioned that their companies now encouraged them to use tights and pointe shoes that matched their skin tones, rather than the standard pink.)

Ms. Lopes Gomes said that, in her case, from the moment she joined the company,

she was picked on in rehearsals by one of the company’s ballet mistresses. “She would say, when you’re not in line or not on the music, we see only you because you’re Black,” she said. “It was upsetting.”

Several of Ms. Lopes Gomes’s colleagues said they had heard similar remarks directed at her. Mr. Ohman, the former co-artistic director, confirmed that Ms. Lopes Gomes had approached him in 2018 to report that a ballet mistress had told her to apply white makeup before performing. The choreographer Alexei Ratmansky, who staged his version of “La Bayadère” for the Staatsballett in 2018, said that he had not witnessed any discriminatory behavior.

The company said the ballet mistress had declined a request for an interview.

Ms. Lopes Gomes said that she believes her dismissal to be racially motivated. Ms. Theobald, who expressed her dismay and regret at Ms. Lopes Gomes’s account during an interview, denied this, saying the contracts of the 12 dancers had not been renewed for “artistic reasons.”

But Ms. Theobald said that, on the basis of Ms. Lopes Gomes’s account, the ballet mistress had been subject to “disciplinary measures.” For legal reasons, she said, she was unable to specify what these are.

On Monday, the company issued a statement on its website that did not refer explicitly to Ms. Lopes Gomes’s assertions, but stated that “the racist and discriminatory behavior that was brought to light in our company deeply moves us and shows that the necessary skills and tools to deal with issues of discrimination need to be worked on thoroughly to instigate profound change.”

Ms. Lopes Gomes said that despite the unpleasantness of some of her experiences in Berlin, she still hoped to find a job with a big classical ballet company.

“This has been my dream since I saw ‘Swan Lake’ when I was 8 years old,” she said. “At that time, everyone onstage was white. I would like to think it doesn’t have to be like that any more.”

The Staatsballett Berlin rehearsing “Swan Lake” in February, with Chloé Lopes Gomes directly above.

TikTok ‘Ratatouille’ Musical to Be Presented Online as a Benefit

A crowdsourced show with songs and scenes inspired by a film will aid the Actors Fund.

By CHRISTINA MORALES

With Broadway houses and performance venues across the country closed because of the pandemic, musical theater lovers burned off pent-up creative energy on TikTok this year, creating songs, dances and even set designs for a hypothetical musical version of the 2007 Disney-Pixar movie “Ratatouille.”

Now, the crowdsourced hodgepodge of a show is coming to virtual life in a one-time-only benefit performance.

Seaview, a theatrical production company, announced on Wednesday that it would present an online performance of the show on Jan. 1 to raise money for the Actors

Brooks Barnes contributed reporting.

Fund. The performance will be available for streaming for three days, the company said.

“The love for the performing arts shines through in the ‘Ratatouille’-inspired TikTok from theater lovers around the world,” Joseph P. Benincasa, the Actors Fund chief executive, said in a statement.

In thousands of TikTok videos, creators have paid homage to the movie, an animated film about a rat who dreams of becoming a French chef. Creators, some of whom can boast of honest-to-goodness Broadway credits, created their own songs, dances, makeup looks, set designs, puppets and Playbill programs.

Without a director, choreographer or stage crew, the performance will be unlike any show on Broadway. It came together organically on TikTok, where users have only a minute to catch people’s attention.

“In a year where we saw Broadway close, the TikTok community brought musical fans together virtually with one of the most unique trends we have ever seen on plat-

form,” said Lizzy Hale, senior manager for content at TikTok.

Lawyers for Disney have a history of zealously guarding the conglomerate’s intellectual property. As social media has become a global force over the last decade, Disney has become more tolerant of fan appropriation, weighing the public relations risk of shutting down endeavors like this against a loss of control over its characters.

“Although we do not have development plans for the title, we love when our fans engage with Disney stories,” Disney said in a statement. “We applaud and thank all of the online theater makers for helping to benefit the Actors Fund in this unprecedented time of need.”

Daniel Mertzluft, 27, a composer, orchestrator and arranger in New York, used a computer program to create his own song for a Disney-style finale scene he imagined.

Mr. Mertzluft, who is involved with the performance, said there was coordination



WALT DISNEY PICTURES AND PIXAR ANIMATION STUDIOS

Remy, a Parisian rat with culinary ambitions, in the 2007 film “Ratatouille.”

with Disney for the one-night-only benefit concert.

“I’m really excited about it and how the TikTok community manifested this,” he said.

“It’s the best feeling in the world knowing I can bring my authentic self to the role,” Jo Ellen Pellman said of “The Prom.”

Jo Ellen Pellman Is Fighting For Every Emma

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has affected how she views the film’s potential.

“For young people who identify as L.G.B.T.Q., I hope it can be a two-hour break from all that’s happening in the world,” she said. “Like, ‘It’s going to be OK, my people are out there.’”

Still, this is her first film role, it happens to be the lead, and her co-stars — including Streep, James Corden and Nicole Kidman as narcissistic Broadway actors who parachute in to help her character — are names she’s long looked up to.

Pellman projected complete confidence in the presence of the stars, Ryan Murphy, the film’s director, said. “She had no fear,” even though her experience until then had consisted of roles like Girl No. 2 in an episode of “The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel.”

Murphy, on the other hand, whose credits include “American Horror Story” and “Pose,” said, “I was so nervous the first time I directed Meryl Streep — I think I did four takes. I was trembling.”

Pellman said she was hardly immune to Streep’s star power. “I love that that’s the way it came across,” she said, grinning during a Zoom interview last month from home in Cincinnati, where she’s been living with her mom since March. “Inside, I was like ‘OMG, that’s Meryl Streep!’”

It took Murphy all of one meeting to decide Pellman was his Emma.

“I watched her tape, and I knew,” he said. “She had that mixture of soul and spunk and spirit — and that amazing smile.”

Pellman, a recent graduate of the University of Michigan, was working three jobs while going to open calls in New York City, when she heard about the nationwide search to cast the role. “It felt like a long shot,” she said. But Pellman, as a queer woman herself, connected with Emma’s optimism and determination when she saw the play on Broadway with Caitlin Kinnunen in the part.

She didn’t know until shortly before her meeting with Murphy that Ariana DeBose, who plays Emma’s girlfriend, Alyssa Green, would be the only other actress there. “I saw Ariana’s name on the call sheet, and I freaked out because she’s someone I’ve looked up to my whole career,” she said.

But Murphy said that if Pellman was nervous, she didn’t let on. “As soon as Jo Ellen talked about her life, she didn’t even have to read,” he said. “She spoke very movingly about being a queer woman and having a gay single mom who raised her. I remember she walked out and I was just like, ‘Thank



DASHAUNA MARISA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Pellman connected with her character’s optimism and determination.

God, that’s over — we’ve found our girl!”

Pellman was less sure. But she did get one hint at her interview. “He hugged us at the end of the audition,” she said. “When does that ever happen? A Ryan Murphy hug? That’s huge!”

When Murphy called the next day to tell Pellman she’d landed her dream role, she was perusing the coats at a thrift shop in Bushwick, Brooklyn. The first person she called was her mother. Or, rather, tried to.

Monica Pellman didn’t pick up.

It was a rare absence for the woman Pellman credits with raising her in a supportive, L.G.B.T.Q.-affirming household — an experience that she’s grateful diverges from Emma’s. “When I came out my senior year of high school, it was no big deal,” she said. “I just blurted out one night while watching TV, ‘Mom, I think I’m queer.’ And she was like, ‘That’s completely fine.’ She just wanted me to be happy.”

Pellman’s mother, whom she calls “pretty much the coolest person ever,” declined to be interviewed for this article. But she was an unseen presence during our November conversation, laughing at her daughter’s confession that she can speak fluent Ubbi Dubbi, the gibberish language popularized by the PBS program “Zoom,” and handing Pellman tissues when she choked up talk-

ing about an emotional moment in the film when Emma declares she has never felt so alone in her life.

Unlike Emma, Pellman was not an out-cast growing up in Cincinnati, which is a far cry from Edgewater, Ind., the film’s fictional setting. She characterizes her high school as “pretty progressive.” Most of her close friends were gay, she said, adding, “I’m lucky because I was never bullied.”

It was that affirmation that she drew from in her portrayal of Emma as a forceful — if reluctant — leader who comes into her own after the course of the film. “It’s the best feeling in the world, knowing I can bring my authentic self to the role,” Pellman said. “And not just be accepted, but celebrated.”

“When she called to tell me she got the role, there was a certain rightness in the world,” Brent Wagner, who recently retired as chairman of the University of Michigan’s musical theater department, said. “Because if she’d hadn’t gotten it, she’d be out there fighting for the Emmas of the world.”

She and DeBose, a fellow queer woman whom Pellman calls “the one person who always knows exactly what I’m going through,” co-founded the Unruly Hearts Initiative to connect young L.G.B.T.Q. people with organizations that help provide housing, mental health services and mentorship.

That isn’t the only time Pellman has shared her talents. In 2017, she traveled to India, conducting theater workshops in Mumbai with incarcerated women and victims of human trafficking.

Pellman proudly points out that this is not her first appearance in The New York Times — she was featured in a 2019 article about a fight to get a refund of the \$1,200 she and her roommate had paid in dubious apartment application fees.

“And I won!” she said.

Despite the praise heaped on her recently — Kidman, in an email, referred to her “1940s movie star face” — Pellman has Selina Meyer’s mouth. “During the scene when I have all these dodge balls thrown at me by members of the crew, I got hit in the face really hard,” she said, and reflexively screamed an epithet back. “It was very funny. Everyone laughed.”

DeBose, 29, said Pellman was the person on set who brought people together — and that they talk on FaceTime regularly. “She’s Emma 2.0,” she said. “She’s great at cultivating community and is the person who rallied the troops.”

For her part, Pellman said she hopes the film speaks directly to young people who identify as L.G.B.T.Q. “I hope they’re like, ‘I’m worthy of a happy ending,’” she said.

In a Lawsuit, FKA twigs Accuses Shia LaBeouf of Abuse

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gression, only rationalizations. I have been abusive to myself and everyone around me for years. I have a history of hurting the people closest to me. I’m ashamed of that history and am sorry to those I hurt. There is nothing else I can really say.”

The lawsuit, filed in Los Angeles Superior Court, says that Mr. LaBeouf knowingly gave Ms. Barnett a sexually transmitted disease. It accuses him of “relentless abuse,” including sexual battery, assault and infliction of emotional distress.

Mr. LaBeouf and his representative did not immediately respond to a request for comment on the lawsuit.

Karolyn Pho, a stylist who is another of Mr. LaBeouf’s former girlfriends, described similarly tumultuous experiences to The Times, some of which are also outlined in the lawsuit. Once, the suit says, he drunkenly pinned her to a bed and head-butted her, hard enough that she bled. Afterward, she began to grapple with the idea that he was abusing her. “So much goes into breaking down a man or woman to make them OK with a certain kind of treatment,” she said in an interview.

Presented with a detailed account of the claims that the women made against him, in interviews and subsequently in the lawsuit, Mr. LaBeouf, responding in a separate email, wrote that “many of these allegations are not true.” But, he continued, he owed the women “the opportunity to air their statements publicly and accept accountability for those things I have done.”

He added that he was “a sober member of a 12-step program” and in therapy. “I am not cured of my PTSD and alcoholism,” he wrote, “but I am committed to doing what I need to do to recover, and I will forever be sorry to the people that I may have harmed along the way.”

Mr. LaBeouf has a long history of turbulent behavior. He has been arrested several times on charges that have been dismissed, including assault and disorderly conduct, according to newspaper reports and public records. In 2015, strangers recorded a video of him arguing with his girlfriend at the time, the actress Mia Goth, telling her, “This is the kind of thing that makes a person abusive.” After the men recording Mr. LaBeouf



MARK BLINCH/REUTERS

gave him a ride, he told them, “If I’d have stayed here, I would’ve killed her,” according to the video.

Ms. Barnett said Mr. LaBeouf would squeeze or grab her to the point of bruising. But she did not go to the police, she said, first out of a misguided concern about harming his career, and later because she thought her account would not be taken seriously, and it would be futile.

Though many states have laws that treat gender-based, sexual or domestic violence as a civil rights violation, tort suits of the kind Ms. Barnett is pursuing, with a daunting account of painful moments, are relatively uncommon; most often, allegations arise amid divorce or custody proceedings, or while seeking orders of protection. But there has been a slight uptick in civil claims since the #MeToo movement, amid more attention on the complex nature of abuse, said Julie Goldscheid, a law professor at CUNY Law School who studies gender violence and civil rights.

Three women die each day at the hands of their abusers, according to the National Organization for Women. The pandemic has exacerbated dangerous situations by forcing partners to stay without interruption in close quarters, law enforcement officials said, and hotlines around the world have reported an increase in calls for help.

In the lawsuit, Ms. Barnett describes how

The musician FKA twigs is suing the actor Shia LaBeouf, above, accusing him of abusive behavior during their relationship. “I have been abusive to myself and everyone around me for years,” Mr. LaBeouf wrote in an email to The New York Times. “I have a history of hurting the people closest to me.” Responding to specific accusations in another email, he wrote that “many of these allegations are not true.”

‘I’d like to be able to raise awareness on the tactics that abusers use to control you.’

FKA TWIGS, SPEAKING OF HER LAWSUIT

she met Mr. LaBeouf in 2018, when she was cast in “Honey Boy,” a film he wrote, and they started dating after the movie wrapped. The early days of their relationship were marked by his “over-the-top displays of affection,” she says in the lawsuit, which helped earn her trust.

In an abusive relationship, there’s often a “honeymoon phase,” as some experts call it, that builds intimacy and sets a benchmark for how happy the romance could be. It serves as a powerful lure; though flashes of bliss may remain, they are meted out through increasingly controlling demands and impossible standards of behavior.

In the lawsuit, Ms. Barnett and Ms. Pho said that Mr. LaBeouf did not like it if they spoke to or looked at male waiters; in an interview, Ms. Barnett said she learned to keep her eyes down when men spoke to her. She also stated in the suit that Mr. LaBeouf had rules about how many times a day she had to kiss and touch him, which he enforced with haranguing and criticism.

Mr. LaBeouf persuaded Ms. Barnett to stay with him in Los Angeles, she said, rather than move back to London where she and her professional circle lived. It was a step toward her isolation, she said. And he would often say that her creative team used her, a message that led her to doubt them.

But living with him became frightening, she said. The lawsuit says that he kept a loaded firearm by the bed and that she was scared to use the bathroom at night lest he mistake her for an intruder and shoot her. He didn’t let her wear clothing to bed and would spin a trifling disagreement — over an artist she liked and he didn’t, for example — into an all-night fight, depriving her of sleep, the suit says.

The situation came just as she was completing her most critically lauded album, “Magdalene.” Ms. Barnett said she found herself in stasis, struggling to fulfill her professional duties, and confounding her friends and colleagues. “Twigs is always the driving force behind her career — always a step ahead of everyone else,” said her long-time manager, Michael Stirton. “This was an extreme change in her personality and character.” The album’s release was delayed multiple times, and a tour was rescheduled at great cost, Mr. Stirton said, as

Ms. Barnett receded. “I could speak to her,” he said. “But I couldn’t reach her.”

As Ms. Barnett grew more isolated, she said, she felt as though her safety nets were unraveling. The gas station episode had happened in public, she said, and no one tried to aid her; an early attempt she made to tell a colleague was brushed off. “I just thought to myself, no one is ever going to believe me,” she said. “I’m unconventional. And I’m a person of color who is a female.”

Slowly, with the help of a therapist, she began to strategize her exit. While she was packing to leave in spring 2019, Mr. LaBeouf turned up unannounced and terrorized her, according to a sworn statement from a witness, her housekeeper, in the lawsuit. When Ms. Barnett wouldn’t leave with him, the statement says, he “violently grabbed” her, picked her up and locked her in another room, where he yelled at her.

Escaping him began to seem “both difficult and dangerous,” the lawsuit says. And even as her resolve grew, she felt overwhelmed, she told her therapist, in an email The Times has reviewed. Though she had the means, it took several attempts for her to extricate herself, she said in an interview. And it was only afterward that she realized how broken down she had become.

“The whole time I was with him, I could have bought myself a business-flight plane ticket back to my four-story townhouse in Hackney” in London, she said. And yet she didn’t. “He brought me so low, below myself, that the idea of leaving him and having to work myself back up just seemed impossible,” she said.

In her lawsuit, Ms. Barnett said she planned to donate a significant portion of any monetary damages she might win to domestic-violence charities. “It was actually very expensive, and a massive undertaking of time and resources, to get out,” she said in an interview.

Her status makes her situation unusual, she said. But she wanted to share her story because it was otherwise so common.

“What I went through with Shia was the worst thing I’ve ever been through in the whole of my life,” she said. “I don’t think people would ever think that it would happen to me. But I think that’s the thing. It can happen to anybody.”