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 FBI News Briefing

**TO: THE DIRECTOR AND SENIOR STAFF**

**DATE: THURSDAY, OCTOBER 1, 2020 6:30 AM EDT**

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## LEADING THE NEWS

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### **Comey Defends FBI's Trump-Russia Investigation In Testimony To Senate Panel.**

In testimony to the Senate Judiciary Committee Wednesday, former FBI Director James Comey defended his oversight of the investigation of ties between President Trump's campaign and Russia. The [AP](#) (9/30, Tucker, Jalonick) says that Republican senators "confronted" Comey during the "politically charged" hearing, and the [Washington Examiner](#) (9/30, Picket, 448K) that Republicans "blasted" him "for failing to provide forthright responses to their questions about the bureau's counterintelligence investigation into President Trump's 2016 campaign and Russia." The Examiner says Comey "frustrated" Republicans on the committee "by failing to recall information related to the investigation or saying it was never provided to him by subordinates." The [New York Times](#) (9/30, Fandos, 18.61M) reports Republicans on the panel "were eager to portray President Trump as a victim of a politically motivated smear by the F.B.I. that unfairly cast a shadow over his presidency. And they contended that Mr. Comey was the ringleader."

The [Washington Examiner](#) (9/30, 448K) reports Sen. Ted Cruz (R-TX) "slammed" Comey "over his handling of the investigation." Cruz said, "Based upon what we know about how you and your agency ran the FBI's anti-Trump investigation, you are either criminally corrupt or completely incompetent. ... And I don't believe you were incompetent ... Nobody trusts the FBI anymore because of you, and that is your legacy."

The [Washington Post](#) (9/30, Zapotosky, Barrett, 14.2M) says Comey "defended the bureau's 2016 investigation into possible coordination between the Trump campaign and Russia, pushing back on Senate Republicans' skeptical questions about the probe and taking particular aim at Attorney General William P. Barr's assertion that it was unfounded." Comey "grew particularly exasperated when asked about Barr's criticism that the FBI's decision to open the investigation into the 2016 Trump campaign was based on insufficient evidence, saying he had 'no idea what on earth' the attorney general was talking about."

[USA Today](#) (9/30, 10.31M) reports Comey "defended" the Russia investigation as "essential." He said, "Overall, I'm proud of the work," but he "conceded that there were 'significant and important failings' in the bureau's repeated pursuit of surveillance authority to track former Trump campaign adviser Carter Page, as part of the investigation." The [Washington Times](#) (9/30, Mordock, 492K) says Comey "took responsibility for what he described as 'embarrassing' errors the bureau made in the course of its investigation" into Page. Comey told the panel, "It's embarrassing. It's sloppy. I'm running out of words. ... There is no indication - and the inspector general would say it if he found it - that people were doing bad things on purpose, but that doesn't make it any less concerning or embarrassing." A report From DOJ IG "concluded the FBI's application to surveil Mr. Page was riddled with errors,

mistakes and omissions." Comey "insisted he was unaware of the bungling, drawing scoffs from Republicans."

[Bloomberg](#) (9/30, Strohm, 4.73M) reports, "Comey said the probe into whether people close to Donald Trump conspired with Russia to interfere in the 2016 election was largely conducted 'by the book' but that specific aspects of the inquiry fell short." Bloomberg adds, "Pressed on Wednesday by Senate Judiciary Chairman Lindsey Graham, who said the probe was based on faulty assumptions and evidence tampering, Comey said he found the shortcomings – which included doctoring an email from the CIA – 'deeply disturbing.' But he backed an inspector general's report that concluded the probe was valid and not driven by bias in the bureau's leadership."

[CNN](#) (9/30, Herb, 83.16M) reports, "Comey pushed back against" Attorney General Barr's "attacks on the FBI's Russia investigation, arguing on Wednesday that the Justice Department's efforts to dismiss charges against Trump's first national security adviser Michael Flynn were 'deeply concerning.' 'I have no idea what on Earth he is talking about,' Comey said when asked to respond Barr's comments that the FBI's Russia investigation was 'abhorrent.'" Comey is quoted saying, "The notion that the attorney general believes that was an illegitimate endeavor to investigate that mystifies me."

[Reuters](#) (9/30, Landay, Hosenball) reports, "Graham and other Republicans sought to pin some responsibility on Comey for the errors found in FBI applications for secret court warrants to monitor the communications of Carter Page, who briefly served as a 2016 Trump campaign advisor. 'To me this is a stunning failure of the system to work,' said Graham, a staunch Trump supporter." Reuters adds, "Several Republicans cited the case of a former FBI lawyer, Kevin Clinesmith, who pleaded guilty in August to doctoring a CIA email submitted with an application so that it said that Page was not an agency source, when in fact, he was. 'I know nothing about Mr. Clinesmith other than what I've read,' Comey said."

The [Washington Times](#) (9/30, Mordock, 492K) reports that Comey "admitted...that he wouldn't have signed the warrant application to wiretap former Trump campaign aide Carter Page. 'No. Not without a much fuller discussion about how they were thinking about their obligations to the court,' Mr. Comey said in testimony before the Senate Judiciary Committee." The Times adds, "Justice Department Inspector General Michael Horowitz last year concluded the FBI made multiple errors when it asked the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court to approve a secret order to monitor Mr. Page in 2016 and 2017. The mistakes included multiple inaccuracies and omission of exculpatory evidence. That application was renewed a total of three times and Mr. Comey said Wednesday he signed off on the renewals."

[The Hill](#) (9/30, 2.98M) reports, "When asked by Graham whether it was "fair to say" the FBI investigation was 'not done by the book,' Comey replied: 'No, I don't think that is fair to say.' His response did little to sway Republicans, who spent the hours-long hearing quizzing him on the investigation and venting about the handling of warrant applications. 'God help us all if this was done by the book,' Graham said. 'It was such an egregious violation of fairness, altering exculpatory information, failing to tell the court the unreliability of information...If this is by the book, we need to rewrite the book and I promise you we will.'"

[ABC News](#) (9/30, Mallin, 2.97M) reports, "Among other issues highlighted by Graham, Horowitz criticized the FBI for its reliance in the Page surveillance on a dossier compiled by former British spy Christopher Steele which included salacious allegations that Trump had been compromised by Russia. Attorney General William Barr recently declassified information for Graham's committee revealing one of Steele's primary sources for the dossier had previously been investigated for his ties to Russian intelligence."

[NBC News](#) (9/30, Williams, 6.14M) reports, "Committee Democrats, by contrast, said the inspector general's report concluded that the FBI had legitimate reasons for opening the investigation, after an Australian diplomat told U.S. authorities that a Trump campaign aide, George Papadopoulos, had said Russians offered him dirt on Hillary Clinton." Sen. Dianne Feinstein (D-CA) "said the errors in the Page FISA application were serious, 'but they played no

part in the broader Russia investigation.' Comey agreed. 'The overarching investigation was very important,' he said. 'The Page slice of it, far less, given the scope.'"

[Fox News](#) (9/30, Singman, 27.59M) reports that Comey "said it didn't 'ring a bell' when asked whether he received an investigative referral on Hillary Clinton purportedly approving 'a plan' attempting to tie" Trump "to Russia and distract from her email scandal before the 2016 election." Graham "asked Comey about the newly declassified information released Tuesday by Director of National Intelligence John Ratcliffe. 'You don't remember getting an investigatory lead from the intelligence community? Sept. 7, 2016, U.S. intelligence officials forwarded an investigative referral to James Comey and Strzok regarding Clinton's approval of a plan [about] Trump...as a means of distraction?' Graham asked Comey Wednesday. 'That doesn't ring any bells with me,' Comey replied."

The [New York Post](#) (9/30, Nelson, 4.57M) reports, "Ratcliffe wrote that US intelligence officials 'forwarded an investigative referral to FBI Director James Comey and Deputy Assistant Director of Counterintelligence Peter Strzok regarding "U.S. Presidential candidate Hillary Clinton's approval of a plan concerning U.S. Presidential candidate Donald Trump and Russian hackers hampering U.S. elections as a means of distracting the public from her use of a private mail server.'" Handwritten notes from then-CIA Director John Brennan – also disclosed by Ratcliffe – say Brennan briefed then-President Barack Obama on 'alleged approval by Hillary Clinton on July 26, 2016 of a proposal from one of her foreign policy advisors to vilify Donald Trump by stirring up a scandal claiming interference by Russian security services.'"

The [Federalist](#) (9/30, 126K) reports Chairman Graham "grill[ed]" Comey "about the '17 significant errors and omissions' as well as the '50 errors in the FBI's Woods process' in applications to spy on" Page. Graham asked, "Does the FBI director have any responsibility to make sure the facts are right when they're given to the court?" Comey replied, "Not in connection with the certification. ... But in general the FBI director is responsible for everything that is being done underneath the FBI director." Graham asked, "Do you wish that you had informed the court that Mr. Page was in fact, working with the CIA, and that explains these contacts?" Comey said, "I don't agree with your preamble. I don't think the record established that he was working with the CIA. I think Horowitz found he was a contact." Comey was "shot down by Graham who said that there was an email disclosing the relationship between Page and the CIA."

The [Daily Caller](#) (9/30, Ross, 716K) says Comey "pleaded ignorance" throughout the hearing "regarding significant problems with the Steele dossier." Matt Vespa writes on [Townhall](#) (9/30, 177K) that Comey's testimony "can be summed up in three words. I. Know. Nothing."

Wednesday afternoon, Trump retweeted a [post](#) from Hoover Institution media fellow Paul Sperry, which said, "BREAKING: Comey swears he doesn't remember hearing anything about Steele's primary subsource, Igor Danchenko, being the subject of an FBI C.I. investigation, as a suspected Russian agent, and doesn't recall his own CrossFire Hurricane team interviewing Danchenko in Jan 2017" In his [tweet](#), Trump wrote, "LIAR!!!" Late Wednesday, Trump retweeted another [post](#) from Sperry which said, "all this memory loss and out-of-the-loop i dunnos is strange for a guy who took copious notes after playing a case agent spying on Trump and locked them in his home safe, and wrote a book and is writing a second book now" Trump [wrote](#) in his tweet, "Comey is a disaster who cheated and lied. How do you write books when you can't remember anything? Should be tried for treason. This is ridiculous!"

In a [tweet](#) Wednesday evening, Trump wrote, "So when will something significant happen to James Comey? Got caught cold. He is either very dumb, or one of the worst liars in political history. TOO LONG. EMBARRASSING!"

[Fox News](#) (9/30, Stabile, 27.59M) reports that Graham told "Hannity" on Wednesday that Page "deserves to be compensated" after Comey "testified about the Russia investigation before the Senate Judiciary Committee. 'What happened here is the Democratic Party hired a foreign agent, Christopher Steele, who enlisted a suspected Russian spy to create a dossier that was a bunch of garbage, Russian disinformation,' Graham told host Sean Hannity. 'And the FBI bought

it hook, line and sinker, used it four times against an American citizen, a Trump campaign person, to get a warrant. If that doesn't bother America, then something's wrong.' 'To my Democratic colleagues,' Graham added, 'if the shoe were on the other foot, you'd be burning the place down.'" Graham "characterized Comey as having a 'convenient memory' of what was 'damning' to President Trump but denying any incriminating conduct by his investigators."

**Comey Says Russians Have "Some Dirt" On Trump.** The [Washington Times](#) (9/30, Dinan, 492K) reports that Comey "said Wednesday that the only explanation he can see for President Trump's actions on Russia is that Moscow has some dirt on him, and urged voters to take that into consideration when they cast ballots." Comey said, "It's difficult to explain his conduct, his statements, in any other way."

**Comey Says Biden Never Raised Prospect Of Prosecuting Flynn Under The Logan Act.** [Breitbart](#) (9/30, Pollak, 673K) reports Comey testified that Joe Biden "never raised the prospect of prosecuting then-incoming National Security Advisor Michael Flynn under the Logan Act." Comey "said that Biden never suggested prosecuting Flynn under the Logan Act, and that he would have remembered if it happened, because it would have been 'highly inappropriate.'"

**Comey: DOJ's Move To Drop Flynn Prosecution "Deeply Disturbing."** [Politico](#) (9/30, Cheney, Desiderio, 4.29M) reports, "Comey said on Wednesday that the Justice Department's attempt to drop the prosecution of Michael Flynn is 'deeply concerning,' suggesting President Donald Trump's former national security adviser is receiving special treatment and key pieces of evidence have been misrepresented. 'It's deeply concerning because this guy is getting treated in a way that nobody's been treated before,' Comey said during public testimony to the Senate Judiciary Committee." Politico adds, "Under questioning, Comey also sought to undercut a specific premise of Flynn's legal defense. Flynn in 2017 pleaded guilty to lying to the FBI about his dealing with the ambassador to Russia, but recently the Justice Department dropped the prosecution. The DOJ's move is currently being challenged."

## PROTESTS

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### **Cuccinelli: Trump Pushing Officials To Devote Proper Resources To Restore Peace.**

Acting Deputy DHS Secretary Ken Cuccinelli said on the [Steve Gruber Show](#) (9/30) that "the President, when he uses a bully pulpit the last four or five months, dealing with the violence going on, it's to push governors and mayors and so forth to use the resources they already have and the authorities they already to have to bring peace to their cities and he offers them help. So, it's the opposite of starting the fight." Cuccinelli said, "When you bring enough responsible police force to bear, and that can include National Guard, you get peace in the streets and the President has said repeatedly that's what he wants for these cities, is peace, so they can live their lives, go to work, raise their families without having to be afraid or have their city burned down."

### **"Portland Sheriff" Says He "Will Never" Support Trump After President Claims Endorsement.**

[USA Today](#) (9/30, Yancey-Bragg, 10.31M) reports Multnomah, Oregon County Sheriff Mike Reese "said he has never and 'will never' support President Donald Trump after the president claimed the 'Portland sheriff' endorsed him during the first presidential debate Tuesday night." Trump claimed he was endorsed by Reese during an exchange with Joe Biden. Reese [tweeted](#) shortly afterwards, "In tonight's presidential debate the President said the 'Portland Sheriff' supports him. As the Multnomah County Sheriff I have never supported Donald Trump and will never support him."

**Portland Asks US To Rescind Federal Deputization Of City Police.** The [AP](#) (9/30, Flaccus) reports Portland Mayor Ted Wheeler "has asked US officials to end the federal

deputation of dozens of police officers in Oregon's largest city as part of the response to ongoing protests in the city." Wheeler said late Tuesday that he had "asked the U.S. attorney's office to withdraw the designation" that deputized the officers. The AP notes that 56 Portland officers "were deputized before a rally in the city last weekend by the far-right Proud Boys group."

### **Man Charged In Shooting Attack On Two Los Angeles County Deputies.**

The [Los Angeles Times](#) (9/30, Winton, 4.64M) reports Los Angeles County Dist. Atty. Jackie Lacey announced charges Wednesday "against a man in the shooting attack on two deputies at the Compton Metro station earlier this month." Attempted murder charges were filed against Deonte Lee Murray, 36, "who was taken into custody Sept. 15 after a lengthy standoff in Lynwood in connection with a separate case." Capt. Kent Wegener said Wednesday that a ballistic comparison of a pistol found in Murray's car "revealed that the .40 caliber pistol was the same weapon used in the attack on the deputies."

On the [CBS Evening News](#)<sup>Vi</sup> (9/30, story 5, 1:35, O'Donnell, 3.95M), Carter Evans said that at the time of Murray's arrest, "officials were adamant the cases were unrelated." [ABC World News Tonight](#)<sup>Vi</sup> (9/30, story 5, 1:35, Muir, 6.98M) reported, "The sheriff said he didn't know what the motive might be, but did allude to rising anti-police sentiment."

The [AP](#) (9/30, Dazio) reports Murray is being held on \$6.15 million bail, and the [New York Times](#) (9/30, Levenson, 18.61M) says he plead not guilty during his arraignment Wednesday in Los Angeles County Superior Court.

## **OPERATION LEGEND**

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### **Operation LeGend Helps St Louis Fight Soaring Homicide Rate.**

[KSDK-TV](#) St. Louis (9/30, Richey, 493K) reports from St. Louis, "As of this week, St. Louis toppled its own record for homicides per resident for all but one of the last 50 years. In 1993, there were 267 homicides within city limits. By the end of the year, there had been almost 70 homicides for every 100,000 residents in the city. So far in 2020, there have been around 68 homicides for every 100,000 city residents." KSDK-TV adds that Major Shawn Dace, "commander in the Bureau of Investigations for the St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department," said the department "got a little extra help from the Department of Justice's Operation Legend starting in August." Dace "said Operation Legend has accomplished a lot in St. Louis already, including more than three hundred arrests for violent crime in St. Louis. He noted that 33 of those arrests were for homicides."

### **Kansas City Mayor Launches Law Enforcement Effort Modeled After Operation LeGend.**

The [Kansas City \(MO\) Star](#) (9/30, Rice, 549K) reports, "In response to the city's dramatic and ongoing surge of violent crime, Mayor Quinton Lucas on Wednesday announced a four-pronged plan that he said would help reverse the trend and build stronger community ties." The Star adds, "Emphasis of the new effort, called Reform Project KC, will focus on prevention, intervention, enforcement and administrative reforms, or 'trust-building activities.' Lucas said his plan would seek to unify existing resources, and create new ones, in an effort to reduce shootings and killings." According to the Star, "The enforcement portion would be modeled after the Operation LeGend, the federal initiative launched this summer that aimed to get killers off the streets. It was named for 4-year-old LeGend Taliferro, who was shot and killed in Kansas City while sleeping in June."

### **Operation LeGend Assisting Memphis Police With Several Child Murders.**

[WHBQ-TV](#) Memphis, TN (9/30, Coy, 23K) reports, "Memphis police have reported a staggering number of young people murdered in 2020. So far this year, 27 children have been killed. Nine

of the cases remain unsolved, according to MPD." WHBQ-TV adds, "FOX 13 has learned some of the suspects are now on the FBI's radar due to Operation Legend. According to MPD, in 12 of the juvenile homicides, investigators have either identified or arrested a suspect." According to WHBQ-TV, "A spokesman for the FBI Memphis told FOX13 if a suspect is under federal investigation for gang and drug crimes when the juvenile murder happened, then the case could be part of Operation Legend."

## COUNTER-TERRORISM

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### **Father And Son From US Charged With Joining Islamic State.**

The [AP](#) (9/30) reports from Miami, Florida, "A father and son accused of traveling from the U.S. to Syria and joining the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham are facing terrorism charges in South Florida, prosecutors said." Emraan Ali, 53, "a U.S. citizen born in Trinidad & Tobago, and Jihad Ali, 19, a U.S. citizen born in New York, made their initial court appearances Wednesday in Miami federal court, according to records. The father is charged with providing and attempting to provide material support to ISIS, and the son is charged with conspiracy to provide material support to ISIS." The AP adds, "According to criminal complaints, Emraan Ali took his family to Syria to join the Islamic State group in March 2015. Both Emraan Ali and Jihad Ali received military and religious training and served as fighters in support of the terrorist organization, prosecutors said."

[WTSP-TV](#) St. Petersburg, FL (9/30, 119K) reports, "The complaint said Emraan Ali also served in other roles in support of ISIS. According to the complaint, Jihad Ali was 14 or 15 years old when he attended ISIS military training. In March 2019, the DOJ said Emraan Ali and Jihad Ali surrendered to the Syrian Democratic Forces near Baghuz. The investigation and charges were announced by Assistant Attorney General for National Security John C. Demers, U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of Florida Ariana Fajardo Orshan, FBI Special Agent in Charge for the Miami Field Office George Piro and members of the South Florida Joint Terrorism Task Force."

### **Court Denies Bond To Texas Man Charged With Supporting ISIS.**

[KABB-TV](#) San Antonio (9/30, 54K) reports from Gonzales, Texas, "An area man accused of providing support to the terrorist group ISIS is considered a flight risk and will continue to be held." The court "decided as much Wednesday during Jaylyn Christopher Molina's detention hearing. FBI investigators say Molina, along with a South Carolina man, Kristopher Sean Matthews, discussed the planning of terrorist attacks in the United States and overseas in a private group chat. They say in those forums, Molina posted instructions on how to train with an AK-47 and make a bomb."

## COUNTER-INTELLIGENCE

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### **House Report: US Intel Unprepared To Counter Threats From China.**

The [Washington Post](#) (9/30, Demirjian, 14.2M) says a new report from the House Intelligence Committee "warns that if the United States does not significantly change its approach to China, it will risk falling behind the rising superpower, creating economic, security and health consequences for decades to come." According to the Post, "The committee released a 37-page summary of the report on Wednesday, after the panel approved it by a voice vote. The document, written by Democrats on the panel, is the product of nearly a two-year investigation that began in early 2019."

According to [Politico](#) (9/30, Matishak, 4.29M), the report concludes that "the U.S. intelligence community has failed to keep pace with the technological and political strides made by China over the last two decades, a lag that risks leaving policymakers permanently in the

dark about a growing, strategic challenge to the country's national security. ... 'Absent a significant realignment of resources, the U.S. government and intelligence community will fail to achieve the outcomes required to enable continued U.S. competition with China on the global stage for decades to come, and to protect the U.S. health and security,' the summary warns."

The [New York Times](#) (9/30, Barnes, 18.61M) reports the US "could fall behind in its global competition with China without additional resources to develop better intelligence on the Chinese government, and spy agencies must focus more on the challenge of pandemics and trade, according to a report by the Democrats on the House Intelligence Committee released Wednesday." The warnings "were similar to the conclusions of a Republican study on China also released Wednesday." While that report "has a wider focus, it too called for a more aggressive stance toward China and better defenses against Chinese theft of intellectual property and efforts to influence American politics."

[The Hill](#) (9/30, 2.98M) adds that the report "said the IC places 'insufficient emphasis and focus' on 'soft threats,' such as viral pandemics and climate change, and that if the IC did not modernize systems to increase focus on machine learning and artificial intelligence, national security could be undermined." [Foreign Policy](#) (9/30, Mackinnon, 340K) reports that a Democratic official on the committee said on background, "COVID-19 cropped up as a very real world example while we were drafting and finalizing this report. At least for us it really does crystallize some of the nontraditional threats that can emanate out of China."

[CBS News](#) (9/30, Gazis, 3.68M) says that the report, "based on hundreds of hours of interviews with intelligence officers and quality checks of thousands of analytic products, also evaluated the intelligence community's budget allocations. The final report includes more than two dozen public, and more than 100 classified, recommendations." [Reuters](#) (9/30, Brunnstrom) reports that the report "called for a broadening of programs to mentor the next generation of China analysts and said agencies should consider 'reskilling' programs for those working in counterterrorism."

[CNN](#) (9/30, Cohen, 83.16M) reports that House Intel Chair Adam Schiff said "our nation's intelligence agencies have a lot of work to do to fully address the challenge posed by China." He added, "The stakes are enormous. We must do everything possible to accurately predict and characterize Beijing's intent, or we will continue to struggle to understand how and why the leadership of the CCP makes decisions, and fail to respond effectively. The good news is that we still have time to adapt."

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (9/30, O'Keeffe, Strobel, Subscription Publication, 7.57M) reports that in a statement, DNI Ratcliffe said, "I'm glad to see that there's congressional recognition of what I've been saying since my confirmation: China poses a greater national security threat to the U.S. than any other nation." [NBC News](#) (9/30, Dilanian, 6.14M) reports that Ratcliffe added, "As DNI, I'm committing the Intelligence Community resources needed to fully understand the threat posed by China and provide policymakers with the best intelligence to counter China's activities."

[Fox News](#) (9/30, Henney, 27.59M) also runs a report, as does [Public Radio International](#) (9/30, 28K), and the [Washington Examiner](#) (9/30, Dunleavy, 448K).

### **Judge Rules DOJ Must Release Redacted Portions Of Mueller Report Before Election.**

[BuzzFeed News](#) (9/30, Leopold, Bensinger) reports a federal judge has ruled "that the Justice Department improperly redacted significant portions of the Mueller report and must release those sections by Nov. 2, just one day before the presidential election." In a 40-page opinion "released Wednesday, US District Court Judge Reggie Walton said the agency violated federal law when it redacted sections of the report dealing with, among other things, discussions within the special counsel's office about whether to charge certain individuals with crimes." At the same time, the judge "ruled that the government was right to redact much of the Mueller report under separate exemptions that are designed to protect the integrity of ongoing investigations, law enforcement techniques and procedures, and individuals' privacy."

[The Hill](#) (9/30, Neidig, 2.98M) reports the specific redactions “he took issue with cover the decisionmaking process within former special counsel Robert Mueller’s team over whether to charge certain people with crimes during the probe.” Walton wrote “the Court concludes that the Department has failed to satisfy its burden to demonstrate that the withheld material is protected by the deliberative process privilege.”

[Newsweek](#) (9/30, Martin, 1.53M) also reports.

### **Intel Officials Urged Ratcliffe Not To Disclose Unverified Russian Claims About Clinton.**

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (9/30, Volz, Subscription Publication, 7.57M) reports DNI Ratcliffe ignored pleas from senior US intelligence officials not to release information about Russian intelligence containing unverified allegations about Hillary Clinton and the 2016 election, according to people familiar with the matter. Intelligence officials feared that sharing the information with Congress would give credence to the unsubstantiated allegations.

[Politico](#) (9/30, Desiderio, Cheney, 4.29M), meanwhile, reports that Ratcliffe “raced to arrange a briefing for senators on Tuesday night, according to three congressional sources, after declassifying [the] unverified Russian intelligence assessment.” The “hastily assembled briefing...caught staffers off-guard and exacerbated concerns about what Democrats said was the deployment of Russian disinformation to support” President Trump’s “effort to discredit the investigation into his 2016 campaign’s contacts with the Russian government.”

### **Andrew Weissmann Says He Hasn’t Been Subpoenaed In Durham Probe.**

[CBS News](#) (9/30, Quinn, 3.68M) reports Andrew Weissmann, a former federal prosecutor “who was a top official in special counsel Robert Mueller’s office, said Wednesday he has not been subpoenaed by US Attorney John Durham, who is conducting a sweeping review of the origins of the FBI’s investigation into Russian meddling in the 2016 presidential election and the Trump campaign’s ties to Russia.” Weissmann told CBSN, “I have not been subpoenaed and I don’t anticipate it,” adding, “I’m happy to give any information I have. I don’t think, given what I understand he’s looking at, which is the genesis of the Russia investigation, which I was involved in, I don’t suspect that I’m going to have particularly relevant information.”

The [Washington Examiner](#) (9/30, Chaitin, 448K) reports Weissman added, “I don’t think, given what I understand he’s looking at, which is the genesis of the Russia investigation, which I was involved in. I don’t suspect that I’m going to have particularly relevant information.”

**Sen. Graham Suggests Inviting Andrew Weissmann To Testify.** The [Washington Examiner](#) (9/30, Chaitin, 448K) reports Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman Lindsey Graham during a hearing with former FBI Director James Comey on Wednesday “floated an invitation for a top prosecutor in former special counsel Robert Mueller’s team who has criticized the Russia investigation.” After noting “that Mueller had declined his invitation to testify, Graham delivered a general invitation to committee members in the room to request Weissmann as a witness.” Graham told Comey, “If you want [Andrew] Weissmann to come, I would invite him.” Mueller released a “rare statement on Tuesday to defend the Russia investigation as Weissmann has gone around in a media blitz to promote his new book and said the special counsel investigation “absolutely” let people down.” In particular, he “said Mueller’s team erred in choosing not to subpoena Trump to testify and not reaching a decision on whether Trump obstructed justice.”

**DOJ Lawyer Who Signed Carter Page Warrants “Now Regrets Doing So.”** The [Daily Caller](#) (9/30, Ross, 716K) reports the Justice Department attorney who “signed the four surveillance warrant applications against Carter Page says they would not have done had they known of the information withheld by the FBI, according to a letter sent to the Senate this month.” Sen. Lindsey Graham (R-SC) read “portions of the letter at the beginning of a Senate Judiciary Committee hearing with former FBI Director James Comey on Wednesday.” The attorney, who works in the DOJ’s Office of Intelligence (OI) “is not identified in the letter.” The attorney signed “all four of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA) warrants granted

against Page." The letter reads, "The OI attorney advises that had he/she been aware of the significant errors and omissions identified by the OIG and the errors in the Woods process, he/she would not have signed the filed Page FISA applications."

**Sen. Lee Argues FBI FISA Abuse "Inevitable."** [National Review](#) (9/30, McArdle, 731K) reports Sen. Mike Lee (R-UT) on Wednesday "lambasted the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act warrant process, saying the abuse that took place during the FBI's investigation of collusion between the Trump campaign and Russia was inevitable given the lack of civil liberties protections included in the statute."

**Rep. Collins Demands Wray Resign.** The [Washington Times](#) (9/30, Blake, 492K) reports Rep. Doug Collins (R-GA) wrote a "terse letter telling FBI Director Christopher A. Wray to resign Wednesday over developments some Democrats have rejected as Russian disinformation." Collins told Wray he has proven to "unwilling or unable to bring accountability to the upper echelon of the FBI" and should accordingly "do the right thing for this country and resign." The congressman cited details "that emerged the day before due to Sen. Lindsey Graham, South Carolina Republican, releasing newly declassified information he received from the administration." Mr. Graham published a "letter Tuesday he received from John Ratcliffe, a former Republican congressman serving as President Trump's director of national intelligence since earlier this year." In the letter, Ratcliffe "revealed U.S. intelligence agencies 'obtained insight into Russian intelligence analysis' involving the 2016 race White House race ultimately won by President Trump."

### **FBI Releases Film On Chinese Spy Recruitment Threat.**

[Bloomberg](#) (9/30, Davalos, 4.73M) reports, "U.S. national intelligence agencies released a movie Wednesday to raise awareness of how foreign intelligence entities use social media to target Americans." According to Bloomberg, "The film, called 'The Nevernight Connection,' tells the fictional account of a former U.S. intelligence official who went to spy for the Chinese. The official was targeted by a Chinese foreign intelligence service through a fake profile on a professional networking site and recruited to turn over classified information. It was inspired by the true story of former Central Intelligence Agency officer Kevin Mallory, who was sentenced to 20 years in prison in 2019 for passing national defense information to a Chinese intelligence officer. The 30-minute film, released by the FBI and the National Counterintelligence and Security Center, is free and available on the FBI's website."

The [Washington Times](#) (9/30, Gertz, 492K) reports, "In the video, a gum-chewing Chinese hacker is shown posting a notice on a fictional social networking site in a bid to contact people with access to secrets who may be recruited as spies. The email entices a U.S. intelligence community expert who was a former underwater warfare specialist at a Naval Support Facility Dahlgren in Virginia. The specialist is offered \$1,500 to produce a white paper on how advanced technology will affect undersea exploration." The Times adds, "Alan E. Kohler, FBI assistant director for counterintelligence said in a statement the movie 'highlights [how] foreign intelligence services are posing as headhunters and consultants on professional networking sites to aggressively target Americans.'"

### **FBI Says Risk Of Voter Fraud Low.**

[KTSM-TV/Nexstar](#) El Paso, TX (9/30) reports the FBI is urging people "to beware of disinformation designed to undermine the 2020 elections." FBI El Paso Division Acting Special Agent in Charge Britton Boyd told the outlet, "On a national level, the FBI has not seen any coordinated efforts to manipulate the elections." Boyd adds, "These are crimes that happen more on a local basis. Here in the El Paso region, it's been very uncommon for any allegations that have been substantiated that would affect an election." The FBI's El Paso Division "says the risk for election crimes continues to be low despite the President's claims to the contrary." Britton "said the FBI hopes voters will critically evaluate the sources of their information, and be diligent about seeking (and sharing) accurate and reliable information."

[KGUN-TV](#) Tucson, AZ (10/1, Smith, 61K) reports FBI agents are “watching for the sort of lies and frauds that interfere with your right to vote.” FBI Tucson Office Assistant Special Agent in Charge Steven Patterson “says a lot of that happens on social media, email and texts.” Patterson says, “We work with the Postal Inspectors office, as part of our partnership. And again, working with the state and the county is, as well. So I’m standing here today, but we are all working in partnership, and very much aware of trying to ensure that we are keeping everything as safe and smooth as it’s been going for the last few hundred years.”

### **Twitter Removes 130 Accounts For Attempting To Disrupt Discourse On Trump-Biden Debate.**

[Reuters](#) (9/30, Bhalla) reports Twitter on Wednesday said “it had removed 130 accounts, as they were attempting to disrupt the public conversation during the first US presidential debate between President Donald Trump and Democrat Joe Biden.” Twitter removed the accounts, “which appeared to originate in Iran, ‘based on intel’ provided by the US Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), it said in a tweet.” The accounts had “very low engagement and did not make an impact on the public conversation, the social media giant said, adding, that the accounts and their content will be published in full once the investigation is complete.” [KRON-TV/Nexstar](#) San Francisco (9/30, Rodriguez, 87K) reports the intelligence “was provided by the FBI. An investigation has since been launched.”

### **Russia Says It “Is Not Going To Intervene” In US Election.**

The [Washington Times](#) (9/30, Toms, 492K) reports Russia is intensely following the “US presidential election between President Trump and his Democratic rival Joseph R. Biden, Kremlin spokesperson Dmitry Peskov said Wednesday following the first debate, but he insisted Moscow will not intervene.” In a conference call with reporters, Peskov said, “Of course, we are spotting new turns in US political culture. But we do not want to make any assessments or make any statements as this could be immediately viewed as an attempt to intervene. Russia has never, is not and is not going to intervene in US domestic affairs.”

### **Few Governors Have Sought National Guard Assistance For Election.**

The [Kansas City \(MO\) Star](#) (9/30, Copp, 549K) reports the National Guard is prepared to “help with security at polling sites, sort ballots or bolster cybersecurity for the November elections, but so far few governors have requested that assistance, Guard units across the country told McClatchy on Wednesday.” National Guard spokesman Army Master Sgt. Michael Houk said that governors can request units under state control to provide “defensive cybersecurity in some states, as well as assisting in setting up polling stations, sorting ballots, and providing physical security for citizen safety and protection.” The Kentucky National Guard, “has been asked by the governor to assist polling locations in the 2020 election with tasks such as cybersecurity help or even directing traffic.” The service members who “provide support for the general election will be in civilian clothes, said Kentucky National Guard spokesman Maj. Stephen Martin.” Only one other Guard unit “contacted by McClatchy, Washington state, said it would be providing polling site assistance, but limited to cybersecurity.”

### **Fear About Voting Process Fuels “Unprecedented Scrutiny” Of Secretaries Of State.**

[Politico](#) (9/30, Geller, 4.29M) reports Americans are expressing “unprecedented distrust in the voting process,” which has led to “unprecedented scrutiny of the nation’s secretaries of state.” And in Washington state, Democratic nominee Gael Tarleton took to Twitter to accuse Republican Secretary Kim Wyman of standing by while Trump “undermined faith in our state’s electoral system.”

### **Privacy, Civil Rights Advocates Seek Transparency On Amazon Election Data Breaches.**

[The Hill](#) (10/1, 2.98M) reports a group of more than “a dozen privacy and civil rights organizations on Thursday demanded that Amazon disclose information about breaches of election data in order to increase the company’s public transparency ahead of November.” Groups including Color of Change “and Demand Progress cited past incidents reported by Reuters that involved voter data, stored on Amazon Cloud servers, being left exposed online in expressing concerns about Amazon security.” They noted “that one or more of Amazon’s election services will be used in 40 states this year.” In the letter, the groups warn, “A single breach could have catastrophic consequences for election integrity in dozens of states.” While the groups “acknowledged that the election officials involved would have some responsibility for election data security, they warned that this did not mean Amazon should abdicate all involvement.”

### **Sen. Cotton Proposes Food Technology Intelligence Office.**

The [Washington Examiner](#) (9/30, Drucker, 448K) reports Sen. Tom Cotton (R-AR) is proposing the “establishment of an intelligence office inside the Agriculture Department to prevent China from stealing proprietary food technology developed by American corporations.” Cotton introduced the “Agriculture Intelligence Measures Act Wednesday with co-author Rep. Rick Crawford, a fellow Arkansas Republican.” The bill would allow “the Agriculture Department to use existing U.S. intelligence assets to investigate plots to steal information on scientifically patented crops.” The legislation also “aims to provide the federal officials with greater capability to prevent attempts to sabotage American farming, such as the recent discovery of suspicious packages of seeds that appear to have been mailed from China to the United States.”

[KAIT-TV](#) Jonesboro, AR (9/30, 42K) also reports.

### **Esper Visits Africa For First Time “Seeking To Push Back On Russia And China.”**

[CNN](#) (9/30, 83.16M) reports Secretary of Defense Mark Esper made his “first visit to Africa Wednesday, a trip aimed in part at pushing back on Russian and Chinese influence in the region.” Esper arrived in Tunisia “to meet with top officials, including the country’s president, Kais Saied.” During a meeting “at the Tunisian Defense Ministry, Esper and his counterpart” signed a “ten-year Roadmap of Defense Cooperation.” Esper said during his speech that the US “will continue to deepen our alliances and partnerships across the continent, including with Tunisia, where your democratic government and sovereignty have made much of our work in the region possible.” He added, “We look forward to expanding this relationship to help Tunisia protect its maritime ports and land borders, deter terrorism, and keep the corrosive efforts of autocratic regimes out of your country.”

### **“American Friends” Of Ecuadorean Embassy’s Security Detail Allegedly Plotted To Kidnap Assange.**

[Bloomberg](#) (9/30, Browning, 4.73M) reports officials at a private security agency “that was meant to be guarding the Ecuadorean embassy in London were actually carrying out a very different task: spying on WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange, according to a court filing.” Staff discussed a “plot to kidnap the Australian from his hideout in the building,” CCTV cameras “were changed to allow for sound recording,” and fire extinguishers were bugged. The allegations were made “in written testimony of a former employee of the Spanish security firm at a hearing where Assange is fighting attempts to have him extradited to the US.” The activities were carried out “at the behest of ‘American friends,’ the employee of UC Global, whose identity wasn’t released by the London court, said in a legal filing Wednesday.” Assange’s attorney, Mark Summers, said in a separate filing the agency was “acting on the instructions of US intelligence.”

[The Guardian \(UK\)](#) (9/30, Quinn, 4.19M) reports “plans to poison or kidnap” Assange “were discussed between sources in US intelligence and a private security firm that spied extensively on the WikiLeaks co-founder, a court has been told.” James Lewis, “acting for the

US government, told the court on Tuesday that the US case was likely to be that the evidence” of the former UC Global employees was “wholly irrelevant.”

**Statements Claim Assange Bugged In Ecuadorian Embassy.** The [AP](#) (9/30, Pylas) reports Julian Assange’s conversations “in the latter part of his 7-year stay at the Ecuadorian Embassy in London were systematically bugged, even in the toilet, a London court heard Wednesday.” In written statements “at Assange’s extradition hearing, two anonymous witnesses who worked for a Spanish firm with a security contract at the embassy said the WikiLeaks founder faced an intensifying bugging operation from 2017 onwards after Donald Trump became US president.” Judge Vanessa Baraitser on Tuesday “granted the two witnesses anonymity amid fears for their safety.” Lawyers acting on “behalf of the US government did not contest the submission of the anonymous statements but said they were largely irrelevant to the matter under consideration in London’s Old Bailey court.”

### **Snowden Ordered By Judge To “Surrender Book Profits” To US.**

[Bloomberg](#) (9/30, 4.73M) reports a US District Judge Liam O’Grady in Virginia on Tuesday ordered Edward Snowden to “relinquish \$4.2 million in profits from his tell-all memoir about his work in U.S. intelligence because he did not submit the manuscript for government review before publishing.” Snowden also must “give up profits stemming from paid speeches that he gave without authorization, and sacrifice potential future profits from the distribution or adaptation of his 2019 memoir.” The government had “argued that Snowden was required to submit the manuscript for his book for review under secrecy agreements he signed with the National Security Agency and the Central Intelligence Agency.” In his order, O’Grady “agreed with that assessment,” writing that Snowden “breached his contractual and fiduciary obligations to the CIA and the NSA by publishing Permanent Record and giving prepared remarks within the scope of his prepublication review obligations.”

[Stars And Stripes](#) (9/30, Yaffe-Bellany, 30K) and The [Washington Times](#) (9/30, Blake, 492K) also report.

### **Pentagon Collaborating With Armed Services On JEDI Cloud Transition.**

[C4ISR & Networks](#) (9/30, Eversden) reports the Pentagon’s top IT official “said Wednesday that his office has spent the last few months preparing the armed services to migrate to the department’s long-delayed enterprise cloud as soon as it becomes available.” During a Defense Writers Group roundtable, Pentagon CIO Dana Deasy said, “We’re doing a lot of work with the services on getting them prepared to move their [software] development processes and cycles to DevOps so when the [Joint Enterprise Defense Infrastructure] cloud finally does get awarded, we’re not starting at Day One.” The JEDI cloud is an “important piece of the Joint All-Domain Command and Control concept, an initiative through which the services want to connect sensors and shooters.” Cloud, data and artificial intelligence “are core elements to enabling JADC2.” Using data for “joint war fighting is the top priority of the department’s forthcoming data strategy, which Deasy said he expects will be released in the next 30 days.”

### **Russian Intelligence Chief Says CIA Behind Unrest In Belarus.**

[Newsweek](#) (9/30, Brennan, 1.53M) reports Russian Foreign Intelligence Service chief Sergei Naryshkin “accused the CIA and Pentagon of training militants to foment unrest in Belarus, as Moscow continues to defend its beleaguered ally President Alexander Lukashenko.” Naryshkin said Tuesday “without providing any evidence to support the assertion – that the US is training fighters in neighboring nations and sending them into Belarus to support protests against Lukashenko.” According to TASS, Naryshkin told the intelligence service’s press division on Tuesday, “Fighters for renewed Belarus are trained in Poland, Georgia, Ukraine and the Baltic states with participation of instructors from the CIA and the Pentagon as well as U.S. non-governmental organizations affiliated with the Department of State.” Naryshkin said the US is

"using the dirtiest methods for rocking the boat in Belarus," accusing the State Department of exploiting "extremist elements in protests."

### **US, Allied Intelligence: North Korea Used Easing Of Tensions To Build, Safeguard Nuclear Capabilities.**

The [Washington Post](#) (9/30, Warrick, Denyer, 14.2M) reports since 2018, at six North Korean missile bases, "workers dug a maze of new tunnels and bunkers, allowing North Korea to move weapons around" while southeast of Pyongyang, "new buildings sprouted across an industrial complex that was processing uranium for as many as 15 new bombs, according to current and former US and South Korean officials, as well as a report by a United Nations panel of experts." While North Korea has refrained "from carrying out provocative tests of its most advanced weapon systems, it never stopped working on them, US intelligence officials said." New evidence suggests that "Kim took advantage of the lull by improving his ability to hide his most powerful weapons and shield them from future attacks." The easing of tensions has also "opened new routes for circumventing sanctions while his factories quietly churn out more nuclear warheads and bigger missiles to carry them, current and former U.S. intelligence analysts and nuclear experts say."

### **Japan's Defense Ministry Submits Largest-Ever Budget Request.**

[Stars And Stripes](#) (9/30, Kusumoto, 30K) reports Japan's Ministry of Defense, "under a new administration, on Wednesday proposed the eighth consecutive hike and its largest-ever defense budget, about \$52 billion." The budget request for "fiscal year 2021, about 5.49 trillion yen, is a 3.3% increase over the 5.32 trillion yen, or about \$50 billion, approved for the current fiscal year." Japan's fiscal year begins in April. The request states, "In order to realize cross-domain operations, the Self-Defense Forces will acquire and strengthen capabilities in new domains, which are space, cyberspace and electromagnetic spectrum by focusing resources and leveraging Japan's superb science and technology." The budget request includes funding "for setting up a specialized electronic warfare unit at Japan Ground Self-Defense Force Camp Asaka and upgrading the Japan Air Self-Defense Force Space Operation Squadron, which works closely with US Space Command." The squadron will be "upgraded to a group by adding another 50 personnel, according to defense ministry officials."

### **US Sanctions Leading Cuban General.**

The [Miami Herald](#) (9/30, Gámez Torres, 1.09M) reports the US on Wednesday sanctioned "Gen. Luis Alberto Rodríguez López-Calleja, the former son-in-law of Cuban leader Raúl Castro, who manages most of the Cuban economy as head of the powerful conglomerate of military companies GAESA." The Treasury Department included López-Calleja "on the list of specially designated nationals and blocked persons." The listing freezes "his assets in the US or under the control of US persons" and prohibits US individuals and companies from dealing with him. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said, "The revenue generated from the economic activities of GAESA is used to oppress the Cuban people and to fund Cuba's parasitic, colonial domination of Venezuela. Today's action demonstrates the United States' long-standing commitment to ending economic practices that disproportionately benefit the Cuban government or its military, intelligence, and security agencies or personnel at the expense of the Cuban and Venezuelan people."

The [AP](#) (9/30, Lee) reports the sanction "steps up" the US "campaign against the communist island's government ahead of the US presidential election in November." The AP says the announcement is the "administration's latest action against Cuba and comes just two days after it imposed sanctions on a debit card operation that allowed Cubans to buy food, appliances and other items with money sent by relatives in the United States."

### **US Offers Millions In Rewards For Former Venezuelan Officials.**

The [Miami Herald](#) (9/30, Weaver, 1.09M) reports the US government has issued “wanted posters for three ex-Venezuelan officials accused in Miami federal court of exporting cocaine from Colombia and extorting bribes from drug smugglers in exchange for protecting them.” The three ex-Venezuelan officials “are accused in Miami federal court of exporting cocaine from Colombia and extorting bribes from drug smugglers in exchange for protecting them.” US Attorney Ariana Fajardo Orshan said in a statement, “Corrupt Venezuelan officials who lined their pockets by protecting drug traffickers from detection and arrest enabled the entry of enormous amounts of dangerous drugs into the United States.” DEA Special Agent in Charge in Miami Keith Weis said that “the rewards for information leading to their whereabouts and capture will add another significant level of pressure” to bring them to justice.

## CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIONS

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### **Judge Delays Release Of Breonna Taylor Grand Jury Recordings To Friday.**

The [CBS Evening News](#)<sup>Vi</sup> New York (9/30, story 7, 0:20, O'Donnell, 3.95M) reported a judge on Wednesday “gave Kentucky’s attorney general an extension until Friday to release grand jury recordings in the Breonna Taylor shooting death. Daniel Cameron wanted more time to redact witness names. A member of the grand jury pushed to get the proceedings released, claiming Cameron misrepresented their deliberations.” [NBC Nightly News](#)<sup>Vi</sup> (9/30, story 7, 0:20, Holt, 5.69M) reported, “Taylor’s family hopes the recordings will shed new light on why the grand jury did not indict any officers for her death.”

The [AP](#) (9/30, Lovan, Blackburn) reports Judge Ann Bailey Smith gave the attorney general “until noon on Friday” to release the recordings, but the [Louisville \(KY\) Courier-Journal](#) (9/30, 368K) reports Cameron had asked for a one-week extension in a motion filed Tuesday. The [Washington Post](#) (9/30, Iati, Berman, Knowles, 14.2M) and [New York Times](#) (9/30, Wright, Bogel-Burroughs, 18.61M), among other news outlets, also report the delay.

### **Seagram’s Heiress Sentenced To 81 Months In NXIVM Sex Slave Case.**

The [AP](#) (9/30, Hays) reports from New York, “An heir to the Seagram’s liquor fortune was sentenced Wednesday to an 81-month prison term and immediately thrown behind bars for her role as an unwavering benefactor of Keith Raniere, the disgraced self-improvement guru convicted of turning women into sex slaves who were branded with his initials.” US District Judge Nicholas Garaufis “gave Clare Bronfman the harsh sentence at a hearing lasting more than three hours and featuring emotional statements from several victims gathered in a courtroom under strict coronavirus safety protocols. The judge repeatedly scolded Clare Bronfman for standing by Raniere and his upstate New York organization, even after the evidence made clear she eventually became aware of his sex-trafficking scheme.”

The [Daily Beast](#) (9/30, Melendez, 1.39M) reports, “For years, Seagram’s liquor empire heiress Clare Bronfman dedicated her time—and millions—to NXIVM as its operations director and one of its largest donors, going to extreme lengths to protect the self-help group and its leader,” but “on Wednesday, the 41-year-old was sentenced to 81 months in prison for her role in the purported cult that branded women and manipulated them into master-slave relationships. She pleaded guilty a year ago to conspiracy to conceal and harbor illegal aliens for financial gain, and fraudulent use of identification.” Prosecutors “had asked the judge to give her a 60-month sentence, arguing that she had shown continued loyalty to NXIVM’s founder Keith Raniere and made ‘obsessive’ attempts to investigate and intimidate possible critics of NXIVM,” but Judge Garaufis “believed she deserved additional time. He gave her almost seven years in prison, a \$500,000 fine and \$96,605 restitution to be paid to one of the victims.”

The [Albany \(NY\) Times Union](#) (9/30, Gavin, 457K) reports, “Prosecutors said Bronfman, who was in NXIVM alongside her older sister, Sara Bronfman-Igtet, used her wealth to recruit immigrants – usually women – into NXIVM-related groups under the idea that they would get a

scholarship or work. But Bronfman instead got a work-force of recruits desperate to earn a living and who were dependent on her and NXIVM to stay in the country. Prosecutors have said Bronfman helped Raniere target the company's perceived enemies, which included members of the organization who defected."

### **Baltimore Police Received Gun Trace Task Force Tip Well Before FBI Probe Surfaced.**

The [Baltimore Sun](#) (9/30, Fenton, 1.33M) reports, "Baltimore Police internal affairs received a tip that Gun Trace Task Force ringleader Wayne Jenkins was robbing drug dealers more than a year before he was charged by the FBI with committing robberies, according to a new court filing. That tip came from a Baltimore police officer who did not give the information to his own department, but instead told a local reporter," who "in turn passed it on to Internal Affairs, according to records obtained by attorneys in civil lawsuits against the department." The Sun adds, "The filings show internal affairs received dozens of complaints of alleged wrongdoing and criminal activity by officers in the GTTF sphere going back to at least 2012. The extent of the criminal activity by the officers did not become public until a federal grand jury issued sweeping charges in 2017, eventually sending nearly a dozen officers to federal prison, including a 25-year sentence for Jenkins."

### **Navy Veteran Ruled Not Competent To Stand Trial In Virginia Slaying.**

The [Washington Post](#) (9/30, Hedgpeth, 14.2M) reports, "A retired Navy petty officer who was indicted in connection with the death of a 19-year-old Virginia college student has been found incompetent to stand trial." US District Judge Raymond A. Jackson for the Eastern District of Virginia "decided Tuesday that Eric B. Brown was not competent to stand trial in the kidnapping and slaying of Ashanti Billie due to mental illness." The Post adds, "The case dates to 2017 when Billie, who was a 19-year-old Virginia Beach college student, went missing as she was on her way to work at a sandwich shop at Joint Expeditionary Base Little Creek in Norfolk. She was later found dead. Brown was charged in connection with her abduction in November 2017. And in December 2018, a federal grand jury indicted Brown on charges including kidnapping resulting in death, sexual abuse and stalking. According to court documents filed by his lawyers, Brown has been diagnosed with schizophrenia."

[WVEC-TV](#) Hampton Roads, VA (9/30, Clemmons, 49K) reports, "Ashanti's mother, Brandy Billie-Moore said the family is devastated by the ruling. 'It's not what we were expecting,' Billie-Moore said. 'We're disheartened, but it's not the fault of the FBI. The good news is he still won't be walking free. We're still seeking to have him committed to a GOV facility.'" Brown "was diagnosed with schizophrenia and involuntarily medicated at Butner Federal Medical Center with one antipsychotic drug. He was considered incompetent to stand trial for 18 months. At the time, federal prosecutors sought to give him one more antipsychotic drug which could have required a court order since Brown refused to take medication."

### **New Mexico Prison Gang Member Pleads Guilty To Racketeering.**

The [Los Alamos \(NM\) Daily Post](#) (9/30, Clark) reports from Albuquerque, New Mexico, "Jonathan 'Baby G' Gomez, a member of the Sindicato de Nuevo Mexico prison gang, pleaded guilty Sept. 25 to a racketeer influenced and corrupt organization (RICO) indictment." The indictment, "to which Gomez pleaded guilty, details various acts and communications since 2002 in which Gomez participated in relation to his membership in the organization. As described in the indictment, those communications discussed gang business, including illicit activities, and coordinated acts of violence, some of which were facilitated, directed or ordered by Gomez. The FBI and the New Mexico Department of Corrections investigated this case."

### **Five Arrested In Canada In Alleged Kidnapping Of New York Couple.**

The [Adirondack \(NY\) Daily Enterprise](#) (9/30, 16K) reports, "Five people have been arrested by Canadian authorities in connection with the alleged kidnapping of a couple from the town of

Moira." The Daily Enterprise adds, "Three people were arrested Tuesday as they left a residence in the Quebec city of Magog, which is located about 75 miles east of Montreal, Surete du Quebec Sgt. Claude Denis said. The Moira couple – James and Sandra Helm, whom Denis described as hostages – were located at the residence." According to the Daily Enterprise, "The SQ is continuing to work with multiple U.S. and Canadian law enforcement agencies, including the FBI, New York State Police, Royal Canadian Mounted Police, and Akwesasne Mohawk Police Services, Denis said. The FBI issued a statement late Wednesday afternoon saying only the 'international kidnapping investigation' is ongoing and the agency continues to work with both U.S. and Canadian law enforcement."

The [Globe and Mail \(CAN\)](#) (9/30, 1.04M) also reports.

### **Trans Person Shot In Puerto Rico In Sixth Killing This Year.**

The [AP](#) (9/30, Coto) reports from San Juan, Puerto Rico, "Authorities said a transgender woman was fatally shot Wednesday in southwest Puerto Rico, the sixth such killing this year." Michelle Ramos Vargas, 33, "was found along an isolated road near a farm in the town of San German, according to officials, who said they were investigating whether it was a hate crime. Police officer Manuel Cruz told The Associated Press that the victim had apparently worked as a bartender and was studying nursing and was shot several times in the head." According to the AP, "The bodies of two transgender women were found inside a charred car in southeast Puerto Rico in April. The FBI took over the investigation after two men were arrested in that case. Also that month, a transgender woman was killed in prison."

### **FBI Seeks Public's Help Identifying Man Who May Know Sexually Exploited Child.**

The [Lincoln \(NE\) Journal Star](#) (9/30, Johnson, 399K) reports, "FBI agents on Wednesday asked for help identifying a man they believe knows the identity of a child being sexually exploited." According to the Journal Star, "The FBI Omaha field office disseminated images of the man, they refer to as John Doe 42. FBI agents are trying to identify this man believed to have key information about the identity of a child being sexually exploited." The Journal Star adds, "In a news release, FBI spokeswoman Amy E. Adams said initial videos of the man shown with a child were first recorded by the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, and data extracted from that video indicates it was created in October 2015."

[WYFF-TV](#) Greenville, SC (9/30, 398K) reports, "The FBI in Columbia on Wednesday released photos and audio recordings of the voice of a man special agents said had information about a child sexual assault victim. 'Somebody out there will know this guy,' Don Wood, FBI special agent in Columbia, said." WYFF-TV adds, "Initial video of the unidentified man investigators are calling John Doe 42 shown with a child was first recorded by the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children in August of 2019, officials said. The EXIF data embedded within the video files indicated that the files were produced in October of 2015, according to investigators. Officials believe critical information pertaining to the identity of a child victim in an ongoing sexual exploitation investigation. 'It has been assessed John Doe 42 speaks with a southern accent, but we cannot conclude he is actually in the south,' Wood said."

[KTSA-AM](#) San Antonio (9/30, 3K) reports, "The FBI believes the man is between the ages of 50 and 65. This individual is being sought as part of the FBI's Operation Rescue Me and Endangered Child Alert Program (ECAP) initiatives, both of which represent strategic partnerships between the FBI and the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children."

### **Continuing Coverage: Nebraska Woman Facing Murder Trial.**

The [Lincoln \(NE\) Journal Star](#) (9/30, Pilger, 399K) reports that the murder trial of Bailey Boswell continued Wednesday. Days Inn manager Hunter Birdsall testified Wednesday.

The [Omaha \(NE\) World-Herald](#) (9/30, 641K) reports that the authorities closed in on Boswell on November 28, 2017, when motel clerk Jennie Bloom called in a tip to the Lincoln police after seeing her photo.

## **Heroin Trafficking Probe Results In 14-Month Prison Sentence For Massachusetts Man.**

The [Daily Hampshire \(MA\) Gazette](#) (9/30, 3K) reports, "Joseph R. Bonavolonta, Special Agent in Charge of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Boston Field Division," was among the officials who announced that Massachusetts resident Jayson Quinones has received a 14-month prison sentence. The article says the arrest of Quinones, who "pleaded guilty to distributing and possessing with intent to distribute heroin," was the result of an investigation that focused on heroin trafficking in Holyoke, Massachusetts. The [Springfield \(MA\) Republican](#) (9/30, Johnson, 395K) also covers this story.

## **Virginia Man Sentenced Over Child Pornography.**

[WCYB-TV](#) Bristol, VA (9/30, Clay, 64K) reports Gregory Lynn McKnight "has been sentenced to 180 months in prison for attempted production of child pornography and traveling interstate commerce for illicit sexual conduct." The investigation "began after the parents of a minor female informed local a law enforcement agency that McKnight had contacted their daughter on social media and began sending messages of a sexual nature to her."

## **North Carolina Man Arrested On Murder Charge In New Jersey.**

[BreakingAC \(NJ\)](#) (9/30) reports John Oiley Mitchell, who is "accused of killing Tameka Minor," was arrested Wednesday in Atlantic City by New Jersey police officers and FBI agents.

[Press of Atlantic City \(NJ\)](#) (9/30, 177K) also reports.

## **Former SUNY Official Pleads Guilty To Falsifying Resume.**

The [Albany \(NY\) Times Union](#) (9/30, Lyons, 457K) reports former SUNY Upstate Medical University official Sergio Garcia "pleaded guilty to a misdemeanor criminal charge Wednesday to settle allegations that he had falsified his professional background on the resume he submitted when applying for the \$340,000-a-year job." He "is expected to be sentenced on Nov. 13 to a conditional discharge with restitution."

## **Missouri Man Sentenced Over Child Pornography.**

[KFVS-TV](#) Cape Girardeau, MO (9/30, Ladd, 39K) reports Justin Paul Pierce "was sentenced to serve 10 years in federal prison on child pornography charges." FBI agents "executed a search warrant at Pierce's home in Fredericktown in March of 2019 after receiving a cyber tip from a social networking site."

## **Michigan Man Facing Hate Crimes Charges.**

The [Detroit Free Press](#) (9/30, 1.52M) reports that an unidentified man "is expected to be arraigned Thursday on multiple felony charges in connection with three racially motivated attacks on a Black family in Warren earlier in September." The authorities "said the man lives in the area and confessed to the crimes as well as other crimes, including one against a white resident about a mile away in the same week as the attacks against Eddie and Candace Hall."

[NBC News](#) (9/30, 6.14M) reports that the victims "had gunshots fired at their home, their vehicles' tires slashed, a rock thrown through their front window and racist threats written on their cars."

## **US Marshals Operation Rescues 11 Missing Children In Louisiana.**

The [New Orleans Times-Picayune](#) (9/30, 480K) reports that law enforcement officials "said Wednesday that the U.S. Marshals office located 11 children from Aug. 1 to Sept. 30, including the recovery of a 16-year-old boy who was allegedly involved in a gang in New Orleans that handled guns." The FBI New Orleans Field Office supported the two-month-long investigation.

[WDSU-TV](#) New Orleans (9/30, Team, 61K) reports that Operation Summer Rescue 2020 "ran from Aug. 1 to Sept. 30 and focused on missing and endangered runaways." The US Marshals "say that several arrests were made during the children's recoveries, to include an adult male who was arrested for aggravated statutory rape."

### **Tennessee Minor Charged With Sexploitation Charges.**

[WKRN-TV](#) Nashville, TN (9/30, 73K) reports that an unidentified 16-year-old Tennessee boy "is the target of a multi-state sexploitation case that involved not only Portland Police but both the TBI and FBI." The authorities "say the teen used the internet to create fake identities and hard to trace IP addresses as he coerced dozens of teenage girls in multiple states into sending him nude photos and more." The investigation "began 20 months ago in February 2019 when a Portland father reported that his daughter had been victimized by the teen." He "is charged with 39 counts of aggravated sexual exploitation of a minor, 5 counts of stalking, and 5 counts of extortion."

### **Convicted Sex Trafficker Arrested In Tennessee.**

The [Rogersville \(TN\) Review](#) (9/30, Goley, 16K) reports convicted sex trafficker Marcus Douglas Washington "was arrested in Rogersville on Sept. 26 after reportedly passing out under the influence of drugs and driving into a ditch."

### **New Jersey Men Charged With Participation In Gun Trafficking.**

[Central Jersey \(NJ\)](#) (9/30, 1K) reports Enrique Quijada, Manuel Espinosa-Ozoria, and Waldin Espinosa-Ozoria "are each charged by criminal complaint with one count of conspiracy to engage in the business of unlicensed firearms dealing." The FBI supported the investigation.

### **Mississippi Man Pleads Guilty To Methamphetamine Trafficking.**

[WLOX-TV](#) Biloxi, MS (9/30, Staff, 24K) reports Aaron Conrad Whavers "pleaded guilty to possession with intent to distribute methamphetamine from California to Mississippi" on Wednesday. He "faces at least 10 years or up to life in prison after agents recovered approximately 114 pounds of methamphetamine in Harrison County in 2019."

## **FINANCIAL CRIME & CORPORATE SCANDALS**

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### **California Lobbyist Pleads Guilty In Los Angeles City Hall Bribery Probe.**

The [Los Angeles Daily News](#) (9/30, 232K) reports from Los Angeles, "A longtime lobbyist and former Los Angeles City Hall official pleaded guilty Wednesday to a federal charge of conspiring with now-suspended Councilman Jose Huizar in a bribery scheme." Morrie Goldman "entered his guilty plea to a felony count of conspiring to commit bribery and honest services mail fraud in the government's ongoing investigation of corruption at City Hall. Goldman faces up to five years in federal prison, with sentencing scheduled for Dec. 14, according to the U.S. Attorney's Office." Goldman, 57, of Porter Ranch, California, "was one of several people who established two political action committees, one of which purportedly supported a variety of causes but actually was created to primarily benefit the City Council campaign of a relative of Huizar's who was planning to run for his council seat, according to federal prosecutors."

### **Former UAW President Pleads Guilty To Embezzling From Union.**

The [Detroit News](#) (9/30, Snell, 825K) reports former UAW President Dennis Williams "pleaded guilty Wednesday to embezzling hundreds of thousands of dollars from the union, giving federal prosecutors a second landmark conviction in a years-long crackdown on auto industry corruption." Williams' plea comes nearly four months "after Gary Jones, his successor, admitted to helping steal more than \$1 million from rank-and-file workers." Williams "is the 15th person

convicted of a crime following an investigation that has revealed labor leaders and auto executives broke federal labor laws, stole union funds and received bribes and illegal benefits from union contractors and Fiat Chrysler Automobiles NV executives."

The [Detroit Free Press](#) (9/30, Lawrence, 1.52M) says Williams "admitted Wednesday to a federal judge that he suspected the money that was paying for his golf, meals and other goodies connected to conferences, including lengthy rental stays in Palm Springs for him and his friends, was bought with union funds, but he chose to do nothing despite an obligation to act." Williams told Judge Paul Borman, "I made a deliberate and conscious decision not to press the matter even though I strongly suspected that If I looked into how Gary Jones was funding these benefits I would find union funds were being misused. As secretary-treasurer and (later) as president I could have investigated into the source of these funds or directed my staff to do so. It was within my power and it was my duty as a UAW officer to do so, but I deliberately looked away." The [AP](#) (9/30) reports former UAW president Gary Jones has also been convicted.

### **US Charges Hundreds In Connection With \$6B Healthcare Fraud Takedown.**

[FierceHealthcare](#) (9/30, Minemyer, 146K) reports, "The Department of Justice charged 345 people across 51 federal districts in the largest healthcare fraud takedown in the agency's history." Federal prosecutors "said the charges were in connection cases responsible for more than \$6 billion in losses. Among those charged were more than 100 doctors, nurses and other medical professionals, according to DOJ. The billions in false claims were submitted to both public and private insurers, DOJ said, with more than \$4.5 billion connected to telemedicine schemes." FierceHealthcare adds, "The national takedowns were conducted jointly between DOJ, the Department of Health and Human Services Office of Inspector General, the FBI, various U.S. Attorney's offices and the Drug Enforcement Administration, according to the announcement."

[Modern Healthcare](#) (9/30, Kacik, Subscription Publication, 214K) reports the healthcare fraud investigation involved claims submitted to federal healthcare programs and private insurance companies for substance use disorder treatment and other services. The [AP](#) (9/30) and the [Wall Street Journal](#) (9/30, Subscription Publication, 7.57M) also report.

### **US Charges Former California Businessman In Alleged Ponzi Scheme.**

The [Marin \(CA\) Independent Journal](#) (9/30, Houston, 95K) reports, "Federal criminal investigators this week charged a former Novato businessman of operating a massive Ponzi scheme, defrauding more than a thousand investors and embezzling tens of millions of dollars to personally enrich himself." According to the Independent Journal, "The U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission and U.S. Attorney's Office alleged this week that the late Kenneth Casey and his business associate, Lewis Wallach, were co-conspirators who intentionally defrauded 1,300 individuals who invested in their two Novato real estate investments companies, Professional Financial Investors Inc., or PFI, and its associated fund, Professional Investors Security Fund Inc., or PISF. Casey, who died after a heart attack in May, founded the companies." Wallach, 64, "has served as PFI's president and CEO since 1998. He is charged with embezzling \$26 million from a PFI account to personally enrich himself and using the money to buy personal items such as a Malibu vacation home and luxury cars."

### **US Charges Former Indiana Lawmaker, Gaming Executive In Campaign Donation Scheme.**

The [Franklin \(IN\) Daily Journal](#) (9/30, Doerflein, 49K) reports, "Local businessman and politician Brent Waltz – a former Johnson County Council member and state senator representing parts of the county – was indicted Tuesday and linked to a campaign donation scheme stemming from his unsuccessful congressional run in 2016. A gaming executive was also indicted and linked to the scheme." A federal grand jury "charged Waltz and gaming executive John Keeler with violations of federal campaign finance laws, false statements and

falsification of records, for making illegal corporate contributions and conduit contributions to Waltz's congressional campaign."

### **Hawaiian Defense Contractor Arrested For CARES Act Fraud.**

[Honolulu Civil Beat \(HI\)](#) (10/1) reports, "A politically connected defense contractor in Hawaii was arrested and charged Wednesday by the U.S. Justice Department for allegedly bilking the federal government out of \$12.8 million in coronavirus relief aid meant to help small businesses." Martin Kao, 47, "is the CEO of Martin Defense Group, formerly known as Navatek LLC, a Honolulu-based company that over the years has received millions of dollars in federal contracts, primarily to design state-of-the-art ship hulls for the U.S. Navy. He's charged with bank fraud and money laundering for falsifying loan applications for the Paycheck Protection Program that was created by Congress as part of the \$2 trillion CARES Act meant to stave off financial ruin for individuals and businesses during the COVID-19 pandemic."

## **CYBER DIVISION**

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### **FBI, CISA Warn Voters On Election-related Cyberattacks.**

The [Washington Examiner](#) (9/30, Soellner, 448K) reports voting information could face "blockades from cyberattacks aimed at slowing down election-related, public-facing websites, according to the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency." Distributed Denial of Service attacks "could hinder voter access to sites regarding information on the voting process or even voting results but would not prevent actual voting." The attacks would prevent users "from accessing those online resources and could temporarily disrupt business activities." The joint warning reads, "The public should be aware that if foreign actors or cyber criminals were able to successfully conduct DDoS attacks against election infrastructure, the underlying data and internal systems would remain uncompromised, and anyone eligible to vote would still be able to cast a ballot." However, neither "the FBI nor CISA found evidence that a DDoS attack has ever prevented a registered voter from casting a ballot or compromised the integrity of ballots that have already been cast."

### **Anthem Settles Data Breach Probe By State AGs For Nearly \$40M.**

[Reuters](#) (9/30) reports, "Anthem Inc said on Wednesday it would pay \$39.5 million as part of a settlement with U.S. states attorneys general following an investigation into a massive cyber-attack at the company in 2015." Reuters adds, "The second largest U.S. health insurer said a state sponsored criminal group had perpetrated the attack, adding that it does not believe the company had violated the law in connection with its data security. Anthem said it has also undertaken commitments that align with its ongoing focus on protecting information." According to Reuters, "In February 2015, several U.S. states began a probe after the company disclosed that unknown hackers had penetrated a database with some 80 million records. Anthem had said it suspected the hackers had stolen information belonging to tens of millions of current and former customers as well as employees."

### **FBI To Unveil New Cyber Strategy During Virtual Event At Auburn University.**

The [Opelika-Auburn \(AL\) News](#) (9/30, Phillips, 37K) reports, "The Federal Bureau of Investigation will unveil its new cyber strategy this week during a virtual event hosted by Auburn University's McCrary Institute. The FBI's top cyber executives will participate in the event, beginning at 9 a.m. Thursday." According to the News, "FBI Cyber Division Assistant Director Matt Gorham will offer opening remarks on the new strategy, followed by an in-depth panel conversation moderated by McCrary Institute Director Frank Cilluffo and an audience question-and-answer session. The panel will consist of Gorham; Tonya Ugoretz, FBI deputy assistant director; and Clyde Wallace, FBI deputy assistant director."

### **FBI Reportedly Probing Possible Ransomware Attack Against California Casino.**

The [Sacramento \(CA\) Bee](#) (9/30, Stanton, 567K) reports, "Northern California's Cache Creek Casino Resort, which has been shut down since Sept. 20 because of what it called a 'systems infrastructure failure,' confirmed Wednesday that its computer systems were the target of an outside attack and that the incident is under investigation. 'While our investigation is ongoing, we have confirmed the cause was an external attack on our computer network,' the Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation, owners of the casino, said in response to questions from The Sacramento Bee." The Bee adds, "Sources, not at liberty to speak on the matter, told The Bee that the FBI is looking into whether the incident is a ransomware attack aimed at holding Cache Creek's network and information hostage in return for payment, but a casino spokesman declined to comment further than the statement."

### **FBI Received 4,541 Cybercrime Complaints From South Carolina Last Year.**

[WACH-TV](#) Columbia, SC (9/30, Cannon) reports from Columbia, South Carolina, "The FBI's Internet Crime Complaint Center received 4,541 cybercrime complaints from South Carolina in 2019, said The South Carolina Department of Revenue (SCDOR)." WACH-TV adds, "Last year was the most number of cybercrime complaints to the FBI and the highest dollar losses from cybercrime since 2000, SCDOR said. The most frequent reported complaints were phishing and similar ploys, non-payment/non-delivery scams, and extortion."

### **DHS CIO Describes New Network Incident Response Strategy.**

[FedScoop](#) (9/30, Nyczepir) reports DHS is consolidating its "network and security operations centers to ensure services remain available when analysts must investigate a cybersecurity incident, according to the department's new chief information officer." The resulting network operations security center (NOSC) "model represents a shift from traditional cyber incident response, where the SOC's goal typically is to take the system offline until the problem can be identified and fixed." During an ACT-IAC event Wednesday, CIO Karen Evans said, "It's not just consolidation for consolidation's sake," but the "next evolution of providing and managing risk to keep the business going while we are then analyzing, being aware of and being able to protect our operations." DHS also has a "pretty robust" Continuous Diagnostics and Mitigation "implementation underway, and those cybersecurity tools will feed data about IT assets and access to NOSC's dashboard for display before being sent on to the federal dashboard, Evans said."

### **Germany Planning Tougher Oversight of Huawei, Telecom Vendors.**

[Reuters](#) (9/30, Rinke, Busvine) reports the German government is planning "tougher oversight of telecoms network vendors that, while stopping short of a ban on Huawei, will make it harder for the Chinese company to keep a foothold in Europe's largest market." Three coalition and government sources "said on Wednesday that an agreement had been reached in principle to extend scrutiny of a vendor's governance and technology to Radio Access Networks (RAN) powering next-generation 5G services, in addition to the more sensitive core." Scrutiny of vendors would "include up-front and ongoing assessments by Germany's cybersecurity watchdog and intelligence services, subject to a judgement from key government departments on whether a vendor is trustworthy, some sources said."

***Huawei Says It Is Ready To "Open Our Insides" To Demonstrate Lack Of Security Threat.*** [Reuters](#) (9/30, Pollina) reports Huawei is ready to be "thoroughly examined to show that its technology does not pose any risk to the countries that will include its equipment in the creation of 5G networks, the head of its Italian unit said on Wednesday." At the opening of a company cybersecurity center in Rome, Huawei President Luigi De Vecchis said, "We will open our insides, we are available to be vivisected to respond to all of this political pressure." The United States has lobbied "Italy and other European allies to avoid using Huawei equipment in their next generation networks, saying the company could pose a security risk." De Vecchis

"said that, despite all the pressure, Huawei had no intention of leaving the Italian market and was considering adding further products in fields such as energy."

### **NSA Launches Cybersecurity Center.**

[ExecutiveGov](#) (9/30, Martin) reports the NSA has launched a "new office that will support NSA's mission to implement cybersecurity across critical systems." The office will lead "NSA's Cybersecurity mission to engage with standards bodies to communicate security requirements and influence standards to secure our National Security Systems and provide support to the Defense Industrial Base (DIB)." The Center for Cybersecurity Standards (CCSS) "will coordinate with standardization entities regarding security requirements needed to protect national security systems, NSA said Tuesday." CCSS co-lead Jessica Fitzgerald-McKay said, "Our engagement with standards bodies improves cybersecurity for the nation and our collaboration ensures vendors understand security requirements for NSS and the DIB." The agency will use CCSS "to inform and influence cyber standards, and in turn, help the defense industrial base keep these systems protected. CCSS is now working on standards for cryptographic algorithms, cybersecurity automation, platform resilience and security protocols."

### **Hackers Increasingly Targeting Health Care Institutions.**

Hackers are increasingly going after health care institutions and undermining patients' well-being as their cyberware become more sophisticated and aggressive, [Wall Street Journal](#) (9/30, McMillan, Strasburg, Subscription Publication, 7.57M) reports.

[MedCity News](#) (9/30, Reuter) also provides similar coverage.

### **CMA CGM Says Data Possibly Stolen During Cyberattack.**

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (9/30, Paris, Subscription Publication, 7.57M) reports a malware attack on container shipping line CMA CGM may have resulted in the theft of data. CMA CGM said in a statement, "We suspect a data breach and are doing everything possible to assess its potential volume and nature."

[Reuters](#) (9/30, Staff) also reports.

### **O'Brien: Chinese Hackers Targeted Trump Family, Campaign.**

The [Washington Times](#) (9/30, Gertz, 492K) reports Chinese hackers have attempted to "break into the private email account members of President Trump's family and also tried to steal emails from campaign and administration officials, said White House National Security Adviser Robert C. O'Brien." Microsoft, he said, "reported that the Chinese were trying to phish the Gmail accounts of Republican campaign officials, Trump family members, Trump administration officials." The company "posted a report on election hacking by Chinese, Russian and Iranian by cyberactors earlier this month."

### **Continuing Coverage: US Cyber Command Has New Senior Enlisted Leader.**

[MeriTalk](#) (9/30, Weingarten) reports US Cyber Command (CYBERCOM) has a new "Senior Enlisted Leader, who is responsible for advising leadership on military workforce issues and advocating on behalf of military personnel." Army Command Sgt. Maj. Sheryl Lyon, who previously "served as the Command Sergeant Major of the U.S. Army Cyber Command, joined CYBERCOM after the departure of Marine Master Gunnery Sgt. Scott Stalker, who left to fill the same position at U.S. Space Command."

### **Security Experts Warn Of TikTok's Risk For Lawmakers.**

[CQ Roll Call](#) (9/30, Donnelly, 154K) reports despite official warnings "for nearly a year about the security risks of the Chinese-owned TikTok video-sharing app, several politicians who might be ideal targets for Beijing's spies still have accounts." These include two "former presidential candidates, plus members of Congress who oversee military, intelligence and digital security

programs." Also on the list "are at least a couple of House candidates, including a former Green Beret with a top-secret security clearance who is a consultant to defense contractors." Rep. Abigail Spanberger (D-VA) a former CIA officer, cited "deep reservations" about her fellow members of Congress using TikTok. Council on Foreign Relations digital security expert Adam Segal "said taking the app off a lawmaker's phone probably ensures that the security risk is relatively low." Segal and others "have pointed out that Beijing's reported hacks of the personal data of millions of Americans, including government officials, through intrusions into the personnel files at the Office of Personnel Management and other entities, has created more of a risk than TikTok."

## LABORATORY

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### **More Unknown Michigan Homicide Victims Being Exhumed In Effort At DNA Identification.**

[MLive \(MI\)](#) (9/30, Clark, 925K) reports from Wayne County, Michigan, "The Detroit Police Department and its law enforcement partners throughout southeast Michigan are continuing efforts to identify the remains of unknown homicide victims using DNA and new technology that were unavailable when the victims were buried." MLive adds, "Operation UNITED, which stands for Unknown Names Identified Through Exhumation and DNA, began its next phase of exhumations Tuesday, Sept. 29, at United Memorial Cemetery in Plymouth, according to Detroit police. Officials will be at the cemetery from Sept. 29 to Oct. 1, carefully exhuming the remains to take DNA samples in hopes of identifying the people." The samples "are collected and sent to the National Missing and Unidentified Persons System and uploaded into the Combined DNA Index System, as well as the FBI's National DNA Index System where they are then searched against all appropriate indexes for potential associations, police said."

## LAW ENFORCEMENT SERVICES

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### **Barr Pledges More Federal Aid To Help Deal With Oklahoma Tribal Crime.**

The [AP](#) (9/30) reports from Tahlequah, Oklahoma that Attorney General Barr "promised more manpower and federal aid to Oklahoma on Wednesday to help tribal governments and federal prosecutors deal with an increase in criminal cases stemming from a recent U.S. Supreme Court decision." According to the AP, "During a visit to the Cherokee Nation headquarters, Barr said the U.S. Department of Justice plans to fund two federal prosecutor positions in the northern and eastern U.S. districts of Oklahoma to handle the increased caseloads." The Supreme Court ruled in *McGirt v. Oklahoma* that "either the federal government or the tribal nation has jurisdiction over crimes committed by or against Native Americans, not the state. 'Obviously we didn't plan on the McGirt decision when we were deploying the resources from the last budget cycle, but we have pressing needs now for our prosecutors and for the prison system,' Barr said during a meeting with Cherokee Nation leaders and U.S. attorneys from the two districts."

## INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

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### **FBI Helping Train Australian Police Officers To Catch Foreign Spies.**

The [Brisbane \(AUS\) Times](#) (9/30, 730K) reports, "The FBI has been training Australian Federal Police officers in how to catch foreign spies as a specialist unit set up to counter foreign interference and espionage becomes due for expansion." The Times adds, "AFP Commissioner Reece Kershaw revealed he had asked FBI director Chris Wray for help in training officers in the new unit, which has 65 officers. AFP Commissioner Reece Kershaw says he expects the AFP to

be finding its own foreign interference cases." According to the Times, Kershaw "said foreign interference and espionage was a new challenge for the AFP after laws were passed in 2018 to crack down on covert influence. 'I reached out to Director Wray, the FBI director, asked him for assistance... around training our people and looking at how we could deliver our own package perhaps modelled on the US,' Mr Kershaw said."

## OTHER FBI NEWS

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### **Nevada Court Approves \$800M Settlement Between MGM Resorts, Shooting Victims.**

The [AP](#) (9/30) reports that a Clark County judge "approved a settlement totaling \$800 million from casino company MGM Resorts International and its insurers to more than 4,400 relatives and victims of the Las Vegas Strip shooting that was the deadliest in recent U.S. history." The resort "acknowledged no liability," and it will "pay \$49 million, while its insurance companies will pay \$751 million."

## OTHER WASHINGTON NEWS

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### **Trump's Debate Comment On Proud Boys Draws Criticism From Republicans And Others.**

President Trump's call for the Proud Boys organization to "stand back and stand by" during Tuesday night's first presidential debate is one of the major threads of coverage of the debate, with political figures of both parties criticizing what analyses call a refusal to condemn white supremacy. The [AP](#) (9/30, Ronayne, Kunzelman) reports the President "didn't condemn white supremacist groups and their role in violence in some American cities this summer" during the debate, "branding it solely a 'left-wing' problem and telling one far-right extremist group to 'stand back and stand by.'" [Reuters](#) (9/30) reports that on Wednesday, Trump said the Proud Boys, "an organization identified as a hate group, should 'stand down' and let law enforcement take the lead." Trump told reporters, "I don't know who the Proud Boys are. They have to stand down. Let law enforcement do their work."

Norah O'Donnell said on the [CBS Evening News](#)<sup>Vi</sup> (9/30, story 3, 2:10, 3.95M) that Trump "is being rebuked by members of his own party for failing to explicitly condemn white supremacy and groups that support it." CBS' Jeff Pegues: "Shortly after the President declined to denounce them, the Proud Boys were online celebrating and claiming victory. On Telegram, a group leader wrote, 'Standing down and standing by, sir.' Also, a new logo with the President's words appeared." On [NBC Nightly News](#)<sup>Vi</sup> (9/30, story 3, 2:40, Holt, 5.69M), Hallie Jackson said, "That phrase 'stand back and stand by' [is] now a rallying cry, and new logo for the Proud Boys, a self-described pro-Western chauvinist fraternity of men, classified as a hate group by the Southern Poverty Law Center and tied to several violent incidents at recent protests." The [Wall Street Journal](#) (9/30, Levy, Subscription Publication, 7.57M) quotes American University's Kurt Braddock, who studies extremist groups, saying, "It suggests that should he need them, he will call on them. It's that kind of language that can be interpreted as a call to action by some people looking for an excuse to engage in violence."

White House Director of Strategic Communications Alyssa Farah said on [Fox News' America's Newsroom](#), "The President has condemned white supremacists countless times. Last week in Atlanta, Georgia, laying out his vision for African Americans, he said he would prosecute crimes committed by the KKK as domestic terrorism. That's a policy position of President Trump." The [Washington Examiner](#) (9/30, Brest, 448K), [The Hill](#) (9/30, Samuels, 2.98M), and [Axios](#) (9/30, 521K) also cover Trump's comments.

[USA Today](#) (9/30, Fritze, Subramanian, 10.31M) reports Trump "drew fire from both Democrats and some Republicans for not explicitly denouncing white supremacy when he had a chance. Trump aides pointed to the president's initial response" to moderator Chris Wallace,

"when he said 'sure' and added that he was 'willing to do anything' because he wants 'to see peace.' ... But even as Trump aides argued the story was a media creation, several Republicans who are usually close to the White House criticized the response." Senate Majority Leader McConnell "said it was 'unacceptable not to condemn white supremacists,'" and on Fox News' Fox & Friends, host Brian Kilmeade "said Trump 'blew the biggest layup in the history of debates by...not condemning white supremacists.'"

The [New York Times](#) (9/30, Shear, Broadwater, Cochrane, 18.61M) reports Sen. Tim Scott (R-SC), "the chamber's only Black Republican, said that 'white supremacy should be denounced at every turn. I think he misspoke, I think he should correct it. If he doesn't correct it I guess he didn't misspeak.'" McConnell "told reporters Wednesday that he agreed with Mr. Scott, sharply rebuking Mr. Trump's refusal to categorically denounce white supremacy during the presidential debate." [McClatchy](#) (9/30, 19K) and [Axios](#) (9/30, Perano, 521K) also cover Scott's comments.

Chuck Todd said on [NBC Nightly News](#) (9/30, story 6, 0:45, Holt, 5.69M), "The best way to look at a post-debate to see which side is having a better time and which side is having the worst time is which one has to explain the most, and today, it has been Donald Trump that has to do explaining on the why he did not denounce white supremacy or the Proud Boys, why even today he still sort of danced around it."

Several newspapers have features on the Proud Boys, which [USA Today](#) (9/30, Shannon, 10.31M) calls "a far-right group with a history of violent confrontations." The [Washington Post](#) (9/30, A1, Hawkins, Wootson, Timberg, 14.2M) says the group was "created in 2016 by a former Vice magazine co-founder" and has become "a fixture at political demonstrations around the country, often showing up wielding batons, bear spray and firearms, ready to do battle with their perceived enemies in the far-left antifa movement. Leaders say they disavow racism, though the Proud Boys have ties to white supremacists and sometimes use nationalist rhetoric common among hate groups." The [Washington Times](#) (9/30, Richardson, 492K) reports that Kentucky State University associate professor Wilfred Reilly, noting that the group's international chairman is Black, "said that about 10% to 20% of the group's activists are non-White, adding, 'Proud Boys are not White supremacists.'" The [Washington Post](#) (9/30, Timberg, Dwoskin, 14.2M) says "mainstream platforms such as Facebook, Twitter and YouTube have cracked down on the Proud Boys for violations against hate speech and other policies."

### **Cardinal Dolan Praises Barrett, Says Her Faith Should Be Respected.**

The [New York Post](#) (9/30, Campanile, 4.57M) reports that during his SiriusXM radio show "Conversation with Cardinal Dolan" on Thursday, Cardinal Timothy Dolan "raved about Judge Amy Coney Barrett's credentials to serve on the US Supreme Court – and warned that her deep Catholic faith should be respected, not attacked, during confirmation hearings." Dolan said, "She takes her Catholic faith seriously, but that is not why she was nominated as a justice to the Supreme Court, is it? I think she is nominated because she is the best candidate around. ... I hope so. And from what I hear, she is. So, let's hope for the best." Dolan "said he did not know Barrett personally but was 'proud' of her" and that "people he's spoken to who know Barrett well 'sparkle about her.'"

***People Of Praise Removes Mentions Of Barrett From Its Website.*** The [AP](#) (9/30, Biesecker) reports the religious group People of Praise, which is "tied to" Supreme Court nominee Judge Amy Coney Barrett, "sought to erase all mentions and photos of her from its website before she meets with lawmakers and faces questions at her Senate confirmation hearings." Barrett "has declined to publicly discuss her decades-long affiliation" with the "charismatic Christian group that opposes abortion and holds that men are divinely ordained as the 'head' of the family and faith." An analysis "shows that People of Praise erased numerous records from its website during the summer of 2017 that referred to Barrett and included photos of her and her family. At the time, Barrett was on Trump's short list for the high court

seat that eventually went to Justice Brett Kavanaugh." When Barrett "again emerged as a front-runner for the court" last week, "more articles, blog posts and photos disappeared."

**Morgenstern: Americans Want Supreme Court Vacancy Filled.** White House Deputy Press Secretary Brian Morgenstern was asked on [Fox News @ Night](#) (9/30) about a recent poll showing 57% of Americans believe the next elected President should replace Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg on the Supreme Court. Morgenstern said, "There was a poll that came out that was taken shortly before Justice Ginsburg passed away and it said about two-thirds of Americans wanted the Supreme Court seat to be filled even in an election year, and that's because the President was elected on this platform of nominating constitutionalist judges and most of the senators were elected on a platform of considering and confirming constitutionalist judges. So, they are following through on their promise."

**McConnell: Biden's Refusal To Answer Court-Packing Question Means He Plans To Do It.** The [Washington Times](#) (9/30, Swoyer, 492K) reports Senate Majority Leader McConnell claimed Wednesday that Joe Biden would not say during Tuesday's presidential debate if he would pack the Supreme Court is that he plans to do it. McConnell said, "He ducked the question. In an election when you duck the question, you know what the answer is. That is exactly what they are up to. That is exactly what they intend to do." McConnell also said Sen. Kamala Harris (D-CA) "has said she is open to the call from progressives in their party to put more justices on the Supreme Court as a way to counter the conservative majority."

**Trump Says Biden Will Pack Supreme Court And Ruin It.** President Trump argued in a tweet Wednesday morning that Biden will pack the High Court and kill the energy business as well as the Second Amendment. Trump [wrote](#), "Biden wants to Pack the Supreme Court, thereby ruining it. Also, he wants no fracking, killing our Energy business, and JOBS. Second Amendment is DEAD if Biden gets in! Is that what you want from a leader? He will destroy our Country! VOTE NOW USA."

### **Trump: COVID Death Toll Would Be Higher If Biden Was President.**

President Trump [tweeted](#) Wednesday, "Many more people would have died from the China Virus if Sleepy Joe were your President. He didn't even want me to close our Country to Infected China until TWO MONTHS later, when he said I was right. Now he likes to say I didn't close up 'fast enough'. Just another politician!"

**Coronavirus Cases Rising In 31 States.** [ABC World News Tonight](#)<sup>Vi</sup> (9/30, story 3, 3:20, Muir, 6.98M) reported coronavirus cases are rising "in 31 states, and Wisconsin with a record number of hospitalizations now. ... Tonight, more than 206,000 American lives have been lost." ABC's Eva Pilgrim added, "A new CDC study found a 55% increase in cases among 18 to 22-year-olds last month. ... And new projections show that risk may be increasing in the northern part of the country as temperatures drop and people just get tired of wearing masks and social distancing. But researchers say there still is time to take those measures and minimize new cases." The [CBS Evening News](#)<sup>Vi</sup> (9/30, story 6, 1:45, O'Donnell, 3.95M) reported, "More than a dozen states reported positivity rates above 10%, indicating the virus is once again spreading quickly."

**Birx Urges Montana To Follow Coronavirus Guidelines.** [KULR-TV](#)<sup>Vi</sup> Billings, MT (9/30, 4K) reported that "after seeing the large spike in numbers" in Montana, White House Coronavirus Task Force Coordinator Deborah Birx called Gov. Steve Bullock (D) "to talk about what can be done." Asked for her comments, Birx said, "Every community, whether it's Yellowstone or Rosebud or Cascade, these communities with community spread, I can tell you, it can be stopped. We've seen it across the South, just by following mask mandates, but seriously following mask mandates and not gathering together without masks on."

Birx said on [KTVQ-TV](#)<sup>Vi</sup> Billings, MT (9/30, 20K), "We can do this together. I know it's going to take a bit of engineering, but we're smart and creative people. I know they've got the 'can-do' spirit out there in Montana. We can figure out our way forward and reengineer utilizing

all the rooms in our houses to keep people physically distanced in their groups, in their pods, while we come together in a physically distant way.”

### **Fauci Pushes Back At Trump For Misrepresenting His Stance On Masks.**

The [New York Times](#) (9/30, Romero, 18.61M) reports NIAID Director Fauci “hit back at President Trump on Wednesday for what he called the misrepresentation of his stance on using masks to curb the coronavirus.” In the presidential debate on Tuesday, Trump claimed that Fauci initially said “masks are not good – then he changed his mind.” When Joe Biden said wearing masks could save tens of thousands of lives, Trump contended, “Dr. Fauci said the opposite.” In an interview on ABC News’ “Start Here” podcast, Fauci said, “Anybody who has been listening to me over the last several months knows that a conversation does not go by where I do not strongly recommend that people wear masks.” Fauci explained that “very early on in the pandemic,” authorities did not recommend masks to the general public because they were worried about shortages.

### **Atlas: “It’s Destructive To Lock Down The Healthy.”**

The [Washington Times](#) (9/30, Howell, 492K) reports President Trump’s “embattled coronavirus adviser” Scott Atlas is not “backing down under intense criticism that his guidance runs counter to established science.” In an interview with the Times, Atlas “says his views have been distorted in the media and too many people in the public eye have been ‘instilling fear’ instead of addressing the damage caused by lockdowns.” Said Atlas, “We know the harms are tremendous to closing schools and businesses. I don’t know why that is not front-and-center.” He added, “It’s destructive to lock down the healthy people.”

### **Birx Seeks To Reassure Americans Of Vaccine Safety.**

Asked for her message to those unwilling to take a new coronavirus vaccine once available on [WGN AmericaVi](#) (9/30), White House Coronavirus Task Force Coordinator Deborah Birx said, “They should go back and look at how America private sector and the federal government have worked together to provide quality, highly sensitive and specific tests. They should look at the therapeutics and say, we brought forward safe therapeutics...with efficacy that improves people’s lives in the hospital. The vaccines will be no different.” Birx added, “No vaccine will go forward to the American public that hasn’t been shown to be safe and efficacious, in the same way that we’ve developed quality test and ensured that remdesivir and steroids are available.”

### **Moderna Says Its Vaccine Won’t Be Ready Until Spring 2021.**

[Axios](#) (9/30, Knutson, 521K) reports Moderna CEO Stéphane Bancel said Wednesday that his company’s coronavirus vaccine “won’t be available for widespread distribution until at least spring 2021.” Bancel said the drugmaker will not seek emergency FDA authorization approval for its vaccine “until Nov. 25 at the earliest.” He added the company would not seek FDA approval “for use in the general population until late January.”

Asked on [Fox News’ Bill Hemmer Reports](#) (9/30) about a small study released this week showing Moderna’s vaccine produced an immune response in elderly recipients, Assistant HHS Secretary for Health Adm. Brett Giroir said, “It’s just a great breakthrough to know that older Americans can actually generate an immune response, because sometimes they can’t. ... If they can generate an immune response and be protected, then we know we can target that vaccine, the early doses, to those who are most at risk, so that’s really, really good news.”

### **FDA Broadens Investigation Of AstraZeneca’s Coronavirus Vaccine Trial.**

[Reuters](#) (9/30, Taylor, Levine) reports the FDA “has broadened its investigation of a serious illness in” AstraZeneca’s coronavirus vaccine trial to “look at data from earlier trials of similar vaccines developed by the same scientists, three sources familiar with the details told Reuters.” AstraZeneca’s Phase 3 trial of its vaccine candidate has been on hold since September 6, “after

a study participant in Britain fell ill with what was believed to be a rare spinal inflammatory disorder called transverse myelitis.”

### **White House Rejected CDC’s Request For Cruise Ship Ban Extension.**

The [New York Times](#) (9/30, A1, Kaplan, 18.61M) reports CDC Director Redfield “wanted a ‘no sail’ order extended until February” for cruise ships, “a step that would have displeased the politically powerful tourism industry in the crucial swing state of Florida.” According to the Times, “The current ‘no sail’ policy, which was originally put in place in April and later extended, is set to expire on Wednesday,” and Redfield “had recommended the extension. ... But at a meeting of the coronavirus task force on Tuesday, Dr. Redfield’s plan was overruled,” according to a “senior federal health official.”

### **CDC Report On Meatpacking Plant Safety Procedures Was Revised To Soften Language.**

The [Washington Post](#) (9/30, Rosenberg, 14.2M) says a CDC report “about safety procedures at a meatpacking plant whose workers were falling ill at an alarming rate early on in the pandemic is raising new questions about political interference at the agency.” On April 22, the CDC “issued a report with basic health recommendations to control the spread of covid-19 at a meatpacking plant run by Smithfield foods in Sioux Falls, South Dakota.” The original “draft version of the report put forth these recommendations about worker safety, according to a copy, which The Washington Post acquired.” But the final report “sent to the plant included language that had been softened with qualifiers like ‘whenever possible,’ and ‘if feasible.’”

### **DOJ Opens Antitrust Investigation Into Medtronic Over Ventilator Manufacturing.**

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (9/30, Kendall, Subscription Publication, 7.57M) reports exclusively that the Justice Department has opened an antitrust probe looking into whether acquisitions by Medtronic hurt competition in the manufacturing of ventilators.

### **As COVID Cases Rise, Insurers Reduce Coverage For Telehealth Visits.**

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (9/30, Mathews, Whelan, Subscription Publication, 7.57M) reports that physicians and hospitals say the complicated rules and differing approaches adopted by major health insurers in coverage of telehealth visits are creating confusion among providers and a potentially increased financial burden for patients who opt for such consultations.

### **Mnuchin, Pelosi To Continue Talks On Coronavirus Aid Package.**

[Politico](#) (9/30, Ferris, Caygle, 4.29M) reports House Democrats delayed a vote on their coronavirus aid package in order to give House Speaker Pelosi “a final 24 hours to reach a deal with the White House before taking up their own bill and going home.” The House had been scheduled to vote on the \$2.2 trillion package Wednesday, but the vote has been pushed to today to buy time for “last-gasp negotiations with Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin – which are widely seen as Congress’ final chance to approve more pandemic aid before the election.” Pelosi and Mnuchin “met in the Capitol for 90 minutes on Wednesday afternoon. ... In a statement, Pelosi said she and Mnuchin will continue to talk but offered no details on whether a deal was imminent.”

Mnuchin said on [Fox Business’ Lou Dobbs Tonight](#) (9/30, 49K), “I did have a productive meeting with the Speaker [Wednesday]. ... I went through a very detailed proposal that I had just come from the Oval Office and reviewed with Mark Meadows and the President, so all three of us were very clear on what we wanted to do. I think it was a very fair proposal that provides a lot of relief for hardworking Americans that have been hurt by this virus, particularly many of the small businesses, kids, and jobs that are impacted by this.” Mnuchin added, “This is the first time we’ve seriously reengaged in what has been several weeks. ... If there’s a fair compromise, we’re prepared to do it.”

[Reuters](#) (9/30, Lawder, Cornwell) reports Mnuchin "said talks with...Pelosi made progress" but adds that Pelosi "avoided use of the term 'progress.'" [CQ Roll Call](#) (9/30, Lerman, 154K) describes Pelosi's statement as "more circumspect." [Bloomberg](#) (9/30, Wasson, House, 4.73M) reports Pelosi's statement "said she and Mnuchin were seeking some 'further clarification' on each others' positions and that 'our conversations will continue.'"

Senate Majority Leader McConnell was more pessimistic about the prospects for an agreement. The [Washington Post](#) (9/30, Werner, Stein, 14.2M) reports he said the sides were "very, very far apart." The Post says his comments left it "uncertain whether any agreement struck by Pelosi and Mnuchin could even pass muster with Senate Republicans." [USA Today](#) (9/30, Wu, 10.31M) quotes McConnell as saying, "I mean we had 52 out of 53 republicans willing to spend roughly a half a trillion dollars. ... The thought that Senate Republicans would go up to 2.2 trillion is outlandish."

The [Washington Times](#) (9/30, Muñoz, 492K) says McConnell "dismiss[ed]" House Democrats' measure as "unserious." He said, "House Democrats are trying to save face by introducing yet another multi-trillion-dollar far-left wish list with virtually all the same non-COVID-related poison-pills as their last unserious bill. ... If they continue to refuse to get serious then American families will continue to hurt."

**Rubio: More Aid For Small Businesses Needed Immediately.** Sen. Marco Rubio (R-FL) said on [Fox News' Fox & Friends](#) (9/30, 831K), the Paycheck Protection Program has "helped...millions of people keep their jobs and hundreds of thousands of small businesses stay afloat. And we are working to do that again. We need to do that again. ... I feel a little bit more optimistic about it simply because I know Secretary Mnuchin has been talking to Speaker Pelosi over in the House about what they are going to do. ... I don't think there is any issue getting PPP passed. I think the issue is they want it to be part of a bill that has other things, and its the other things there is no agreement on. But we can't wait until November."

### **Senate Approves Stopgap Spending Bill.**

The [New York Times](#) (9/30, Cochrane, 18.61M) reports the Senate on Wednesday "overwhelmingly approved" a stopgap measure "to keep the government funded through early December, punting the threat of a government shutdown and a series of thorny debates about federal funding until after the general election." The Senate "passed the measure 84 to 10, with only Republicans voting against the legislation." [Politico](#) (9/30, Emma, 4.29M) says passage of the measure "prevent[ed] an unlikely but potentially disastrous scenario that would kneecap federal agencies in the weeks before the presidential election."

### **Wheeler Defends EPA Regulations During COVID.**

Asked on [WRFH Radio](#) (9/30) about the EPA's regulatory actions during the coronavirus pandemic, EPA Administrator Wheeler said, "It would have been irresponsible, I believe, to require employees to go into a closed facility to fill out reports, saying there are zero emissions to send to us. ... Facilities were very appreciative of that across the board and, you know, it's important for them to get back up and running, get their workforce, make sure that everybody is safe and healthy, get production going to make products for the American people and for export, and we didn't want to be an impediment to that happening and we weren't."

### **NFL Postpones Steelers-Titans Game After Players Test Positive.**

[ABC World News Tonight](#)<sup>Vi</sup> (9/30, story 7, 0:10, Muir, 6.98M) reported, "The NFL postponing its first game of the season because of COVID, pushing back Sunday's game between the Titans and Steelers. Three players and five staff members for the Titans testing positive." [NBC Nightly News](#)<sup>Vi</sup> (9/30, story 9, 1:35, Holt, 5.69M) reported "a fourth Titans player" has tested positive this week, "bringing the organization total to nine. The NFL [tweeting](#) the delay will allow additional time for further testing and to ensure the health and safety of players, coaches, and

game day personnel." The [New York Times](#) (9/30, Shpigel, 18.61M), among other news outlets, also reports the announcement.

### **Administration Will No Longer Block Abortion Access For Immigrant Teens In Custody.**

The [Washington Post](#) (9/30, Marimow, 14.2M) reports the Administration "will no longer block immigrant teens in federal custody from accessing abortion services, according to an agreement approved Wednesday by a judge in Washington." The revised policy, the Post notes, "comes three years after the American Civil Liberties Union went to court on behalf of a pregnant 17-year-old from Central America," accusing the government of imposing "an unconstitutional abortion ban." As part of the new policy, the Office of Refugee Resettlement "clarified that shelters cannot interfere with access to reproductive health care, including abortion."

### **Malinowski Faces QAnon Death Threats Following False Republican Ad.**

The [New York Times](#) (9/30, Edmondson, 18.61M) reports Rep. Tom Malinowski (D-NJ) is receiving "death threats from QAnon supporters after the House Republicans' campaign arm falsely accused him of lobbying to protect sexual predators." QAnon supporters targeted the lawmakers "on Tuesday, after he led a bipartisan resolution condemning the movement, which spreads a baseless conspiracy theory that President Trump is battling a cabal of Democratic pedophiles. QAnon believers seized on an advertisement released last month by the campaign arm, the National Republican Congressional Committee, that falsely claimed that Mr. Malinowski, then a lobbyist for Human Rights Watch, worked to block a provision in a 2006 crime bill that would have expanded registration requirements for sex offenders."

### **Senate Panel Approves Wolf For DHS Post.**

The [Washington Times](#) (9/30, Dinan, 492K) reports a Senate panel gave initial approval Wednesday to Chad Wolf, President Trump's pick to lead DHS, "with Republicans brushing aside complaints from immigrant-rights groups to power the nomination to the Senate floor." The 6-3 vote in the Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee sets up a full floor vote as early as next week.

[CQ Roll Call](#) (9/30, Misra, 154K) reports that at his confirmation hearing last week, Wolf "faced pushback from committee Democrats for his role in implementing controversial immigration policies and over clashes between federal law enforcement agents and people protesting police brutality."

### **Whistleblower Complaints Lodged Against USAGM's Pack.**

[Politico](#) (9/30, Lippman, 4.29M) reports that "six senior officials at the U.S. Agency for Global Media have filed a whistleblower complaint with the State Department's inspector general and the U.S. Office of Special Counsel, alleging that they were retaliated against for raising concerns about the new political leadership installed earlier this year" by President Trump. According to Politico, "In perhaps the complaint's most explosive allegation, its authors say one of them was told the media group's CEO Michael Pack or one of his aides ordered a senior USAGM official to conduct research on the voting history of at least one employee at the media agency – a violation of laws protecting civil servants from undue political influence or reprisal."

### **Trump Cites Botched NYC Ballots As Evidence Of Problems With Mail-In Voting.**

The [New York Post](#) (9/30, Nelson, 4.57M) reports President Trump has claimed for months that "widespread mail-in voting amid the COVID-19 pandemic opens the door to fraud and is likely to delay the Nov. 3 results." On Wednesday, he "said his concerns about mail-in voting are being borne out by New York officials sending botched ballots to nearly 100,000 Brooklyn residents." Trump told reporters at the White House, "We had a problem in New York, they have

100,000 ballots that are a mess. ... They're all confused, all mixed up. Now they say they're going to redo them. Well, what are they going to do with 100,000 ballots that have already been sent? This is exactly what I'm talking about. ... It's a big, big, big-scale problem."

Trump [tweeted](#) Wednesday night, "100,000 DEFECTIVE BALLOTS IN NEW YORK. THEY WANT TO REPLACE THEM, BUT WHERE, AND WHAT HAPPENS TO, THE BALLOTS THAT WERE FIRST SENT? THEY WILL BE USED BY SOMEBODY. USA, END THIS SCAM – GO OUT AND VOTE!"

***NYTimes Report: Trump's Voter-Fraud Concerns Are Part Of GOP Conspiracy.***

Geoff Bennett said on [NBC Nightly News](#) (9/30, story 4, 2:25, Holt, 5.69M) that Trump "unleashed a flood of misinformation and mistruths about mail-in voting" during Tuesday night's debate. The [New York Times](#) (9/30, Victor, 18.61M) reports that a [New York Times Magazine](#) investigation "finds that" Trump's "misleading and false claims about widespread voter fraud are part of a long disinformation effort that the president has taken to new extremes." The Times adds, "The specter of widespread voter fraud has been a cornerstone of President Trump's efforts to dispute the Nov. 3 election should he lose. A New York Times Magazine investigation published on Wednesday has found that the idea, based on a flimsy set of sensationalist, misleading or outright false claims, was intentionally planted in the public discourse as part of a decades-long disinformation campaign by the Republican Party and outside actors." The Times adds, "The strategy was hatched soon after Mr. Trump won the 2016 election and has included the involvement of top officials, including the president and Vice President Mike Pence."

In a separate article, the [New York Times](#) (9/30, Epstein, Thrush, 18.61M) says that "in recent months, as his standing in the polls has fallen, Mr. Trump has pre-emptively argued that Democratic elections officials are orchestrating a scheme to send extra mail ballots to like-minded voters." According to the Times, "There is no evidence of this."

***Trump Campaign Demands Access To Philadelphia Voting Sites.*** The [AP](#) (9/30) reports on Wednesday, the Trump campaign "threatened a lawsuit...if it does not gain access soon for its campaign officials to observe activity inside newly opened satellite election offices in Philadelphia, where people can register to vote, apply for mail-in ballots and fill them out." A letter, "sent late Tuesday night by a lawyer representing the Trump campaign, insisted the campaign has a legal right to observe the voting process in the heavily Democratic city's satellite election offices." However, "election lawyers say there is no right under Pennsylvania law, even for a certified poll watcher, to observe inside an election office where someone is registering to vote, applying for a mail-in ballot or filling one out."

***Democrats Say Trump's Call For Supporters To Monitor Polls Is Voter Intimidation.*** [Reuters](#) (9/30, Martina, Sullivan) reports President Trump's "calls for his supporters to act as ad-hoc poll watchers in the November election" were denounced by "Democrats and nonpartisan election experts," who said "they were an oblique call for illegal voter intimidation." Democrats "accused Trump of trying to scare voters." House Speaker Pelosi told MSNBC, "He is intimidating people." Reuters adds, "Democrats have expressed concerns that some right-wing groups with firearms could try to gather near polling places, particularly in close districts or areas with high minority populations, as a way to suppress Democratic turnout."

***Pennsylvania GOP Lawmakers Move To Create "Select Committee On Election Integrity."*** The [Washington Post](#) (9/30, Partlow, 14.2M) reports GOP lawmakers in Pennsylvania "took the first step on Wednesday to create a committee that would have wide-ranging powers to investigate the vote, including the ability to subpoena election officials and members of the U.S. Postal Service while the election and vote counting are in progress." A resolution to create the "select committee on election integrity" in the Pennsylvania House of Representatives "passed in committee along party lines on Wednesday and could be voted on by the full House on Thursday." Pennsylvania Democrats "expressed alarm" that the proposed committee "could disrupt the election by subpoenaing ballots and bringing in election officials and others to testify before the vote count is certified."

**Appeals Court Rules Against Republicans In Wisconsin Voting Case.** The [Milwaukee Journal Sentinel](#) (9/30, 632K) reports, "Republicans sought Wednesday to kick a lawsuit over Wisconsin's voting laws to the state Supreme Court," but the Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals in Chicago "quickly blocked their effort." It was "the second ruling against Republicans in less than 24 hours by a panel of three federal judges appointed by GOP presidents." On Tuesday, the panel "allowed extended deadlines for absentee voting to go into effect in Wisconsin." The decision was based, in part, "on a state Supreme Court decision from July that it said limited the ability of lawmakers to be involved in litigation involving the state." GOP lawyers "said they disagreed with the meaning of the state Supreme Court ruling and asked the appeals court to allow the state justices to weigh in directly on what they meant. ... But the appeals panel quickly rejected the request from Republicans to send the case to the state Supreme Court."

### **Appeals Judges Uphold Lower Court's Order To Continue Census Count.**

The [Washington Post](#) (9/30, Bahrampour, 14.2M) reports a federal court of appeals Wednesday denied the Administration's request for "a temporary stay on a lower court's ruling that the 2020 Census count should be extended." A three-judge panel on the US Ninth Circuit "found, 2 to 1, that blocking the ruling would allow the Census Bureau to continue winding down operations as it had started to do before a temporary restraining order and a preliminary injunction this month." The ruling comes "a day after US District Judge Lucy Koh said she might hold the government in contempt after it suddenly announced Monday that the count would end Oct. 5."

### **Northern California Wildfires Threaten Tens Of Thousands Of Homes.**

[NBC Nightly News](#)<sup>Vi</sup> (9/30, story 10, 1:35, Holt, 5.69M) reported that the deadly wildfires in northern California "are now threatening tens of thousands of homes." NBC's Miguel Almaguer added, "Racing in multiple directions, two fires in northern California's wine country are now threatening twice as many structures. More than 24,000. Hundreds of homes are lost." The [Los Angeles Times](#) (9/30, 4.64M) reports that officials announced Wednesday that a fourth person "has died as a result of the fast-moving Zogg fire burning in Shasta County." The [CBS Evening News](#)<sup>Vi</sup> (9/30, story 4, 1:40, O'Donnell, 3.95M) reported 30 lives have been "lost to fires in California since last month." [ABC World News Tonight](#)<sup>Vi</sup> (9/30, story 4, 1:50, Muir, 6.98M) provided similar coverage.

### **Denver Moves To Rectify "Decades Of Discriminatory Municipal Planning."**

The [New York Times](#) (9/30, Penney, 18.61M) reports that while white residents of most US cities "live near parks, trees and baseball fields...communities of color are left with concrete and the heat that comes with it." In an effort the Times says could "provide a road map for other cities, officials in Denver are working to rectify that historical inequity." The push, which "has been bolstered by an environmental tax that added tens of millions of dollars to the city budget," involves "purchasing land for new parks, repairing derelict playgrounds, adding recreation centers and planting trees in areas where shade is sparse." To the Times, addressing "decades of discriminatory municipal planning is especially important as climate change heats up American cities. Adding green space, researchers have found, can help residents cope with rising heat and brings all sorts of side benefits, like filtering air pollution or boosting residents' mental health."

### **Marine F-35 Pilot Ejects Safely After Midair Collision.**

The [CBS Evening News](#)<sup>Vi</sup> (9/30, story 9, 0:20, O'Donnell, 3.95M) broadcast "dramatic video of a Marine F-35 fighter jet falling from the air and crashing into a fireball Tuesday near Palm Springs, California. The pilot ejected and is being treated for injuries. The jet had collided in

midair with the refueling plane, which made an emergency belly landing in a field. Luckily, no one was hurt.”

### **Hundreds Of Voting-Related Lawsuits Have Been Filed Across The Country.**

The [AP](#) (9/30, Tucker) reports hundreds of voting-related lawsuits have been filed across the country in recent months. The cases “concern the fundamentals of the American balloting process, including how ballots are cast and counted, during an election made unique by the coronavirus pandemic and by a president who refuses to commit to accepting the results.” The suits take on added importance because President Trump “has raised the prospect that the election may wind up before a Supreme Court with a decidedly Republican tilt if his latest nominee is confirmed.” The AP adds that the suits “are a likely precursor for what will come afterward. Republicans say they have major law firms on retainer, along with thousands of volunteer lawyers at the ready. Democrats have announced a legal war room of Democratic heavyweights, including a pair of former solicitors general and a former attorney general.”

## **INTERNATIONAL NEWS**

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### **China Approves Another Vaccine For Human Trials.**

The [Wall Street Journal](#) (9/30, Deng, Subscription Publication, 7.57M) reports Chinese drugmaker Shenzhen Kangtai, which is collaborating with AstraZeneca PLC on production of a coronavirus vaccine, has won approval from Chinese regulators to begin human testing one of its vaccine candidates.

### **UK Warns Outbreak Is Not Under Control.**

[Bloomberg](#) (9/30, 4.73M) reports the UK’s coronavirus outbreak “is not under control, the government’s chief scientist said, as Boris Johnson warned tighter rules may be needed.” Government Chief Scientific Adviser Patrick Vallance said, “Numbers of cases are going up, hospitalizations are going up, ICUs are going up, and unfortunately, very sadly so are deaths. We don’t have this under control at the moment.” The “bleak assessment” from Vallance came as the prime minister “warned the country he will not ‘hesitate’ to impose tougher national restrictions if required.”

### **France’s Daily New Cases Again Tops 10,000.**

[Reuters](#) (9/30) reports France’s new COVID-19 cases “increased by more than 10,000 for the first time in three days on Wednesday while the number of people hospitalized with the disease rose by almost a hundred to a 10-week high of 6,590.” French health authorities reported “12,845 additional infections after 8,051 new cases on Sunday and 4,070 on Saturday.” The country’s total number of confirmed cases now ranks as the second-highest tally in Western Europe.

### **Spain To Lock Down Madrid, Angering Regional Government.**

[Reuters](#) (9/30, Carreño, Melander) reports Madrid residents “are to be barred from leaving except on essential trips under new rules to fight the coronavirus resurgence, Spain’s government said on Wednesday.” Regional authorities “said the decision had no legal basis, setting the stage for a political showdown in an area accounting for more than a third of Spain’s 133,604 new cases in the past two weeks.”

### **US Sanctions More Syrians In Push For Assad To End War.**

[Reuters](#) (9/30, Psaledakis) reports the US on Wednesday “blacklisted what it called ‘key enablers’ of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad’s government, reinforcing efforts to push Damascus back to United Nations-led negotiations to end Syria’s nearly decade-long civil war.”

The US sanctioned 13 entities and six individuals, including the governor of the Central Bank of Syria. In a statement, Treasury Secretary Mnuchin said, "The United States will continue to employ all of its tools and authorities to target the finances of anyone who profits from or facilitates the Assad regime's abuse of the Syrian people."

### **Taliban's Team Of Peace Negotiators Comprised Of "Old Guard."**

The [Washington Post](#) (9/30, George, Tassal, Khan, 14.2M) reports the Taliban negotiating team engaged in talks with the Afghan government "comprises 21 men, most with graying beards and biographies that date back to the fight against the Soviet Union." Nearly all of the negotiators are "pulled from the organization's old guard, and many served in the militant group's shadow government." Several are also "known for links to deadly attacks, including on civilians; others are essentially unknown outside of the group." To the Post, a "key challenge for the Taliban will be maintaining command of its thousands of rank-and-file fighters, as talks are likely to force compromises."

### **North Korea Continuing Building Nuclear Capability Amid Talks With Trump.**

The [Washington Post](#) (9/30, Warrick, Denyer, 14.2M) reports on its front page that while North Korean leader Kim Jong-un was writing letters to President Trump in 2018, "at six of the country's missile bases, trucks hauled rock from underground construction sites as workers dug a maze of new tunnels and bunkers, allowing North Korea to move weapons around like peas in a shell game." Outside Pyongyang, meanwhile, "new buildings sprouted across an industrial complex that was processing uranium for as many as 15 new bombs, according to current and former US and South Korean officials, as well as a report by a United Nations panel of experts." While North Korea has refrained from carrying out provocative tests of nuclear weapons during its talks with the US, "it never stopped working on them, US intelligence officials said." In fact, "new evidence suggests that Kim took advantage of the lull by improving his ability to hide his most powerful weapons and shield them from future attacks."

### **Vatican Denies Pompeo An Audience With Pope Over China Tension.**

[Reuters](#) (9/30, Pullella) reports that on Wednesday, the Vatican "said...it had denied a request from Mike Pompeo for an audience with Pope Francis, and accused the Secretary of State of trying to drag the Catholic Church into the U.S. presidential election by denouncing its relations with China." To Politico, the "extraordinary remarks from the two top diplomatic officials at the Vatican came after Pompeo accused the Church in an article and a series of tweets this month of putting its 'moral authority' at risk by renewing an agreement with China over the appointment of bishops." Pompeo, "who was in Rome on Wednesday and due to meet Vatican officials on Thursday," nevertheless "repeated his denunciations of China's record on religious freedom at an event hosted by the U.S. embassy to the Holy See."

The [AP](#) (9/30, Winfield) reports Pompeo "urged the Vatican on Wednesday to join the United States in denouncing violations of religious freedom in China, saying the Catholic Church should be at the forefront in the fight to insist on basic human rights there." Pompeo's appeal "took place at the same time the Vatican is entering into delicate negotiations with Beijing on extending their controversial agreement on nominating bishops for China."

The [New York Times](#) (9/30, Jakes, 18.61M) reports that "to some observers on both sides of the tensions between the Roman Catholic Church and the Trump administration, Mr. Pompeo's visit is as much about the coming presidential election as about China policy. Mr. Pompeo dismissed that suggestion as absurd, but intended or not, his trip signals that President Trump is on the side of those conservative American Catholics who worry about the church's direction under Francis and think he is soft on China."

**WSJournal A1: Chinese Government Involved In European Acquisitions.** The [Wall Street Journal](#) (9/30, A1, Michaels, Subscription Publication, 7.57M) reports on its front page that the Chinese government has been involved behind the scenes in a series of acquisitions

across Europe over the past ten years. According to the Journal, of 650 Chinese investments in Europe since 2010, roughly 40% have involvement by state-owned or state-controlled companies.

**Ortagus: US Businesses Should Be "Vigilant" About Chinese Rights Abuses.** On [Fox Business' Making Money](#), State Department spokesperson Morgan Ortagus said, "We have done a number things...shedding the light on human rights abuses. ... China is doubling down on this. Chairman Xi, the head of the Chinese Communist Party, is doubling down what is going on in Xinjiang. We're asking all Americans and businesses to be vigilant."

### **US, Taiwan Move Ahead With Joint Infrastructure Projects.**

The [Washington Times](#) (9/30, Toms, 492K) reports the US and Taiwan are "moving forward with joint infrastructure projects in the Indo-Pacific region and Latin America, officials said Wednesday." Taiwan Foreign Minister Joseph Wu said Wednesday, "The Taiwan-US cooperative partnership relationship has gone up another level." The Times cautions that the announcement is "all but set to escalate ongoing disputes with Beijing," though "details of the partnership have not yet been published."

### **Lawmakers Press Pentagon Over Lack Of Details On Germany Troop Cuts.**

[Reuters](#) (9/30, Ali) reports both Democratic and Republican lawmakers "expressed frustration with the Pentagon at a hearing on Wednesday over the lack of details" surrounding President Trump's plans to withdraw thousands of US troops from Germany. Two senior Pentagon officials appeared before a House Armed Services Committee hearing, "where lawmakers pressed them about the cost of the troop withdrawal, how long it would take and how much the administration had coordinated with European allies before making the decision." According to Reuters, lawmakers "got few answers during the sometimes contentious 2-1/2 hour hearing." Acting Undersecretary of Defense for Policy James Anderson "said the military did not yet have details and would share plans as they are developed."

The [Washington Times](#) (9/30, Toms, 492K) says "bipartisan concerns of a US troop withdrawal from Germany is growing among lawmakers." House Armed Services Chairman Adam Smith told the hearing, "I don't think this plan was particularly well thought out and I worry about a number of aspects of its implementation."

### **Fighting Between Azerbaijan And Armenia Shows No Sign Of Abating.**

The [AP](#) (9/30, Demourian) reports on Wednesday, "heavy fighting between Armenian and Azerbaijani forces over the separatist region of Nagorno-Karabakh continued for a fourth straight day...with statements from both sides indicating that the flare-up of a decades-old conflict that has killed dozens of people since Sunday was no closer to an end." While Azeri President Ilham Aliyev "said Armenia's withdrawal from Nagorno-Karabakh was the sole condition to end fighting over the separatist territory," Armenian officials "alleged Turkey's involvement in the renewed conflict." On Wednesday, Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan "said that Armenia may recognize Nagorno-Karabakh as independent, a move that could further interfere with a potential settlement of the dispute."

[Reuters](#) (9/30, Hovhannisyan, Bagirova) reports France and Turkey "traded angry recriminations on Wednesday as international tensions mounted over" the clashes in Nagorno-Karabakh. Some NATO allies are "increasingly alarmed by Ankara's stance" on the conflict. Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu "said French solidarity with Armenia amounted to supporting Armenian occupation in Azerbaijan."

### **Cuccinelli: Foreign Powers "Haven't Been Able To Touch" Election Infrastructure.**

Asked about the federal response to election interference on the [Steve Gruber Show](#) (9/30), Acting Deputy DHS Secretary Ken Cuccinelli said, "States run their own elections. So the federal government doesn't come in and track ballots and do this and that sort of thing, but we do face

off with China, Russia, Iran, and so forth, and they haven't been able to touch our infrastructure this cycle."

### **Bolsonaro Criticizes Biden For "Coward Threats" Over Amazon.**

[Reuters](#) (9/30, Spring) reports Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro "reacted angrily" on Wednesday to Joe Biden's call "for a world effort to offer Brazil \$20 billion to end Amazon deforestation or face unspecified 'economic consequences.'" On Facebook, Bolsonaro wrote "he interpreted Biden's comment in a US presidential debate on Tuesday night as a threat of economic sanctions if Brazil did not take the offer." Bolsonaro wrote that he does not accept "bribes" or "coward threats."

### **US Embassy Worker In Ukraine Dies After Suspected Assault.**

[Reuters](#) (9/30, Polityuk, Zinets) reports an American woman working at the US Embassy in Ukraine "died after a suspected assault in a park near the mission, authorities said, and a search was underway for the possible perpetrator." Ukrainian police "said a passerby found the woman unconscious with a head injury, wearing running gear and headphones" in western Kyiv. In a statement, the US Embassy "said it was working with Ukrainian authorities to determine what happened."

### **Reports: UK Considered Sending Asylum Seekers To South Atlantic Island.**

The [Washington Post](#) (9/30, O'Grady, 14.2M) reports British opposition lawmakers "expressed dismay Wednesday over reports that Home Secretary Priti Patel had floated plans to send asylum seekers to a remote island in the southern Atlantic." Patel asked officials "to explore sending people seeking to reach Britain to Ascension Island," while officials "reportedly also looked into housing asylum seekers on another British overseas territory: St. Helena." The British Home Office "appears to have since scrapped plans to send asylum seekers to such far-flung locations," but "even that the idea had been floated drew ire from opposition lawmakers and human rights advocates in Britain."

## **THE BIG PICTURE**

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

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

[Stocks Finish Second Straight Quarter Of Big Gains](#)

[Commission Considers Changes To Format After Raucous First Debate](#)

[Behind China's Decade Of European Deals, State Investors Evade Notice](#)

[Why Hospitals Can't Handle Covid Surges: They're Flying Blind](#)

['Mushrooms Have Kidnapped You': Pandemic Feeds Russia's Obsession With Forest Fungi](#)

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

[GOP Alarmed By Trump's Comments On Extremist Group, Fearing A Drag On The Party](#)

[Tuesday's Debate Made Clear The Gravest Threat To The Election: The President Himself](#)

[Trump Renews Fears Of Voter Intimidation As GOP Poll Watchers Mobilize](#)

[Ski, Party, Seed A Pandemic: The Travel Rules That Let Covid-19 Take Flight](#)

[White House Blocked CDC Order To Keep Cruise Ships Docked](#)

#### ***Washington Post:***

[GOP Fears Loss Of Crucial Voters In Debate Fallout](#)

[Kim Kept Up Nuclear Toils During Test Freeze](#)

['Stand By' Puts Proud Boys In The Spotlight](#)

[Panel Pledges Rule Changes To Stem Chaos](#)  
[Pandemic Demand Could Bar Many From Antibody Cocktail](#)  
[For The Most Vulnerable, A Devastating Blow](#)

**Financial Times:**

[Germany Crackdown Set To Exclude Huawei From 5G Rollout](#)  
[Dealmaking Rebound Drives Busiest Summer For M&A On Record](#)  
[EY Faces Mounting Backlash After Wirecard Whistleblower Revelation](#)

**Washington Times:**

[Treasury Reports Rebut Biden's 'Totally False' Claims About Hunter's Cash Haul](#)  
[EXCLUSIVE: Trump COVID Adviser Won't Cave To Criticism: 'It's Destructive To Lock Down The Healthy'](#)  
[From Picking Up Classes To Cooking Meals: Notre Dame Pulling For Amy Coney Barrett](#)  
[Trump-Pentagon Rift Widens As Top Brass Fear Being Drawn Into Election](#)  
[Trump's Cryptic Comment Sets Off Firestorm, Shakes Up Campaign](#)  
[Comey Acknowledges FBI's 'Embarrassing' Lapses In Russia Probe, Deflects Blame](#)

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

**ABC:** Presidential Debate; Second Debate Changes; Coronavirus-Cases; Wildfires; California-Sheriffs Deputies Ambush; Boeing 737 MAX; NFL-Coronavirus Outbreak; Singer Helen Reddy Tribute; New Mother Diagnosed With Covid Finally Holds Newborn.

**CBS:** Presidential Debate; Second Debate Changes; Trump-Proud Boys; Wildfires; California-Sheriffs Deputies Ambush; Coronavirus-Cases; Breonna Taylor Case; Airlines-Layoffs; California-Marine F-35 Crash; French Open-Serena Williams Drops Out; Singer Helen Reddy Tribute.

**NBC:** Presidential Debate; Second Debate Changes; Trump-Proud Boys; Trump-Voter Fraud; Debate Reactions; Debate Analysis; Breonna Taylor Case; Airlines-Layoffs; NFL-Coronavirus Outbreak; Wildfires; Retired Marine's Stolen Medals Returned.

**Network TV At A Glance:**

Presidential Debate – 13 minutes, 15 seconds  
Wildfires – 5 minutes, 5 seconds  
Second Debate Changes – 3 minutes, 25 seconds

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

**ABC:** Second Debate Changes; Trump-Duluth Rally; Biden-Whistlestop Tour; Airlines-Layoffs; Cruise Ships-No Sail Order Extended; Coronavirus-Latino Community.

**CBS:** Airlines-Layoffs; Mnuchin-Talks; Senate-Short Term Spending Bill; Second Debate Changes; Mississippi-Face Mask Mandate Lifted; Milwaukee-Funeral Home Shooting.

**FOX:** Trump-Duluth Rally; Biden-Whistlestop Tour; Senate-Short Term Spending Bill; Airlines-Layoffs.

**NPR:** Trump-Proud Boys; Senate-Short Term Spending Bill; Airlines-Layoffs; Wildfires.

## WASHINGTON'S SCHEDULE

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**Today's Events In Washington.**

**White House:**

- President Trump — Participates in a roundtable with supporters in Bedminster, NJ; delivers remarks at a fundraising committee reception; speaks to Alfred E. Smith Memorial Foundation annual dinner

- Vice President Pence — Campaigns in Iowa, holding a “Make America Great Again!” event in Council Bluffs; and HUD Secretary Carson at The FAMiLY LEADER event

#### **US Senate:**

- Senate Armed Services subcommittee hearing on supply chain integrity – Readiness and Management Support Subcommittee hearing on ‘Supply Chain Integrity’, with testimony from Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Sustainment Ellen Lord  
*Location: Rm G50, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Washington, DC; 9:15 AM*
- Senate Judiciary Committee Executive Business Meeting – Executive Business Meeting, with agenda including ‘S. 4632, Online Content Policy Modernization Act’ plus the nominations of Benjamin Beaton to be U.S. District Judge for the Western District of Kentucky; Kristi Haskins Johnson and Taylor McNeel to be U.S. District Judges for the Southern District of Mississippi; Kathryn Kimball Mizelle to be U.S. District Judge for the Middle District of Florida; and Thompson Dietz to be a U.S. Court of Federal Claims Judge  
*Location: Rm 325, Russell Senate Office Building, Washington, DC; 10:00 AM*
- Senate Commerce Committee debates subpoenaing Twitter, Facebook, and Alphabet heads to testify – Executive Session, with agenda including ‘authorization to subpoena the attendance of witnesses for purpose of a hearing: Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg, Twitter CEO Jack Dorsey, and Alphabet CEO Sundar Pichai’  
*Location: Rm 106, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Washington, DC; 10:00 AM*

#### **US House:**

- House Energy subcommittee remote hearing on clean energy access and affordability – Energy Subcommittee remote hearing on ‘Generating Equity: Improving Clean Energy Access and Affordability’, held via Cisco Webex, with testimony from American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy Senior Research Associate for Local Policy Ariel Drehobl; University of Michigan School for Environment and Sustainability Assistant Professor Dr Tony Reames; The Foundation for Research on Equal Opportunity Visiting Fellow Robert Bryce; and GRID Alternatives Policy and Regulatory Manager Alexandra Wyatt; *10:00 AM*
- House Agriculture subcommittee hybrid hearing on conservation programs – Conservation and Forestry Subcommittee hybrid hearing on ‘Challenges and Successes of Conservation Programs in 2020’ \* Held via Cisco Webex and in Rm 1300, Longworth House Office Building; *10:00 AM*
- House Foreign Affairs Committee hybrid markup hearing – Hybrid markup hearing on legislation including ‘H.R. 6986, Protecting Human Rights During Pandemic Act’, ‘H.R. 7990, FENTANYL Results Act’, ‘H.R. 7673, Represent America Abroad Act’, ‘H.Res. 697, Recognizing the significance of the genuine autonomy of Tibet and the Tibetan people and the work His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama has done to promote global peace, harmony, and understanding’, ‘H.Res. 1100, Reaffirming the strategic partnership between the United States and Mongolia and observing the 30th anniversary of democracy in Mongolia’, ‘H.Res. 751, Reaffirming the partnership between the United States and the African Union and recognizing the importance of diplomatic, security, and trade relations’, ‘H.R. XXX, Department of State Student Internship Program Act’, and ‘H.Res. 17, Expressing concern over the detention of Austin Tice, and for other purposes’ \* Held via Cisco Webex and in Rm 2172, Rayburn House Office Building; *10:00 AM*
- House Small Business subcommittee hybrid hearing on ‘Preventing Fraud and Abuse of PPP and EIDL’ – Investigations, Oversight, and Regulations Subcommittee hybrid hearing on ‘Preventing Fraud and Abuse of PPP and EIDL: An Update with the SBA Office of Inspector General and the Government Accountability Office’, with testimony from Small Business Administration Inspector General Mike Ware; and GAO Director of Financial Markets and Community Investment William Shear \* Held via Cisco Webex and in Rm 2360, Rayburn House Office Building; *10:00 AM*

- House Oversight Committee hearing on 'unsustainable drug prices' concludes – Hybrid hearing on 'Unsustainable Drug Prices: Testimony from the CEOs (Part II)', with testimony from Amgen CEO Robert Bradway; Mallinckrodt Pharmaceuticals CEO Mark Trudeau; and Novartis U.S. Country President Thomas Kendris; *10:00 AM*
- Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission virtual hearing on enforced disappearance in Latin America – Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission virtual hearing on 'Enforced Disappearance in Latin America: Taking Stock', with witnesses – former Search Unit for Missing Persons in Colombia High Level Advisor Federico Andreu, National Search Commission El Salvador (CONABUSQUEDA) Commissioner Leonor Arteaga Rubio, National Search System (Mexico) member Grace Fernandez, and Forensic Anthropology Foundation of Guatemala (FAFG) Director Fredy Peccerelli – discussing responses to enforced disappearance, drawing on experiences from Colombia, Central America, and Mexico, including initiatives to search for victims and preserve their memory, strategies to pursue accountability domestically and internationally, the creation of new institutional mechanisms such as official search commissions, and efforts to implement regional and international conventions; *10:00 AM*
- House meets for legislative business – House of Representatives meets for legislative business, with agenda for the week including completion of consideration of 'H.R. 6270 – Uyghur Forced Labor Disclosure Act of 2020'; possible consideration of legislation related to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic; and consideration of legislation including 'H.R. 5901 – Technology Modernization Centers of Excellence Program Act', as amended, 'H.R. 7340 – Chai Suthammanont Remembrance Act of 2020', as amended, 'H.R. 7496 – COVID PREPARE Act of 2020', as amended, 'H.R. 5736 – Transnational White Supremacist Extremism Review Act', as amended, 'H.R. 5780 – Safe Communities Act of 2020', as amended, 'H.R. 5823 – State and Local Cybersecurity Improvement Act', as amended, 'H.R. 5822 – Homeland Security Acquisition Professional Career Program Act', as amended, 'H.R. 5811 – TSA Personnel Workplace Improvement Act of 2020', as amended, 'H.R. 5804 – DHS Blue Campaign Enhancement Act', as amended under suspension of the rules  
*Location: U.S. Capitol, Washington, DC; 11:00 AM*
- House Natural Resources Committee virtual legislative hearing – Virtual legislative hearing on the Environmental Justice for All Act, with testimony from Texas Southern University Professor of Urban Planning and Environmental Policy Dr Robert Bullard; and Harambee House/Citizens for Environmental Justice co-founder and Executive Director Dr Mildred McLain; *12:00 PM*
- House Rules Committee virtual Members' Day Hearing – Virtual 'Members' Day Hearing on Proposed Rules Changes for the 117th Congress', held via Cisco Webex, with testimony from Members of Congress; *1:00 PM*
- House Judiciary subcommittee hearing on 'strengthening the antitrust laws and restoring competition online' – Antitrust, Commercial, and Administrative Law Subcommittee hearing on 'Proposals to Strengthen the Antitrust Laws and Restore Competition Online'  
*Location: Rm 2141, Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC; 1:00 PM*
- House Climate Crisis Committee remote hearing on 'strengthening the financial system and expanding economic opportunity' – Remote hearing on 'Creating a Climate Resilient America: Strengthening the U.S. Financial System and Expanding Economic Opportunity', held via Cisco Webex, with testimony from Commodity Futures Trading Commission Commissioner Rostin Behnam; Fermat Capital Management Senior Underwriter and Director of New Markets Joanna Syroka; Environmental Defense Fund Director of Working Lands Maggie Monast; and ClearPath Executive Director Rich Powell; *1:00 PM*

**Cabinet Officers:**

- Treasury Secretary Mnuchin participates in Independent Community Bankers of America Virtual Fall Leadership Meeting – Secretary of the Treasury Steven Mnuchin participates in Independent Community Bankers of America Virtual Fall Leadership Meeting; *11:00 AM*
- Vice President Pence and HUD Secretary Carson at The FAMILY LEADER event – The FAMILY LEADER Foundation hosts 'Faith in Leadership, America's Need for Revival' special event featuring Vice President Mike Pence, Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Ben Carson, author Joel Rosenberg, and MyPillow CEO Mike Lindell  
*Location: Community Choice Credit Union Convention Center, Des Moines, IA; 3:15 PM*
- Secretary of State Pompeo continues Greece / Italy / Vatican City / Croatia trip – Secretary of State Mike Pompeo continues trip to Greece, Italy, Vatican City, and Croatia, with agenda including meeting Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis and Foreign Minister Nikos Dendias, signing a bilateral science and technology agreement and hosting a discussion with energy sector business leaders in Thessaloniki, and visiting Naval Support Activity Souda Bay in Crete; meeting Italian Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte and Foreign Minister Luigi Di Maio in Rome, delivering remarks at the Holy See Symposium on Advancing and Defending Religious Freedom through Diplomacy, and meeting Vatican Secretary of State Cardinal Pietro Parolin and Secretary for Relations with States Archbishop Paul Gallagher; and meeting Croatian Prime Minister Andrej Plenkovic, Foreign Minister Gordan Grlic Radman, and Defence Minister Mario Banozic

**Visitors:**

- No visitors scheduled

**This Town:**

- Bipartisan Sens. Mike Braun and Debbie Stabenow speak on BPC online discussion on carbon solutions – 'Tapping into Markets for Farm and Forest Carbon Solutions' Bipartisan Policy Center online discussion, with Republican Sen. Mike Braun and Democratic Sen. Debbie Stabenow discussing their legislative priorities in the Growing Climate Solutions Act and the Rural Forest Markets Act of 2020. Other speakers include Soil Health Partnership Lead Scientist Maria Bowman, American Forest Foundation President and CEO Tom Martin, and Ecosystem Services Market Commission Executive Director Debbie Reed; *8:30 AM*
- POMED discussion on 'Mohammed bin Salman's Saudi Arabia' – 'Mohammed bin Salman's Saudi Arabia' Project on Middle East Democracy public virtual conference, with remarks from Democrats Sens. Chris Van Hollen and Tim Kaine and Reps. Gerald Connolly, Ro Khanna, Tom Malinowski, Jim McGovern, and David Trone. Other speakers include Washington Post Jamal Khashoggi Fellow Hala Aldosari, ALQST founder Yahya Assiri, Kawaakibi Foundation President Iyad el-Baghdadi, New York Times Beirut Bureau Chief Ben Hubbard, Middle East Center Visiting Professor Madawi Al-Rasheed, American Enterprise Institute Resident Scholar Karen Young, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace Visiting Fellow Yasmine Farouk, Soufan Group Chairman and CEO Ali Soufan, and former U.S. Ambassador to Saudi Arabia Robert Jordan; *9:00 AM*
- CSIS online discussion with GOP Rep. Tom Cole on coronavirus testing, caseloads and vaccine – Center for Strategic and International Studies Commission on Strengthening America's Health Security holds online conversation with Republican Rep. Tom Cole, who addresses questions including: how to improve the accessibility and utility of coronavirus (COVID-19) testing across states and local municipalities; what steps should Congress advocate to address social disparities in coronavirus caseloads, particularly in Native American, Black, and Latinx communities; how to assess Operation Warp Speed's progress towards a coronavirus vaccine while at the same time reversing declines in the public's trust and confidence in vaccines; how is the U.S. to lead in addressing the vaccine needs of low- and middle-income countries; and what are key lessons for the U.S. Congress regarding pandemic preparedness, at home and abroad, generated by the coronavirus pandemic; *9:00 AM*

- [Hudson Institute / Manufacturing Policy Initiative online discussion on 'Strengthening U.S. Manufacturing'](#) – 'Strengthening U.S. Manufacturing: Enhancing Resilience' online discussion hosted by the Hudson Institute and the Manufacturing Policy Initiative at Indiana University, with discussion on the role the U.S. govt can play to enhance resilience of the manufacturing supply chain, and lessons from the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic for U.S. policymakers to reposition the U.S. manufacturing sector. Speakers include Manufacturers Alliance for Productivity and Innovation President and CEO Steve Gold, Pareto Policy Solutions Principal Keith Belton, Ford Motor Company Chief Manufacturing and Labor Affairs Officer Gary Johnson, 'China Rx: Exposing the Risks of America's Dependence on China for Medicine' author Rosemary Gibson, Economic Policy Institute Trade and Manufacturing Policy Research Director and Senior Economist Robert Scott, and Hudson Institute Senior Fellow Tom Duesterberg; *12:00 PM*
- [CSIS online conversation with Dem Rep. Gregory Meeks on Africa policy](#) – Center for Strategic and International Studies Africa Program hosts online conversation with Democratic Rep. Gregory Meeks on Africa's importance to U.S. interests, examining issues such as democracy and governance, trade and investment, and peace and security. Rep. Meeks also discusses the Congressional Black Caucus' relationship with the African continent; *12:00 PM*
- [Axios virtual event with GOP Sen. Marsha Blackburn and Atlanta Mayor Bottoms](#) – Axios News Shapers virtual event on 'America's Road Ahead', with Republican Sen. Marsha Blackburn and Atlanta Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms reacting to Tuesday's presidential debate between President Donald Trump and 2020 Democratic presidential nominee Joe Biden; *3:30 PM*
- [National Center for Missing & Exploited Children Hope Live](#) – National Center for Missing & Exploited Children Hope Live, honoring individuals whose efforts have contributed to making the world a safer place for children

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