



Washington State Fusion Center INFOCUS



TUESDAY — 9 JUN 2020

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Events, Opportunities

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HEADLINE	06/09 Protesters take to streets
SOURCE	https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/seattle-area-protests-live-updates-for-monday-june-8/#update-12838705
GIST	<p>The sea of protesters seen at the corner of 11th Avenue and Pine Street on Capitol Hill every night for the past week started to spread out Tuesday night after police took down the barricade near the department's East Precinct.</p> <p>Demonstrators moved up the street, past the precinct and slowly fanned out around Cal Anderson Park, but multiple livestreams showed some leaders urging the group to stick together as much as possible to maintain a unified front. They also continued discussing the logistics of taking protest shifts, emphasizing the importance of organizing in a sustainable, consistent way.</p> <p>Seattle rapper Raz Simone led most of these conversations, calling for protesters to bring tents, air mattresses, pillows and other items that would help the group "occupy the space for days."</p> <p>"Who's willing to stay out here all night?" another protester shouted to the crowd.</p> <p>Simone reminded the group not to feel overconfident after police appeared to mostly clear out of the area.</p> <p>"We gotta stay out here and keep pushing," he said to the group.</p> <p>Another protester said she'd like to see the space turn into a "living community."</p> <p>Simone agreed, adding that they should reach out to the homeless community, bring them to the corner of 11th Avenue and Pine Street and offer to share their food and tents.</p> <p>The area remained peaceful through 2 a.m., as protesters organized candlelight vigils, live music performances and other brainstorming conversations.</p>
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HEADLINE	06/08 Protesters seek defund Spokane PD
SOURCE	https://www.krem.com/article/news/politics/what-protesters-mean-by-defund-spokane-police/293-7c02a24c-3a2b-4d93-8736-f8d05fbbcd14
GIST	<p>SPOKANE, Wash. — Defunding the Spokane Police Department was one of the changes protesters called for at Sunday's demonstrations in Riverfront Park.</p> <p>This isn't a new idea. It emerged from protests against police brutality in Ferguson, Missouri in 2014.</p> <p>Pulling funds from police departments did not gain much traction then, but now its returned to the spotlight.</p> <p>So was does defunding police mean?</p> <p>Some activist groups would say it's slashing law enforcement budgets and redirecting the money to social services. Others want the funding removed and departments dissolved.</p> <p>Dustin Jolly with Occupy Spokane said the local activist group wants to see funding for the Spokane Police Department redirected to public services, specifically relating to mental health.</p>

	<p>"We need to look at other city services that are available and city programs," Jolly said. "And when we look at 911 calls and the mass amount of information that comes in from that, we see a mass need for mental health."</p> <p>He said this would accomplish creating a resource-based system that is for the people. This would also include replacing police officers with peace officers.</p> <p>How likely will the idea of pulling funds from the police department be seriously considered?</p> <p>City of Spokane spokesperson Brian Coddington described a list of ways police are engaging and building positive relationships in the community, including implementing recommended changes from the Department of Justice and citizen use of force commission.</p> <p>As for funding social services, Coddington said the city is already doing this.</p> <p>"It's not necessarily a conversation about, do we take from police and put it over here, or is it we like what we're doing and the progress we're making on the police department side," Coddington said. "We need to find ways now that will be able to fund these other programs to be proactive as well."</p> <p>But, protesters want to see more done and hope the Spokane Police Department makes broader changes moving forward.</p>
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HEADLINE	06/08 Deputy investigated; use of force
SOURCE	https://www.king5.com/article/news/local/protests/snohomish-county-deputy-investigated-after-punching-suspect-during-arrest/281-873cf1bb-ae77-470a-94d0-ec0a4bd3becd
GIST	<p>SNOHOMISH COUNTY, Wash. — Cell phone video, initially posted on Nextdoor.com and shared with KING 5 by Everett's HeraldNet.com, shows a Snohomish County deputy pulling a man from a van and putting him on the ground.</p> <p>As the deputy struggles to handcuff the man, he's seen punching the man repeatedly. The video of the May 28 arrest shows at least 10 strikes.</p> <p>The video comes to light as dozens gathered outside the Snohomish County Sheriff's Office Monday, demanding police reform and the defunding of the department in the wake of the killing of George Floyd in Minnesota.</p> <p>Floyd's death, as well as the police killings of Breonna Taylor in Kentucky and Manuel Ellis in Tacoma earlier this year, have been the focal point of protests nationwide for the last two weeks.</p> <p>In records obtained by KING 5 News, the deputy admits to "delivering a few close hand strikes" and then "another set" as the suspect yells that he isn't resisting and has COVID-19.</p> <p>Sheriff's office spokesperson Courtney O'Keefe says the deputy indicated he was being clawed by the suspect during the takedown, and that the hits were to the suspect's hand.</p> <p>"It's impossible to see from that video what's going on with the suspect's hands, so the information is from the deputy's report and he states that the suspect is digging his nails into the deputy's skin," O'Keefe said.</p> <p>Indeed, the deputy's report states the suspect had "long fingernails" and the deputy could feel them digging into his bare skin.</p>

	<p>The incident started May 28 at the Mill Pointe apartments near Mill Creek with deputies searching for the suspect in relation to a domestic violence call. He was found hiding under a blanket in the back of his girlfriend's van, according to investigators.</p> <p>The suspect was known to police and believed to be dangerous.</p> <p>He was ultimately taken into custody for domestic violence, possession of a stolen vehicle, hit and run as well as for several warrants.</p> <p>O'Keefe says the intense public scrutiny of police makes it difficult for them to do their job.</p> <p>"We're on the public's team," she says. "We're here to protect them. We're being watched very closely right now, and we always should be, but it's a hard time right now for law enforcement."</p> <p>The use of force incident is under investigation by the deputy's supervisor. He remains on the job.</p>
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HEADLINE	06/08 Union calls for Seattle mayor to resign
SOURCE	https://www.kiro7.com/news/local/unionized-essential-workers-call-mayor-durkan-resign/3EQI5T6X2NFILCVKTL7IAJYII/
GIST	<p>SEATTLE — Members of the United Food and Commercial Workers local 21 are joining in on the call for the resignation of Seattle Mayor Jenny Durkan.</p> <p>The union said the recent protests in Seattle have put an impact on essential workers' jobs.</p> <p>"Many of our fellow UFCW 21 members who are essential workers have faced a choice between losing a paycheck or traveling to work during confusing curfews and consistent use of tear gas, pepper spray, and explosive devices in neighborhoods where we live and work," said Seattle members of the UFCW 21 rank-and-file executive board Sam Dancy (QFC), Jeannette Randall (Safeway), Greg Brooks (PCC), and Amy Dayley Angell (QFC). "The distance between Mayor Durkan and the values of the membership of UFCW 21 is growing clearer each day."</p> <p>UFCW 21 represents 46,000 workers in retail, grocery stores, health care, cannabis and other industries in the state. More than 10,000 members live or work in Seattle.</p> <p>Over the weekend Seattle City Council member Kshama Sawant (District 3, Central Seattle) called for Durkan's resignation citing an "abuse of power" amid ongoing demonstrations in the city.</p>
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HEADLINE	06/09 Tacoma mayor vows to pursue change
SOURCE	https://q13fox.com/2020/06/08/tacoma-mayor-victoria-woodards-vows-to-pursue-change-starting-with-body-cameras-following-the-in-custody-death-of-manuel-ellis/
GIST	<p>TACOMA--Tacoma leaders, including Mayor Victoria Woodards came together on Monday evening to discuss racial reconciliation and healing during a drive-in event hosted by Tacoma's NAACP, Tacoma's Ministerial Alliance, OURChurch, and Associated Ministries.</p> <p>Some of the most passionate words during the event came from Mayor Woodards when addressing the March 3rd in-custody death of Manny Ellis, ruled a homicide by the medical examiner just last week.</p> <p>Dozens of cars filled the Cheney stadium parking lot, hanging onto the mayor's every word. "Although she is a politician, the fact that she said she is a black woman and she is tired as well," said attendee and pastor, Jeffery Jones, recalling a moment of the Mayor's Woodards' speech that really resonated with him.</p>

"I think people fail to understand that this is bigger than George Floyd this is bigger than Manuel Ellis," continued Jones.

Speakers discussed the importance of prayer, peaceful protest, and most significantly-voting. Using your voice to make change. "This is such a movement, it's revolutionary, it's touching everybody's core," said attendee Pam Bridges. Her husband, Paris agreed. "It's 2020 and I'm seventy something years old and the same thing was going on when I was a kid." Paris and Pam say they feel this movement might get them closer to the change they fought for decades ago.

Dozens of cars laid on their horns in support when Mayor Woodards vowed to make changes, starting with pushing for all Tacoma PD officers to wear body cameras. "We need real reform, we we need to look at every policy we have in place, and we need to look at things differently," said Woodards.

The mayor asked for the crowd to pray for the Ellis family, and for the city's police officers. As the crowd also promised to pray for her, Mayor Woodards acknowledged that it's not easy to speak out against law enforcement in her own city, as she did last week calling for the four officers involved in Ellis's death to be fired.

"We will get due process, I don't know the facts, we will all know the facts at the same time and that will tell what the full outcome will be, what I know now what i know at this moment, it's hard to speak out, it's hard to speak out, but Manny Ellis can't speak anymore, and we have to speak out and get that change that he deserves."

The four officers involved in Manuel Ellis's death are on administrative leave. The Pierce County Sheriff's Department has been leading the investigation and will present it's findings to the Pierce County Prosecutor's Office on Wednesday. Once the Pierce County Prosecutor's Office makes a decision on whether or not to file charges against officers, the Washington State Attorney General's Office will be given jurisdiction to do an independent review of the case.

Ellis died on March 3rd after an encounter with officers that Pierce County Sheriff's officials say Ellis pursued, saying he wanted to discuss his warrants. Sheriff's officials say shortly after, Ellis reportedly assaulted an officer, leading four officers to restrain him. Sheriff's officials and Ellis's family say Ellis was captured on police radio saying "I can't breathe," at which time Detective Ed Troyer with the Pierce County Sheriff's Office says officers turned Ellis over on his side and called 911.

Ellis's death was ruled a homicide in early June. As The Tacoma News-Tribune first reported, the Pierce County Medical Examiner's Office noted intoxication from methamphetamine and an existing heart condition as contributing factors, but Ellis' death was ultimately ruled a homicide - respiratory arrest due to hypoxia caused by physical restraint.

"What they heard was a man on the radio saying, 'I can't breathe. I can't breathe,'" James Bible, the Ellis family's attorney, said. "He ended up dead, and that was at the hands of officers."

Investigators with the Pierce County Sheriff's Office, the agency tasked with conducting an independent investigation into Ellis' death, insist it was not like the death of Floyd. They said officers did not pin him down with a knee on his neck for minutes on end.

"There was no heads on knees. There was no cutting off of circulation, none of that," Troyer said. "He was handcuffed. He was talking. He was breathing. Then throughout the process, he had trouble breathing and he told people, 'I can't breathe.' They put him on his side and called for medical aid."

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HEADLINE 06/08 Joint jurisdiction restraint death probe

SOURCE <https://www.seattlepi.com/news/article/State-granted-joint-jurisdiction-in-restraint-15325791.php>

GIST	<p>TACOMA, Wash. (AP) — The state Attorney General’s office has been granted concurrent jurisdiction in the investigation into the death of a black man who died while in Tacoma Police custody.</p> <p>The move by Pierce County Prosecuting Attorney Mary Robnett Monday allows Bob Ferguson’s office to immediate access to the investigation of Manual Ellis’ March 3 death, KOMO-TV reported.</p> <p>On Friday, Gov. Jay Inslee pledged an independent state review after the Pierce County prosecutor’s work was finished, but Robnett said she didn’t want to wait.</p> <p>“In the interests of justice, the Attorney General’s review should begin now,” Robnett said in a news release.</p> <p>Police encountered Ellis on March 3 after he was reportedly punching the window of a car. Officers asked Ellis if he needed help, at which point he told officers he had warrants, according to Detective Ed Troyer with the Pierce County Sheriff’s Department. Troyer said Ellis picked up the officer by the vest and slam-dunked him to the ground, prompting the second officer to get out of the police cruiser and work to physically restrain Ellis in order to detain him.</p> <p>At one point while Ellis was being restrained, he told officers he couldn’t breathe, investigators said. Medics performed CPR on him but he died at the scene.</p> <p>The Pierce County Medical Examiner ruled Tuesday Ellis’ death as a homicide -- specifically, respiratory arrest to hypoxia, due to physical restraint, the examiner ruled. The office found contributing factors that included methamphetamine intoxication and dilated cardiomyopathy, also known as an enlarged heart.</p> <p>Tacoma Mayor Victoria Woodards and Ellis’ family have called on all four officers involved in Ellis’ death to be fired and arrested. The officers were put on administrative leave last week after the autopsy results were made public.</p> <p>The state patrol will review the Pierce County sheriff’s investigation of Ellis’ death to ensure it is complete. Ferguson’s office determine whether any different charging decisions need to be made by the attorney general.</p>
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HEADLINE	06/08 Tacoma Mall reopens; slow recovery
SOURCE	https://www.thenewtribune.com/news/business/article243369016.html
GIST	<p>Tacoma Mall has reopened after months of being shut down during the COVID-19 pandemic.</p> <p>Don’t expect everything to be up and running immediately, but do expect signage and one-way directions to help enforce social distancing inside.</p> <p>The mall’s website announced the reopening Monday, with mall hours 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday through Saturday and noon to 6 p.m. on Sundays.</p> <p>The website included examples of signage and traffic flows inside a Simon mall property, along with safety protocols.</p> <p>The mall, operated by Simon Property Group, follows Puyallup’s South Hill Mall reopening over the weekend. Both are the result of Pierce County receiving approval from the state to move into Phase 2 of the Safe Start plan on Friday.</p> <p>The mall shut down in mid-March to help stop the spread of COVID-19. Earlier that month, a Macy’s employee at the mall was diagnosed with COVID-19.</p>

	<p>Much like at South Hill Mall, patrons visiting Tacoma Mall won't see every store open yet, as stores catch up with restocking and bringing back workers as well as getting up to speed on COVID-19 operating procedures and PPE supply for employees.</p> <p>Visitors are asked to wear facial coverings and to not visit if you are ill or have any COVID-19 symptoms. Some of the mall's retailers also are offering curbside pickup, and some of the restaurants are offering delivery. More information on the retail to-go program and restaurant delivery is on the mall's website: simon.com/mall/tacoma-mall</p> <p>Other sites such as Gene Juarez Salon & Spa were taking reservations Monday online and via phone for appointments.</p> <p>It's recommended to contact individual stores to see what's open or not before going.</p> <p>"Simon isn't able to speak on behalf of its retailers, so it is recommended that shoppers contact stores directly to verify if they are open or not before visiting," Caroline Dawson, a media representative for the mall, told The News Tribune via email on Monday.</p>
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HEADLINE	06/08 Gov. open: 'rethink policing, public safety'
SOURCE	https://www.thenewstribune.com/news/politics-government/article243381596.html
GIST	<p>Gov. Jay Inslee said Monday he will convene a task force to "rethink policing and public safety," saying there should be a statewide restriction on the use of chokeholds.</p> <p>Inslee discussed three "action items" for the group, which will consist of black leaders, members of other "marginalized communities" and law enforcement officials. The announcement came the same day as congressional Democrats introduced legislation to overhaul policing, including a ban on the chokehold used by a then-Minneapolis police officer in the death of George Floyd.</p> <p>The governor said Washington needs an independent process to investigate and prosecute for cases involving alleged police misconduct that results in death or serious harm to residents.</p> <p>In response to a question at a Monday press conference, the governor said he didn't know if that unit would be part of the State Patrol or a new agency. The state-funded unit would replace the common practice of city police departments contracting with sheriff's departments for independent reviews, he said.</p> <p>Second, there needs to be a statewide restriction on the use of chokeholds by law enforcement, the governor said.</p> <p>"We need to rethink the use of police force and look more broadly at police tactics," Inslee said.</p> <p>Third, the state needs to create a "legally enforceable obligation" that law enforcement officers must report misconduct by their fellow officers, he said.</p> <p>"Now we know that much more is needed. What I mean by that is the tenor of these moments gives us an opportunity, I believe, to take additional steps for the larger efforts in addition to police misconduct issues," the governor said.</p> <p>"Police misconduct may be the byproduct of institutional racism, but fixing that alone will not solve the underlying problems that bedevil us in inequity in education, inequity in health care, economic inequities that defy the imagination," Inslee added.</p> <p>Inslee said the members of the task force have not been chosen yet. He said he hopes to collaborate with them to develop proposals to the Legislature.</p>

The Washington Association of Sheriffs & Police Chiefs said it is open to the suggestions that Inslee made about additional state-level reforms.

“While we feel we have done a lot to improve the policing profession, we know there is still more work – hard work -- to be done to create meaningful, lasting change,” said the group’s executive director, Stephen Strachan.

New York lawmakers voted on Monday to make it a crime for police officers to use chokeholds that cause death or injury. The move came three days after Minneapolis agreed to ban chokeholds by police.

Captain Neil Weaver of the Washington State Patrol said the agency has had a policy for at least 30 years against the use of neck restraints including chokeholds, unless an officer’s life is in danger.

The policy states: “The use of any type of neck hold that intentionally restricts blood flow or breathing shall be considered use of lethal force.”

Over the past two weeks, Inslee said he has had several discussions with members of the Black Lives Matter movement in King County, members of the legislative black caucus, members of the color caucus, and Tacoma community leaders.

On Friday, Inslee announced the State Patrol will review the Pierce County Sheriff’s Department investigation into the death of Manuel Ellis in Tacoma and the Attorney General will examine any charging decisions by the Pierce County prosecutor’s office.

Asked Monday by a reporter about calls for an entirely new investigation, Inslee stressed that the State Patrol will begin its investigation after the sheriff’s department is finished with its probe.

“That may involve interviewing witnesses. It may involve analyzing physical evidence. It may involve getting new physical evidence. It may involve hiring new forensic experts,” he said.

Inslee noted that people have asked Attorney General Bob Ferguson to do the investigation. The governor said the role of the attorney general’s office will be to review the work of the Pierce County Prosecuting Attorney.

“In our state, the Attorney General does not have investigative resources or actual authority to do the witness statements, the forensic evidence,” he said.

Also at Monday’s press conference, Inslee thanked protesters and first responders for their actions after a gunman drove into a demonstration on Capitol Hill in Seattle and shot a 27-year-old man.

“Individual protesters took brave actions to make sure this incident did not lead to even more dangerous escalation, as did emergency responders medically and in law enforcement,” he said.

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HEADLINE	06/08 DOH: 24,041 cases, 1161 deaths
SOURCE	https://www.thenewstribune.com/news/coronavirus/article243381086.html
GIST	<p>The Washington State Department of Health reported 312 new cases of COVID-19 and two deaths Monday.</p> <p>Statewide totals have reached 24,041 cases and 1,161 deaths, up from 23,729 cases and 1,159 deaths Sunday.</p>

	<p>King County remains the hardest hit with 8,496 cases and 579 deaths, while Yakima County has 4,665 cases and 101 deaths and Snohomish County has 3,039 cases and 153 deaths.</p> <p>Pierce County reported nine new cases Monday, bringing its totals to 2,059 cases and 80 deaths.</p> <p>Seventeen of the state's 39 counties have reported more than 100 cases, and 11 counties have reported at least 10 virus-related deaths.</p> <p>Garfield, the state's least populous county, remains the only county without a reported case. Seven other counties are reporting fewer than 10 cases each.</p> <p>There are 29 cases that have not been assigned to a county.</p> <p>There were 13 people with confirmed cases of COVID-19 admitted to state hospitals on May 31, the most recent date with complete data. The total number of people who have been hospitalized in the state stood at 3,699 on Monday.</p> <p>There have been 410,290 tests conducted in the state with 5.9% coming back positive.</p> <p>The test numbers reflect only polymerase chain reaction (PCR) tests, which are given to patients while the virus is presumably still active in the body.</p>
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HEADLINE	06/08 Seattle council to consider defund SPD
SOURCE	https://crosscut.com/2020/06/city-council-will-consider-defunding-seattle-police
GIST	<p>In just over a week, as citywide protests have exploded, Seattle's oft-polite politics are blowing apart at the seams.</p> <p>The city's plodding approach to police reform has suddenly been displaced by visions of a teardown and reimagining of the very definition of public safety. And the usually consensus-driven City Hall is in tatters, as council members attacked Mayor Jenny Durkan's leadership Monday, while three of them — Tammy Morales, Kshama Sawant and Teresa Mosqueda — urged her to consider resigning.</p> <p>In a city known for its slow process — it took months to call for the resignation of a mayor credibly accused of molestation — the council's ambitions and the speed of its conversations are remarkable. The once-radical call to “defund police” is now on the agenda for the legislative body of a major American city.</p> <p>“I have now come to a place where I believe you cannot fix what appears to be fundamentally broken,” said council President Lorena González, after years spent working on incremental reform.</p> <p>Since at least the year 2000, the Seattle Police Department has never seen a budget reduction from one year to the next. Even through the dot-com bust of 2001 and the housing crash of 2008, as human services, housing, transportation and other departments saw cuts of up to and beyond \$10 million, the police department continued to see its funding tick upward.</p> <p>The current budget for the Seattle Police Department is \$407 million — nearly one-third of the city's entire general fund.</p> <p>Seattle is facing at least a \$300 million shortfall in the coming years. In the wake of the economic devastation driven by the COVID-19 pandemic, the police department was likely already headed toward cuts; Durkan said as much last week.</p>

But the reductions elected leaders are advocating would go beyond, as Mosqueda said, “nibbling at the edges.” The pressure from more than a week of demonstrations since George Floyd was killed at the hands of a Minneapolis officer have forced the momentum.

“I am committed to defunding the police and using most of that money, 50% ideally, to invest back into the community,” Mosqueda said Monday during a city council meeting.

Even the the council's more moderate wing — anchored by Debora Juarez and Alex Pedersen — pledged to work closely with their colleagues on redirecting funds toward community organizations.

“It’s just not a healthy tree,” said Juarez. “We need to plant a new tree.”

Budget discussions, usually reserved for the fall, are scheduled to begin this week because of the COVID-19 crisis and are expected to continue for weeks.

Additionally, the council is set to consider a bill that would permanently ban the use of what Sawant called “weapons of war” at protests, including tear gas, rubber bullets and pepper spray.

Durkan is under fire in a way she’s not been since she took office in 2017. Once upon a time, [she tied her election to that of Mosqueda’s](#), saying “she was a person who ran a race with a very similar approach to mine.”

That relationship had already frayed, but was broken completely Monday. Mosqueda was incredulous at the continued use of certain crowd control tactics, including tear gas on Sunday, and said there was a “vacuum of true leadership” in the city.

“I think the mayor should assess in this moment, ask herself if she is the right leader in this moment and resign,” she said.

On Sunday evening, Durkan dismissed calls for her resignation as a distraction. Nevertheless, every council member went after her Monday for the chaos that’s now a nightly feature on Capitol Hill. Not all called for her resignation, but they echoed points made [in a recent letter](#) — signed by state senators, representatives and council members — assailing police response to the protests. The situation was made worse by a pledge last week to halt the use of tear gas at protests, a pledge promptly broken Sunday night after Chief Carmen Best authorized its use.

Durkan has said that SPD’s budget will be cut. On Sunday, she said those cuts would go beyond just responding to the COVID shortfalls and that she would find \$100 million to invest in community organizations, although not necessarily all from the police department. “We will examine SPD’s budget, and in addition to the partnership with Chief Best and the leaders of the community, really have a community-driven voice in that budgeting,” she said.

Durkan also listed actions her office has already taken or intends to take, including instructing officers to turn on body cameras, reviewing crowd management policies and withdrawing the city’s motion to remove federal oversight of the police department.

Yet the mayor — a longtime prosecutor before taking her seat in City Hall — has stopped short of reimagining policing as those in the legislative body have called for. Asked Sunday about a pledge by the Minneapolis City Council to tear down its department, Durkan pointed instead to the 2012 agreement with the federal government to rewrite policies on uses of force.

“That’s basically what we did through the federal consent decree,” she said. “We tore it down and rebuilt it around all uses of force. But we’ve road tested a lot of those policies in the last week or two weeks. We now know where we need to make changes in the area of crowd control.”

	<p>At the same time, Best has sought to strike a balance between sympathizing with protesters and supporting the police officers. Before every public appearance she's recognized Floyd. As a Black woman, Best said she herself has been the target of racism, only to find herself accused of perpetuating the same.</p> <p>"We find ourselves in this really surreal position where those of us who really want to have fairness and freedom and justice, people like myself, are now the target of complaints of brutality," she said.</p> <p>At their core, the mass demonstrations across the country in recent weeks are about issues of racism and disparities in law enforcement. Seattle is no exception. Past surveys show Black communities are much less likely to believe police treat people equally based on their race.</p> <p>As recently as December 2019, 30% of Seattle police stops were of Black people, who comprise less than 7% of the population. But police were less likely to find a weapon than when they stopped white people. Additionally, 32% of all uses of force and 26% of instances Seattle officers pointed their weapons were against Black people.</p> <p>"We don't necessarily know what it means to dismantle a police department," said Morales. "But we have to commit as policymakers to asking ourselves some really important questions. What does a world with no police look like? How do we redefine safety to focus on the well being of our neighbors? And what does it mean to invest in black lives?"</p>
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HEADLINE	06/09 US protests push Europe: face histories
SOURCE	https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2020/06/09/us-protests-push-europe-face-its-own-histories-injustice/
GIST	<p>Edward Colston was a 17th-century English merchant who rose to the position of deputy governor of the Royal African Co. His family became fabulously wealthy as a result, profiting from the company's role in the British trade of African slaves to the New World. Under Colston's watch, about 84,000 Africans were shipped to lives of bondage and misery. An estimated 19,000 of them perished during the grisly Middle Passage, their corpses tossed into the Atlantic.</p> <p>On Sunday, it was Colston's turn to get dumped into the water. Inspired by U.S. protests over the death of George Floyd, demonstrators in Bristol — the seaside port from which Colston generated his fortunes — dragged the 19th-century bronze statue that had been erected in his honor off its pedestal. In scenes that went viral on social media, the protesters then rolled the stricken monument to the waterfront and hurled it over the railings to ecstatic cheers.</p> <p>The irony — and, some would say, poetic justice — of the moment was not lost on observers. "Colston lies at the bottom of a harbor in which the ships of the triangular slave trade once moored, by the dockside on to which their cargoes were unloaded," wrote British historian David Olusoga.</p> <p>British Prime Minister Boris Johnson wasn't so sanguine about the spectacle. He described it as a "criminal act" and argued that there were other avenues for people to seek the statue's removal. "The PM absolutely understands the strength of feeling," said a spokesman for Johnson, "but in this country we settle our differences democratically, and if people wanted the removal of the statue there are democratic routes which can be followed."</p> <p>Colston's statue was hardly the only one under protester scrutiny. In London's Parliament Square, a statue of Winston Churchill was vandalized, with activists scrawling graffiti that labeled the revered former prime minister a racist — what most honest historians would concede is an objective fact. But Nigel Farage, the far-right British campaigner, suggested that incident and other scenes of unrest marked the birth of a "new form of the Taliban" in Britain.</p>

That's a line of argument more common than you'd think. On both sides of the ocean once traversed by Colston's slave ships, conservatives still insist that calls to remove monuments connected to bloody legacies of slavery and colonial exploitation are acts of intolerance, [antithetical to the telling of history itself](#). They conveniently disregard the widely celebrated removal of statues of Lenin and Stalin in the former Soviet world or, indeed, the U.S.-aided toppling of the statue of Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein. Moreover, they ignore an argument that's taken for granted by most historians: That the erecting of statues is itself a narrative act of history, aimed mostly at the glorification of the people the statues depict. A statue's toppling, often under circumstances of widespread popular approval, is also an act of history.

"Whatever is said over the next few days, this was not an attack on history," [Olusoga wrote in the Guardian](#) about the scenes in Bristol, which followed long-standing demands for the statue's removal. "This is history. It is one of those rare historic moments whose arrival means things can never go back to how they were."

That's a call being felt in the United States. In Richmond, the capital of Virginia and former seat of the Confederacy, protesters have converged on the city's stretch of Confederate monuments. Now, state and municipal authorities have [announced plans to finally remove](#) at least some of those statues, which commemorate insurrectionists who championed slavery. Separately, the U.S. Army is [weighing renaming some bases](#) named for former Confederate commanders.

A similar, though slower, phenomenon is at work in parts of Europe, too. On Sunday, protesters in Brussels set their sights on traces of the country's colonial past. [As my colleagues reported](#), "they crowded in front of the Palace of Justice — a symbol both of the rule of law and injustice because its construction allowed the 19th-century monarch King Leopold II to dominate the Brussels skyline while he presided over a brutal rule in Congo in which as many as 10 million people died."

This is no small matter. Brussels, with all its E.U. institutions, is the de facto capital of Europe, and by extension the heart of the global liberal project. Yet statues to Leopold still adorn the city and other parts of Belgium.

"It's as though they still had statues of Hitler in Germany," said Jenny da Costa, a 35-year-old Brussels resident, to The Washington Post. "I can't even understand why those statues are still here. He is a murderer."

It speaks of a broader European blind spot: Though many on the continent look in horror at the United States' police violence and explosions of racial unrest, fewer [feel the need to atone for the imperial systems of injustice](#) that in many cases built [the economic and societal foundations](#) of their own modern nation-states.

Of course, no society's heritage is free of hate, to invert [the slogan deployed by American defenders of Confederate monuments](#). Societies once under the European colonial yoke have to [reckon with their diverse histories of violence and discrimination](#). But the conversation in Europe is [gaining steam](#) as the voices of minority communities — in many instances directly connected to that colonial past — grow louder and more confident.

In recent years, European museums have started returning artifacts to the countries from which they were stolen. In a few cases, European governments have [extended apologies](#) or [qualified statements of contrition](#) to specific communities affected by the misdeeds of empire.

And many want more to be done. In Britain alone, there are calls for [a restructuring of school history curriculums](#), which conspicuously leave out much of the dark side of its colonial past, as well as for [new institutions](#) that more thoroughly examine the country's imperial legacy.

"I see no good reason to oppose the fixing of explanatory plaques on streets named after plantation owners or merchants whose wealth was largely owed to slavery," [wrote center-right Scottish columnist Alex](#)

	Massie . “History cannot be denied but must be owned in the round. Look on our works, we might say, but do not forget.”
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HEADLINE	06/08 Summer camps, small towns brace
SOURCE	https://www.wsj.com/articles/as-covid-19-closes-summer-camps-small-towns-brace-for-impact-11591617601?mod=hp_lista_pos1
GIST	<p>Camp counselors and staff usually start rolling into Hancock, N.Y., in early June, buying buckets of paint and hammers and nails, movie tickets, pizzas and vodka from local businesses.</p> <p>This year the town is quiet after the coronavirus pandemic forced many nearby camps to cancel. That has left residents and business owners in this small village about 140 miles north of New York City bracing for a slow summer.</p> <p>Andrew Grigoli, owner of the Little Italy restaurant in Hancock, said his business and other establishments rely on campers and their families to get them through the slow offseason during the winter.</p> <p>“If it wasn’t for camps, would I be here? Maybe not,” said Mr. Grigoli, who opened his restaurant in Hancock 22 years ago. “The locals spend money, but the town is just too small to support a lot of businesses.”</p> <p>Rural areas may be emerging from the public health crisis relatively unscathed compared with more densely populated cities, but small towns including Hancock aren’t immune to the pandemic’s economic fallout. The cancellation of sleep-away camps, festivals, sports tournaments and concerts is hurting businesses that rely on the thousands of people these summer gatherings attract to sustain them during slower months.</p> <p>Many sleep-away camps in New York, Massachusetts, Maine and other states in the Northeast have canceled their 2020 seasons. These camps typically welcome their first campers at the end of June and contribute more than \$1 billion a year to the region’s economy, said Susie Lupert, executive director of the American Camp Association, NY and NJ. The group doesn’t yet know exactly how many operators have canceled.</p> <p>Many camps that do plan to open have signaled that they will start later in the summer and keep children and staff on campgrounds and out of nearby towns and businesses.</p> <p>“The camp industry is going to be very hard hit by this pandemic, and that does trickle down to the towns,” Ms. Lupert said.</p> <p>The village of Hancock, located in Delaware County, N.Y., near the Pennsylvania border, has fewer than 1,000 residents, more than half of whom are older than 55, according to Mayor Carolann McGrath. Sleep-away camps—the American Camp Association has accredited 39 within a 40-mile radius of the village—bring thousands of people to the area each summer. The nearby French Woods performing arts camp alone drew more than 1,800 campers and 450 counselors and staff last year.</p> <p>“We rely heavily on people coming to visit us in the summer,” Ms. McGrath said. “We have very severe winters here. If businesses don’t make the money in the summer, there’s no way for them to make it up.”</p> <p>Ron Schaefer, director of French Woods, has been buried in paperwork as he processes more than \$2 million in refunds after deciding in late May to cancel this year’s programs. He said he cringes to think about the impact on his vendors as well as businesses in Hancock, where the camp holds dozens of shows—dramas and musicals and circus performances—in the town square every summer.</p>

“Parents come up throughout the summer to see these shows,” Mr. Schaefer said. “They eat in the area, they take lodging in the area, they purchase things at the local stores.”

French Woods spent about \$200,000 at Bisbee Lumber & Supply last year, accounting for about one-tenth of the business’s sales for 2019, said owner Ken Salvestrini. The lumber and hardware store, located in Hancock, sells supplies to more than a dozen camps in the area, most of which have canceled.

So far New York City residents and people from out of state who are riding out the pandemic in their Delaware County summer homes are helping to sustain his business, and Mr. Salvestrini said he hasn’t had to lay off any of his eight employees after receiving a loan from the federal Paycheck Protection Program. But he expects to see a hit to his revenue later this summer.

“These camps are, at least up until now, constantly updating their cabins, their kitchen facilities,” Mr. Salvestrini said. “They’re a good 40% of our summer business.”

Kieve Wavus Education, a nonprofit foundation that runs two camps in Maine, one for boys in Nobleboro and one for girls in Jefferson, canceled for the first time in its nearly-100-year history, Executive Director Henry Kennedy said. The wilderness-trip camps usually accommodate about 1,200 children a summer. Staff members often buy lunch and snacks at the Nobleboro Village Store, said owner Joanne Kroll.

The camp’s closure this summer will further hurt businesses that were already squeezed during the pandemic. Ms. Kroll said she hasn’t been able to make her signature handmade doughnuts because she is too busy running the store after several of her employees said they were too worried about catching the virus to come into work.

“Most of us are struggling as it is,” Ms. Kroll said.

This year, Mr. Grigoli, of Little Italy, has six employees preparing takeout orders, and despite strong support from residents he is still pulling in revenue more typical of January than June.

“It’s not enough,” he said. “Not when you don’t have the camps.”

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HEADLINE	06/08 Countries reopen; many avoid second wave
SOURCE	https://www.wsj.com/articles/as-countries-reopen-many-avoid-a-second-wave-of-covid-19-casesso-far-11591638007?mod=hp_lead_pos6
GIST	<p>Europe and Asia have so far avoided a significant resurgence of Covid-19 cases even though most countries have emerged from lockdown and restarted chunks of their economies, a possible sign the coronavirus pandemic can be held in check by less stringent means.</p> <p>The preliminary evidence offers some hope to areas of the U.S. like New York City that are emerging from the lockdown, even as disease experts caution that the virus is far from defeated and the risk of a major new wave of infection remains. That caveat means some degree of social distancing and other markers of post-Covid society will need to stay in place while researchers hunt for a vaccine.</p> <p>The average daily rate of new infections in Europe at the beginning of June was down 80% on its April 9 peak, according to the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control. Croatia, Cyprus and Hungary reported no new cases at all Sunday. New daily cases in Germany, France, Spain and Italy have fallen to the low hundreds, from thousands a day when the pandemic was at its fiercest.</p> <p>Daily infections are also waning in large parts of Asia, which experienced the full force of the pandemic earlier than Europe. New Zealand on Monday said it had no active cases and said it would lift all coronavirus restrictions with the exception of border closures. “We are confident we have eliminated transmission of the virus in New Zealand for now,” said Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern.</p>

Even with the virus in retreat in some places, the World Health Organization said Monday it was continuing to spread rapidly around the world, especially in the Americas and South Asia. A single-day record of 136,000 new cases were reported to the organization on Sunday.

“Although the situation in Europe is improving, globally it’s worsening,” said Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, its director general. In countries where the picture was improving, “the biggest threat now is complacency,” he said, noting that in many places mass gatherings were becoming more common.

Epidemiologists say the experience of Europe and Asia shows a mix of behavioral changes and public-health policies appear sufficient to keep the virus more or less in check as schools, businesses and factories reopen.

Though some countries, including China, South Korea and Germany, have seen clusters of new cases spring up since restrictions were relaxed, widespread and uncontrollable transmission of the pathogen appears to be on hold.

Some experts liken the effort to contain Covid-19 to fighting a fire. Having starved it of opportunity to spread by imposing lockdowns and other strict social-distancing measures, just as firefighters starve a fire of oxygen, the challenge now is to ensure sporadic, localized flare ups are tamped down before they can ignite a wider conflagration.

One such spike has occurred in Poland in connection with religious ceremonies. In the country’s south, the small town of Tuchów has quarantined some 500 of 7,000 residents after an ordination ceremony became a so-called “super spreading” event. Another 132 priests from eight monasteries have been quarantined, with 43 testing positive after attending a retreat in the village of Kościelisko in southern Poland, said Mariusz Mazurkiewicz, spokesman at the Warsaw chapter of the Redemptorists, a Catholic group dedicated to missionary work.

“The virus has not become any less transmissible. As long as there are cases around, it can transmit,” said Jimmy Whitworth, professor of international public health at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine.

Some countries offer cautionary tales. Singapore reacted quickly when its first case was reported in January, closing its borders to foreigners and tracking down close contacts of coronavirus patients. Schools, restaurants and some workplaces remained open.

But in early April, thousands of infections occurred, traced back to crowded migrant dormitories. The government reversed course, closing schools and nonessential businesses. It has since brought daily case numbers under control, with fewer than 500 daily cases in recent days from a peak of 1,400 in late April.

In Iran, coronavirus cases have returned to peak levels after Tehran rolled back many lockdown restrictions to revive its sanctions-battered economy. Iran last week recorded more than 3,000 new infections for three consecutive days—the same level as when the outbreak first peaked in the country in late March. Iranian officials say part of the reason for the growing caseload is more widespread testing. But its health ministry has also rebuked Iranians for not following guidelines.

For many countries that have beat back the new coronavirus’s first assault, spotting new cases quickly is key to preventing a second.

South Korea, for instance, has implemented widespread testing and tech-savvy tracing of an infected person’s contacts to spot infections and slow transmission. Health officials track down close contacts using cellphone data, credit card transactions and security footage. Anyone who enters the country must quarantine for 14 days, and those who exhibit symptoms are tested upon entering the country.

When dozens of new cases of coronavirus last month emerged in China, the government said it collected coronavirus swab tests from more than 9 million of the 11 million people in the central city of Wuhan in just 10 days to find and isolate the infected and prevent a resurgence.

Ongoing social distancing is also playing a role in suppressing a second wave. Few countries have relaxed coronavirus-related restrictions entirely, with mass gatherings still banned in many places and activities such as dining out transformed by empty tables and other efforts to limit personal contact. International travel remains severely curtailed.

Most governments continue to urge citizens to stay away from each other where possible. In the U.K., for example, workers who are able are still being asked to work from home and use of public transport is discouraged in favor of driving, cycling and walking.

The pandemic has anyway made people more aware of risky behavior that could spread the disease. Face masks, once a rarity in Europe, are now an everyday sight, though their use still isn't as widespread as it is in Asia. Data collected by Alphabet Inc.'s Google unit shows that in countries including France, Germany and Spain, visits to shops, restaurants, transit stations and workplaces remain well below pre-Covid averages, while visits to parks and other outdoor spaces have increased.

"People are still very concerned, very risk averse," said Linda Bauld, professor of public health at the University of Edinburgh.

One question is whether winter will bring a revival in cases as people spend more time indoors. "What we know about the virus is it is transmitted indoors, in convivial environments such as those where people gather for a drink after a day on the ski field," said Prof. Michael Baker, an epidemiologist at the University of Otago in Wellington, New Zealand, where winter is just beginning.

Another wild card is the mass protests in parts of Europe related to the killing of George Floyd, which disease experts say could pose a risk of sparking new clusters of infections.

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HEADLINE	06/08 India, China border flare-up; wider clash?
SOURCE	https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2020/jun/8/india-china-border-flare-sparks-fears-wider-clash/
GIST	<p>As if the world didn't have enough problems, the two most populous and nuclear-armed countries — India and China — are now at each other's throats in a long-running border cold war that has suddenly become hot.</p> <p>The high-altitude row over a long-disputed Himalayan border territory has included fistfights between Indian and Chinese troops in recent weeks. It also has caused growing unease in Washington, where President Trump's offers to mediate have been brushed aside by New Delhi and Beijing.</p> <p>Analysts say major escalation between the nuclear-armed rivals appears unlikely at the moment, although the prospect of a widening or slow-burning clash between China's communist leaders and the world's most populous democracy in India is real.</p> <p>Relations between the two countries have been generally stable in recent years, but they have grown increasingly complex as China challenges America's status as India's top trading partner and as India's Hindu nationalist government bristles at China's show of military and financial clout in the region.</p> <p>India and China were once roughly economic equals. Now India chafes at China's fast-growing economy, which has produced a gross domestic product nearly five times larger than India's.</p>

The latest crisis centers on Chinese troop movements along an area of the Himalayan border that was the site of a bloody war between the two countries in the early 1960s. The length of the border is 2,100 miles, but the hot zone is just off India's northern tip, not far from the disputed territory of Kashmir and the tense border with Pakistan, another nuclear-armed nation.

Mr. Trump's surprise offers to mediate, at a time when U.S.-Chinese relations are at a low point, has some Chinese strategists fearful that Washington is trying to exploit the rivalry for its own ends by drawing India into an alliance of China's neighbors designed to contain China's rise.

"Washington looks forward to the China-India dispute in order to gain from it," the Chinese state-controlled Global Times said in an editorial last week. "The U.S. supports India every time China and India have conflicts to encourage New Delhi's confrontation against Beijing and to hype new border disputes."

In a hastily arranged series of meetings of diplomats and military officials, the two sides appeared to lower the temperature on the dispute over the weekend.

"Both sides agreed to peacefully resolve the situation in the border areas ... keeping in view the agreement between the leaders that peace and tranquility in the India-China border regions is essential for the overall development of bilateral relations," India's foreign ministry said in a statement Sunday after bilateral talks. Additional troops and equipment that had been rushed to the region recently were reportedly being withdrawn.

But the situation remains volatile and the border issues unresolved, and both governments must deal with nationalistic domestic constituencies and angry voices on social media demanding escalation.

Seizing the moment

Border tensions last soared between New Delhi and Beijing in 2017. The standoff simmered after a series of troop movements at the time, but analysts say China has been eager recently to press its claims amid global geopolitical uncertainty and a COVID-19 pandemic that many in India blame on China.

Officials say hundreds of Chinese soldiers were suddenly seen moving deep inside Indian-controlled territory of the Ladakh region's Galwan Valley in early May and erecting guard posts and tents. India responded quickly by massing troop and equipment in the area.

Indian officials say the Chinese ignored repeated verbal warnings, triggering a shouting match, stone-throwing and even fistfights in at least one place along Pangong Lake, which is above the 14,000-foot elevation mark in the valley.

Thousands of Chinese and Indian soldiers are now reported to be camped just a few hundred yards from each other. Analysts say the development began with China's desire to show military dominance and prove it can engage in aggressive foreign policy on multiple fronts at the same time.

"This is China on offense," said Joseph DeTrani, a longtime former U.S. intelligence official focused on China. He said Beijing's moves are reminiscent of a 1962 Chinese military invasion of Ladakh that Mao Zedong used to show "he wasn't happy with India and could use force to prevail if necessary."

"This incursion appears to be a similar message for India, and others, that China is capable and willing to address a number of national security issues of concern to its leadership," Mr. DeTrani said in an interview. "This comes at a time when China established two new administrative districts in contested areas in the South China Sea, announced plans to impose a national security law in Hong Kong and disseminated disinformation that COVID-19 originated in the U.S."

Michael Kugelman at the Woodrow Wilson Center for Scholars said Beijing acted in part "to telegraph strength at a moment when global criticism of China's pandemic response has put it on the defensive."

“We’ve seen Beijing take on an increasingly assertive foreign policy in recent months and, not coincidentally, as its relationship with the U.S. has worsened,” Mr. Kugelman said. “We’ve seen it using bellicose rhetoric and taking provocative actions in Hong Kong, Taiwan and the South China Sea, and so its provocations on the border with India fit right in with a broader Chinese foreign policy trend.”

Rising tensions between Beijing and Washington may also factor into China’s calculus. “There’s something to be said for China trying to throw its weight around in India’s backyard, given how quickly the U.S.-India partnership has grown in recent years thanks in great part to shared opposition to China’s rise,” Mr. Kugelman said. “Beijing understands this connection, and it clearly wants to make a strong statement addressed to both Indian and U.S. audiences.”

But Mr. Trump has clearly said Washington would be happy to help.

“We have informed both India and China that the United States is ready, willing and able to mediate or arbitrate their now raging border dispute,” Mr. Trump tweeted late last month.

Neither side embraced the idea, although Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi discussed the issue in a phone call with Mr. Trump last week even as Indian media reports said officials in New Delhi wanted Washington to stay on the sidelines.

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Zhao Lijian told reporters in Beijing on Wednesday that “there is no need for any third party to intervene.”

Mr. Zhao said the situation remains “stable and controllable,” stressed that there are “sound mechanisms and channels of communication between China and India” and that “the two sides are capable of properly resolving relevant issues through dialogue and consultation.”

It remains to be seen when that will occur. High-level talks Saturday resulted in no breakthrough but set the stage for further negotiations.

Upsetting the status quo

Each side accuses the other of provocations in disputed border lands that have upset the tentative status quo.

India is reported to be building its own strategic road through the Galwan Valley with the goal of connecting the area to an airstrip. The Associated Press noted that New Delhi also unilaterally declared Ladakh a federal territory while separating it from disputed Kashmir in August and that China was among a handful of nations that strongly condemned the move and raised the issue with the U.N. Security Council.

Analysts generally agree, however, that the likelihood of a shooting war or major nuclear standoff remains low. “New Delhi has repeatedly emphasized in its public messaging that it favors diplomacy to end the crisis,” said Mr. Kugelman, adding that “China has already made a strong statement, and there’s little reason to believe things will escalate.”

Still, some warn that the situation is volatile and warrants close monitoring.

“[The] rising tensions ... are occurring against the backdrop of continued cross-border shelling along the India-Pakistan border and intensified militant action in the erstwhile Indian state of Jammu & Kashmir,” said Tamanna Salikuddin, a former high-level U.S. adviser in the region now heading South Asia programs at the U.S. Institute of Peace.

“From the Indian perspective, China’s aggression is seen as supportive of Pakistan’s efforts to contest the borders with India in this highly inflammable region,” Ms. Salikuddin said in comments circulated last week.

	<p>“India and China are trying to reduce current tensions both through public rhetoric and private high commander level meetings, and they have a robust conflict management arrangement,” she said.</p> <p>“However, there is a risk of escalation or miscalculation given the high number of troops and heavy weaponry that both India and China have positioned in eastern Ladakh.”</p>
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HEADLINE	06/08 Abolish ICE movement storms back
SOURCE	https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2020/jun/8/abolish-ice-movement-storms-back-amid-defund-police/
GIST	<p>Anti-ICE protesters assaulted an immigration detention facility in California over the weekend, smashing windows and vandalizing vehicles, reviving the “Abolish ICE” movement that was, in many ways, the precursor to the current “Defund Police” effort.</p> <p>A 46-minute video posted to YouTube by someone in the crowd captured the mayhem, showing protesters waving Mexican flags, shouting obscenities, smashing windows and scrawling graffiti. At one point the video captures a woman holding a Mexican flag and throwing objects, apparently at employees.</p> <p>The man taking the video, who identifies himself as the Highdesert Community Watch News Network, seemed stunned that the gathering turned so confrontational after what he said was a mile and a half march.</p> <p>The protest took place at the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement facility in Adelanto, California, run by GEO Group, a private contractor, which said the crowd was being fueled by wrong information, including that children were being held there.</p> <p>“Unfortunately, the dishonest narrative and lies that are being spread about the services our company provides on behalf of the federal government continue to lead to the endangerment of our employees, as witnessed yesterday,” GEO Group said in a statement.</p> <p>“While we support peaceful protests and the constitutional right to free speech, our employees, who are on the front lines caring for all those in our facilities, should never be met with acts of violence,” the company said.</p> <p>At the White House, press secretary Kayleigh McEnany compared the Abolish ICE movement to the Defund Police movement that’s arisen in some communities and among some Democratic politicians in the wake of the killing of George Floyd.</p> <p>“We all remember the Defund ICE movement — they want to defund Immigration and Custom Enforcement and now they want to defund the police. This is extraordinary,” she said. “This is rolling back the protective layers that protect Americans in their homes and in their places of business.”</p> <p>She said President Trump was “appalled by it.”</p> <p>Protesters held signs such as “Free R Kids” and screamed to “give my children back.”</p> <p>“A couple mothers here are crying for their children,” the man taking the video narrated.</p> <p>GEO said children are not housed at the Adelanto facility, and never have been.</p> <p>Both ICE and GEO have said misinformation and heated anti-ICE rhetoric places them in danger.</p> <p>Last year, at the height of the Abolish ICE movement, spearheaded by immigrant-rights activists and some liberal Democrats in Congress, GEO facilities were targeted for attacks.</p>

	Shots were fired into a building in San Antonio, Texas, that housed both GEO and ICE offices, and a man armed with a rifle attacked a GEO-run detention facility in Tacoma, Washington. The man was attempting to ignite a propane fuel tank to cause an explosion when he was killed.
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HEADLINE	06/08 Furious backlash in Brazil over virus data
SOURCE	https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/08/world/americas/brazil-coronavirus-statistics.html?action=click&module=Well&pgtype=Homepage&section=World%20News
GIST	<p>RIO DE JANEIRO — As the coronavirus tore through Brazil, President Jair Bolsonaro came under blistering criticism for sabotaging the isolation measures imposed by states, encouraging mass rallies by his supporters and lashing out on the soaring death toll, saying, “What do you want me to do?”</p> <p>Now that the outbreak in Brazil has gotten even worse — with more infections than any country but the United States — Mr. Bolsonaro’s government has come up with a unique response to the growing alarm: It decided to stop reporting the cumulative toll of the virus altogether.</p> <p>Brazil’s health ministry took down the website where it had been reporting coronavirus statistics on Friday. And then, when it came back online on Saturday, the site omitted the historical data — leaving out how many people had already been infected or killed because of the virus.</p> <p>Lawmakers and health experts quickly attacked Mr. Bolsonaro in unusually blistering terms. Not only did they condemn the government’s decision to withhold comprehensive statistics as deaths and contagion continue to soar, but they roundly criticized the Bolsonaro administration’s repeated practice of playing down the danger of the virus, regardless of what scientists and his own health ministers may say.</p> <p>Gilmar Mendes, a Supreme Court justice, called the government’s “manipulation of statistics a tactic of totalitarian regimes,” adding that the “trick will not absolve the government from an eventual genocide.”</p> <p>The pandemic — and, specifically, the government responses to them — have been highly contentious around the world. But in few places have the issues been quite as polarizing as in Brazil, a country already separated by a political chasm between Mr. Bolsonaro’s furious detractors and equally fervent devotees.</p> <p>Mr. Bolsonaro, who initially described the virus as a “measly flu,” says the challenge of the virus is dwarfed by the economic fallout of stay-at-home measures, and that the real danger is the rising unemployment that will leave people hungry.</p> <p>But he has also come under withering criticism for joining large pro-government protests that risk spreading the virus, for ordering the armed forces to mass produce an unproven medication for the virus, hydroxychloroquine, and for fighting with his own health officials as the crisis intensified.</p> <p>Now Brazil is suffering the highest daily number of deaths in the world — often over 1,000 a day — and the government has stopped reporting the cumulative toll of the outbreak.</p> <p>“By altering the numbers, the health ministry is trying to cover the sun with a sieve,” Rodrigo Maia, the Speaker of the lower House of Congress said in a message on Twitter posted shortly after midnight on Monday. “It is urgent to restore the credibility of statistics. A ministry that distorts numbers creates a parallel universe to avoid facing the reality of facts.”</p> <p>Carlos Wizard Martins, a businessman who was recently tapped to help lead the government’s response, told the newspaper O Globo last week that the country’s coronavirus statistics were being audited because federal officials believed that states were reporting inflated figures in an effort to secure more funding.</p> <p>That explanation, which was not supported by evidence, was broadly seen as the government’s latest misstep in its response to the outbreak.</p>

The health ministry has been rocked by personnel turnover in recent weeks as the virus took hold in Brazil. Mr. Bolsonaro fired one health minister, Luiz Henrique Mandetta, in mid-April after the two clashed over the president's disdain for social distancing measures that the ministry and state governors were promoting.

Then the health minister's successor, Nelson Teich, quit after less than a month on the job, leaving the ministry in the command of an active duty general with no health care experience.

The government on Sunday issued two different figures on the latest daily death toll, initially reporting 1,382 fatalities, only to revise that number to 525. The ministry said the early figure included erroneously reported deaths.

The health ministry on Sunday also said in a statement that its new record-keeping method would provide "a more realistic snapshot of what is happening at the national level."

The government did not explain its new methodology for tracking cases.

Over the weekend, the National Council of Health Secretaries, which represents local health officials, launched a website compiling comprehensive data. According to that tally, as of Sunday Brazil had more than 680,400 confirmed coronavirus cases and at least 36,151 deaths.

The council responded with indignation to the accusation that state officials were providing fictitious numbers for monetary gain, referring to the allegation leveled by Mr. Wizard.

Over the weekend, outraged Brazilians called for a boycott of Mr. Wizard's businesses. On Sunday night, Mr. Wizard announced he would step down from his role in government.

"I apologize for any statement I have made that could have been interpreted as disrespectful toward the relatives of victims of Covid-19 or health professionals who have embraced the noble mission of saving lives," he said in a statement.

Brazil, which has a robust public health care system, has historically excelled at epidemiological surveillance. If anything, experts said that a rigorous audit of Covid-19 cases would reveal that the disease has killed more people than the official data has captured because testing has been severely limited. An analysis by the Times found that in Manaus, a metropolis deep in the Amazon, the number of deaths in April was three times its historical average for the month.

"The tampering of pandemic data by the Ministry of Health is, to say the least, distressful," said Denise Garrett, a Brazilian American epidemiologist who worked at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for more than two decades. "The data should be communicated in a transparent, accurate and timely manner. This is crucial for decision-making and also of utmost importance to avoid public confusion."

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HEADLINE	06/08 Group: US entered recession in February
SOURCE	https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/08/business/economy/us-economy-recession-2020.html?action=click&module=Top%20Stories&pgtype=Homepage
GIST	WASHINGTON — The United States economy officially entered a recession in February 2020, the committee that calls downturns announced on Monday, bringing the longest expansion on record to an end as the coronavirus pandemic caused economic activity to slow sharply.

The economy hit its peak in February and has since fallen into a downturn, the National Bureau of Economic Research's Business Cycle Dating Committee said. A recession begins when the economy reaches a peak of activity and ends when it reaches its trough.

This downturn is the first since 2009, when the last recession ended, and marks the end of the longest expansion — 128 months — in records dating back to 1854. Most economists expect this recession to be both particularly deep and exceptionally short, perhaps just a few months, as states reopen and economic activity resumes.

The National Bureau of Economic Research, a nonprofit group that tracks economic cycles in the United States, noted the unusual circumstances surrounding the slump in its announcement.

"The committee recognizes that the pandemic and the public health response have resulted in a downturn with different characteristics and dynamics than prior recessions," the group said. "Nonetheless, it concluded that the unprecedented magnitude of the decline in employment and production, and its broad reach across the entire economy, warrants the designation of this episode as a recession, even if it turns out to be briefer than earlier contractions."

Many economists believe the United States may already have exited the recession — or at least be on its way out.

Robert Gordon, a Northwestern University economist and a member of the dating committee, said that he would bet a recovery started in April or May, meaning that the recession would most likely last for only a couple of months. Even so, he said, labeling it a downturn was not a hard choice "because of the extraordinary depth."

"There's no way you can observe that happening and not call it a recession," he said, while acknowledging that it was a very unusual one. "Nothing like it has ever happened."

The National Bureau of Economic Research formally dates business cycles based on a range of economic markers, importantly gross domestic product and employment.

Economic activity in the United States began to contract sharply at the very end of February and into early March as the coronavirus spread across major metropolitan areas, like New York City, Chicago and Atlanta. Shops closed, travelers canceled flights and diners began avoiding restaurants, even before some states issued formal stay-at-home orders.

Real-time economic gauges, like a series on Chase credit card spending produced by J.P. Morgan, show that spending pulled back sharply in early March and has gradually rebounded since late April. Even so, spending remains well below pre-crisis levels.

The unemployment rate, a crucial gauge of economic health and an important input to business cycle dating, began to rise in March before jumping to 14.7 percent in April. It eased slightly to 13.3 percent in May, data released last week showed, but that is higher than the peak jobless rate in the Great Recession.

"We've already seen signs that the economy is past the trough and is in the recovery phase," said Matthew Luzzetti, the chief U.S. economist at Deutsche Bank Securities. But there are differences between the overall level of output and the period-to-period change because the former is likely to remain depressed for some time, even as the latter bounces back.

Economists in a Bloomberg survey expect growth to contract by 9.7 percent in the second quarter compared with the same period last year, followed by a 6.8 percent contraction in the third quarter relative to the third quarter of 2019.

	<p>Looking at a commonly used annualized rate, which states the numbers so that they are easily comparable from period to period, growth is expected to contract by a 34 percent rate in the second quarter before bouncing back at a 15 percent pace in the third.</p> <p>“It’s going to take longer to recover the level of activity, even though the growth rate is strong,” Mr. Luzzetti said.</p> <p>The global economy as a whole will experience its deepest recession since World War II this year, according to a World Bank forecast released on Monday. Global output will shrink by 5.2 percent, the institution said, warning that while growth is likely to rebound in 2021, a more protracted pandemic that leads to a breakdown in financial markets and global trade could darken the outlook.</p>
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HEADLINE	06/08 China tweets narrative on virus; more
SOURCE	https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/08/technology/china-twitter-disinformation.html?action=click&module=Top%20Stories&pgtype=Homepage
GIST	<p>As the Trump administration lashes out at China over a range of grievances, Beijing’s top diplomats and representatives are using the president’s favorite online megaphone — Twitter — to slap back with a pugnaciousness that is best described as Trumpian.</p> <p>Behind China’s combative new messengers, a murky hallelujah chorus of sympathetic accounts has emerged to repost them and cheer them on. Many are new to the platform. Some do little else but amplify the Beijing line.</p> <p>No doubt some of these accounts are run by patriotic, tech-savvy Chinese people who get around their government’s ban on Twitter and other Western platforms. But an analysis by The New York Times found that many of the accounts behaved with a single-mindedness that could suggest a coordinated campaign of the type that nation states have carried out on Twitter in the past.</p> <p>Of the roughly 4,600 accounts that reposted China’s leading envoys and state-run news outlets during a recent week, many acted suspiciously, The Times found. One in six tweeted with extremely high frequency despite having few followers, as if they were being used as loudspeakers, not as sharing platforms.</p> <p>Nearly one in seven tweeted almost nothing of their own, instead filling their feeds with reposts of the official Chinese accounts and others.</p> <p>In all, one third of the accounts had been created in the last three months, as the war of words with the Trump administration heated up. One in seven had zero followers.</p> <p>The United States and China are battling to dominate the global narrative. China was criticized for its early mishandling of the coronavirus outbreak, but it has regained confidence as other countries have made their own stumbles. With the United States in turmoil, upended first by the epidemic and now by protests, Beijing sees a chance to define itself as a global leader, one unafraid to press its interests in Hong Kong and the region.</p> <p>It is far from clear that the Chinese government is behind the swarms of accounts helping to spread its gospel on Twitter. Online information campaigns are becoming increasingly sophisticated as malicious actors get better at disguising their digital activity, security experts say. They now rarely make telltale mistakes such as using social media accounts that were all created on the same day, follow one another and post the same material.</p> <p>Campaigns are often uncovered one small piece at a time. Twitter has declared operations to be state-backed after identifying as few as six accounts.</p>

Much is unknown about China's covert influence activities in particular. [Twitter last year suspended more than 200,000 accounts](#) that it called a [Chinese state-backed operation](#) aimed at discrediting Hong Kong's protesters, though it said little about how it came to that conclusion.

Still, The Times's findings add to other recent evidence suggesting that Twitter is being manipulated to amplify pro-Beijing messages. Next Dim, a data firm in Israel, discovered two mundane-looking tweets praising China's coronavirus response that were liked and reposted hundreds of thousands of times in March, possibly with the help of strategically placed influencer accounts.

The U.S. State Department found inauthentic-seeming accounts that in April cited [a Cambridge University study](#) to raise doubts that the coronavirus originated in China. The most active of these accounts referred to the study in scores of tweets, even though the study's lead author dismissed that interpretation of its findings.

Neither Next Dim's findings nor the State Department's have been previously reported.

"Improving the health of the public conversation is a priority for our company," Twitter said in a statement. "Platform manipulation, including spam and other attempts to undermine the public conversation, is a violation of the Twitter Rules."

The State Department has [denounced China's efforts](#) to burnish its image and drown out criticism during the pandemic, comparing them to Russia's disinformation campaigns. Both countries are using a range of tools to "shape and tilt any given information environment in their favor," said Lea Gabrielle, coordinator of the department's Global Engagement Center.

"I think the Chinese Communist Party is still trying to define its relationship with Twitter," said Kristine Lee, a fellow at the Center for a New American Security. "But the Covid-19 pandemic has served as an important period of experimentation."

The U.S.-China tongue-lashing adds to the questions vexing Twitter about [how it treats inflammatory or misleading remarks](#) from world leaders. Mr. Trump has [accused the company](#) of censoring him and other Republicans while ignoring questionable posts by Democrats and the Chinese government.

Beijing's Twitter brigade includes Hua Chunying, the head of the foreign ministry's information department. Since joining the platform in October, Ms. Hua has attracted more than half a million followers with her [feisty put-downs](#) of the United States.

In [a Communist Party journal](#) last year, Ms. Hua wrote that China had to find a voice in international affairs that was commensurate with its economic strength. "We have walked closer to the center of the world stage than ever before, but we still do not grasp the microphone completely in our hands," she wrote.

One reason, she wrote: a lack of "fighting spirit."

Another foreign ministry spokesman, Zhao Lijian, [became notorious after tweeting](#) that the U.S. military might have brought the coronavirus to China. Twitter later added a [fact-checking label](#) to Mr. Zhao's post. The Times analyzed all of the tweets that Ms. Hua, Mr. Zhao and 12 other Twitter users linked to the Chinese government posted between May 18 and May 25.

The other users included the foreign ministry's main account, as well as the accounts of China's ambassadors to the United States and Britain. They also included nine accounts run by state news outlets.

That week, Beijing moved to tighten its [control over Hong Kong](#). Mr. Trump threatened to cut off [funding to the World Health Organization](#). American officials congratulated Taiwan's president on the start of her second term. China, which claims Taiwan as its territory, [was furious](#).

Ms. Hua mused about [whether the coronavirus actually originated in the United States](#): “Scientists at the US NIH began developing a #COVID19 vaccine on January 11. There were reports of cases as early as November last year. Any explanation or investigation?” Her post, which refers to the National Institutes of Health, was liked 4,600 times.

The Times’s analysis found that hundreds of the 4,600 accounts that reposted the Chinese government mouthpieces that week behaved suspiciously. Many were incessant tweeters despite having limited followings. After excluding accounts that had zero followers and had tweeted five times or fewer, over a sixth of the accounts had posted 100 or more times for every follower.

A few accounts repeatedly retweeted at set lengths of time after the original post — 9 hours and 49 minutes after, 19 hours and 34 minutes after — suggesting that software had been used to schedule their tweets. Twitter has since suspended some of the accounts for violating its policies.

When contacted by The Times, several pro-China Twitter users denied being part of a government campaign but acknowledged that they joined the platform specifically to follow the foreign ministry representatives. The ministry did not respond to a request for comment.

Others said they were either curious about Mr. Trump’s tweets about China or felt demonized by them. “He has done so many shameless things for re-election,” one user, [@beautifullady76](#), said in a Twitter message. “Countless Chinese people are angry and everyone has the right to the truth. We just want to say a fair word for China!”

Public records show that Beijing is trying to expand its influence on the Western internet. China’s internet regulator has sought out contractors to help it “make use of overseas social media platforms to develop online propaganda on major themes,” procurement documents show.

Much of this kind of activity may not appear in official documents, however. The regulator did not respond to a request for comment.

“There’s no reason to think that the parts of the Chinese government that are formally in charge of conducting information operations are not able to conduct operations that are as sophisticated as others,” said Camille François of the network analysis company Graphika. “They just haven’t been publicly exposed and dissected yet.”

Researchers remain on the lookout. ProPublica tracked [10,000 fishy accounts](#) that posted about the coronavirus and the Hong Kong protests. Alkemy, an Italian digital marketing firm, [found that inauthentic-looking users](#) were behind many posts celebrating Chinese medical aid to Italy.

In March, two tweets lauding China’s handling of the outbreak were liked and reposted hundreds of thousands of times. The posts were not shocking, funny or newsworthy, and originated from users with modest followings.

That caught the attention of Next Dim, an Israeli company that uses network analytics to identify and prevent financial crime.

“While scanning Twitter, our systems automatically discovered a huge irregularity,” said Next Dim’s chief executive, Netta Marrom. Too huge, he believes, to be the result of chance.

On March 12, the first user, [@manisha kataki](#), posted a video showing workers disinfecting streets in China. “At this rate, China will be back in action very soon, may be much faster than the world expects,” the user wrote.

	<p>The next day, another user, @Ejiketion, retweeted the post, marveling at how China had locked down cities and built coronavirus hospitals. In the West, by contrast, “We washing our hands LOL,” @Ejiketion wrote. The account has since been deleted.</p> <p>The two posts together received more than 382,000 retweets and 1.1 million likes, many of them within the first two days. That made them roughly as popular as Elon Musk’s tweet, also from March, in which the head of Tesla called the coronavirus panic “dumb.”</p> <p>Two other posts that also retweeted @manisha_kataki but translated @Ejiketion’s comment into Spanish and French received a combined 67,000 retweets and 181,000 likes.</p> <p>Next Dim identified around 20 Twitter users whose followers accounted for thousands of the retweets of @manisha_kataki’s and @Ejiketion’s posts. Some of these users had immense followings but rarely tweeted about China.</p> <p>Next Dim’s analysis uncovered other signs that the two tweets’ popularity may not have been organic. Few of the first users to retweet @manisha_kataki’s post were followers of the account, which means they were unlikely to have seen the tweet in their timelines. Thousands of accounts reposted both tweets, even though @Ejiketion’s tweet was itself a repost of @manisha_kataki’s.</p> <p>Neither @manisha_kataki nor @Ejiketion responded to requests for comment.</p>
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HEADLINE	06/08 WHO: pandemic appears worsening
SOURCE	https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/08/world/coronavirus-live-updates.html?action=click&module=Top%20Stories&pgtype=Homepage#link-38a0803b
GIST	<p>The World Health Organization reported on Monday that the number of new daily cases worldwide had hit a new high on Sunday, a sign that the pandemic appeared to be worsening.</p> <p>Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, the organization’s director general, told reporters that more than 100,000 new cases had been reported on nine of the previous 10 days, and that Sunday’s tally — 136,000 cases — was the highest single-day tally so far.</p> <p>The pandemic has sickened more than 7 million people worldwide, according to a New York Times database. As of Tuesday morning, at least 405,400 people had died, and the virus had been detected in nearly every country.</p> <p>Dr. Tedros said that three-quarters of the new cases reported on Sunday came from just 10 countries, mostly in the Americas and South Asia. He urged people who are demonstrating against racism round the world to practice social distancing and other measures to prevent new infections.</p> <p>Also on Monday, a W.H.O. scientist stirred confusion by saying that asymptomatic transmission was not a significant factor in the spread of the virus, as many public health experts had assumed for months.</p>
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HEADLINE	06/08 Protests continue nationwide
SOURCE	https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/08/us/george-floyd-protests.html?action=click&module=Top%20Stories&pgtype=Homepage#link-1a45113c
GIST	<p>Two weeks after George Floyd was killed in Minneapolis, demonstrations against police violence continued to fill the streets of cities and towns across the country on Monday.</p> <p>About 1,000 protesters gathered in Los Angeles near a memorial for those killed by the police.</p>

Thousands more [called for police reforms](#) before a City Council meeting in Charlotte, N.C. And more than 1,000 made their way to a march that began in Washington Square Park in Manhattan.

“This is a young, young revolution,” said Vidal Guzman, 29, as he led marchers down Fifth Avenue in New York. “These are teenagers, people in their 20s, 30-year-olds. We have energy. We believe in what we’re doing, and we’re not going to let up.”

Still, there were signs in parts of the country that the demonstrations that have raged through cities after dark over the past two weeks appeared to be ramping down in many places.

By Monday night in Washington, after more than 40,000 people descended on the nation’s capital over the weekend, the city — for the most part — was quiet. The mouth of Lafayette Square, just yards from the White House, which had been a focal point for days of protests, was more a place of tribute than raised voices.

The black chain-link fence erected last week to keep protesters out had been adorned with flowers and flags, signs and posters. “Stop killing us,” one read. Another: “I am not a threat.”

Geoff Thiel, 24, of Washington, was still in the park after arriving on Tuesday to hand out food and water from the back of a dilapidated white Volvo. Now, he and other volunteers had a tent, foldout tables and a significantly larger inventory.

Mr. Thiel opted to measure the crowd size by water bottles distributed. On Saturday: well over a thousand. Monday, he said, “just a few hundred.”

Still, with the economic devastation caused by the coronavirus giving people plenty of time to participate, activists vowed not to lose visibility or momentum. And it seemed it might only take another incident of police violence, like those seen during demonstrations across the country in recent weeks, to renew the rage.

“I’ll come out day after day after day,” said Andrew Jackson, a 25-year-old government contractor who said his own experiences of police abuse had compelled him to cut back on his work hours and join rallies in Washington.

While city streets have calmed throughout much of the country, the Pacific Northwest has continued to see tense nightly standoffs between demonstrators and the police. On Monday, demonstrators in Portland, Ore., began their latest march by shutting down Interstate 84, while those in Seattle moved barricades in the city’s Capitol Hill neighborhood to create a protected space.

The persistent pressure from demonstrators has stirred further change in police departments. In Portland, Chief Jami Resch announced Monday that she was stepping down, saying new leadership was needed to help rebuild trust. In Seattle, police officers abandoned and boarded up their East Precinct building, which has been the center of demonstrations in the city.

Both cities have vowed to limit their use of tear gas, although at a protest that lasted from Sunday night into Monday morning, the police in Seattle still ended up discharging it, saying they were being targeted with projectiles. Two City Council members have called on Seattle’s mayor, Jenny Durkan, to resign.

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HEADLINE	06/08 Politicians rethink police budgets, reforms
SOURCE	https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/08/us/unrest-defund-police.html?action=click&module=Top%20Stories&pgtype=Homepage
GIST	MINNEAPOLIS — In an abrupt change of course, the mayor of New York vowed to cut the budget of the nation’s largest police force. In Los Angeles, the mayor called for redirecting millions of dollars from

policing after protesters gathered outside his home. And in Minneapolis, City Council members pledged to dismantle their police force and completely reinvent how public safety is handled.

As tens of thousands of people have demonstrated against police violence over the past two weeks, calls have emerged in cities across the country for fundamental changes to American policing.

The pleas for change have taken a variety of forms — including measures to restrict police use of military-style equipment and efforts to require officers to face strict discipline in cases of misconduct. Parks, universities and schools have distanced themselves from local police departments, severing contracts. In some places, the calls for change have gone still further, aiming to abolish police departments, shift police funds into social services or defund police departments partly or entirely.

“It is a critical time that we can see concrete change,” said the Rev. Al Sharpton, who last week addressed the crowd gathered for [a memorial service for George Floyd](#), the black man who died after a white police officer pressed his knee into his neck for nearly nine minutes in Minneapolis last month. “The legislation and the policy changes will be the ones that determine the victory of this movement.”

Democrats in Congress on Monday unveiled legislation aimed at ending excessive use of force by the police and making it easier to identify, track and prosecute police misconduct. The measures were seen as the most expansive intervention into policing that federal lawmakers have proposed in recent memory.

The legislation would curtail protections that shield police officers accused of misconduct from being prosecuted and would set restrictions aimed at barring officers from using deadly force except as a last resort. The fate of the measures was far from certain; they were expected to pass swiftly in the Democratic-led House, but President Trump and Republican lawmakers have yet to signal what measures, if any, they would accept. The legislation under consideration does not contemplate defunding police departments and falls short of what many protesters have demanded.

For his part, Mr. Trump on Monday [discarded proposals to remove funds](#) from police departments. “We won’t be defunding our police,” he said. “We won’t be dismantling our police.” His attorney general, William P. Barr, said that it would be wrong to reduce police budgets in part because he felt the country needed more policing to preserve public safety, and warned that the nation would see “chaos” and “more killings” should any major city disband its department.

Former Vice President Joseph R. Biden Jr., the presumptive Democratic presidential nominee, “does not believe that police should be defunded,” [a campaign spokesman said on Monday](#), adding that Mr. Biden “supports the urgent need for reform” as well as financial support for community policing programs.

Around the country, city and state leaders were weighing overhauls of their policing policies, aware of the delicate balance of voters’ concerns about crime versus their repulsion at police brutality.

In Albany, New York State lawmakers on Monday began passing a wide-ranging package of bills targeting police misconduct, overcoming deep-seated opposition from law enforcement unions. The measures, many of which have languished for years, include [a ban on the use of chokeholds](#) as well as the repeal of a decades-old statute that has effectively [hidden the disciplinary records](#) of police officers from public view.

Last week, a City Council budget meeting in Nashville stretched on for more than eight hours, coming to a close well after midnight as residents organized by a coalition of community groups lined up to demand that the police budget be cut.

The idea of removing money from police forces, once largely put forth for years by academics and advocacy groups, appeared to be shifting into the spotlight, as activists and elected officials in cities like Nashville, Portland, Ore., and Denver weighed the possibility.

“This is totally new,” said Stacie Gilmore, City Council member for a largely Latino and African-American district in Denver who had received 2,500 emails in the past three days demanding the city defund the police. “We’re always scrambling to get enough resources. Our Police Department by default serves as social worker, therapist, family counselor, career counselor. We don’t need the police to do that job anymore. It’s not working for communities of color.”

Late last week, after several days of protests, Mayor Ted Wheeler of Portland announced an end to school resource officers, freeing up \$1 million to be used elsewhere with community input, according to Tim Becker, a spokesman for the mayor.

Around the country, the calls from activists and other leaders for defunding police departments have taken on different meanings in different places. Most pleas for defunding the police do not signal a wish to end efforts at public safety. Rather, officials say they want to stop spending millions of dollars on certain items for the police, such as military-style equipment. Some proposals seek to trim the number of officers, a prospect that could force a debate over union contracts.

The end goal, advocates say, is to put an end to horrific scenes like the death of Mr. Floyd in Minneapolis.

In that city, council members took a first major step toward dismantling its police force on Sunday when nine of them, a veto-proof majority, pledged to revamp policing. Specifics were uncertain but council members promised to listen to concerns from community groups and cautioned changes would take time. “We’re reclaiming the conversation of public safety and we’re saying, ‘It doesn’t have to be fear-based, it doesn’t have to be punishment-based,’” said Alondra Cano, a council member.

Other lawmakers and leaders say defunding police departments could have unintended consequences. Some people worry about safety if fewer armed officers are on patrol, especially in summer months when crime rates tend to spike.

Jim Cooper, a Democratic state legislator in California, urged cities to proceed with caution when they consider cutting police budgets.

“You still have bad people out there who do bad things,” said Mr. Cooper, who spent 30 years in law enforcement. “And most of the crime is in underserved neighborhoods, not in SoHo or Beverly Hills.”

After 10 nights of mass protests and several videos documenting police violence in New York, Mayor Bill de Blasio on Sunday vowed to cut an unspecified amount from the New York Police Department’s \$6 billion budget and redirect it toward youth and other social programs.

Earlier, Mr. de Blasio had expressed substantial skepticism about the wisdom of cutting police funding, even as he acknowledged that all agencies might face cuts should the federal government fail to come through with more coronavirus relief.

In Los Angeles, Mayor Eric Garcetti last week agreed to redirect \$150 million from the Police Department’s nearly \$2 billion budget and other city programs to health and education programs among others. The move came after calls from members of Black Lives Matter Los Angeles and the City Council.

Officials from police unions have pushed back against the idea with sharp rebukes in some cases. In Los Angeles, the union issued a statement saying that a crisis response team should be sent to the mayor “because Eric has apparently lost his damn mind.” Union members [warned that spending cuts would lead to more crime.](#)

In Minneapolis, [police have used force against black people](#) at a rate at least seven times as often as they have against white people over the past five years, according to the city’s data.

That statistic helps explain why the idea of abolishing the police force makes sense to some African-Americans. Some black people say police departments have not served to protect their communities, but

rather to harass and brutalize them. Amanda Brazelton, a resident of Minneapolis's predominantly black North Side, said she supported using money that now goes to the police to instead create community-led safety efforts.

Ms. Brazelton said negative interactions with the police started when she was 14 and riding in a car that was pulled over. The officers did nothing when her white friends got out, she said. But when she stepped out of the car, the officers pulled weapons on her and yelled.

Now, if there is an issue at her home or she feels in danger, Ms. Brazelton, a 30-year-old caterer, said she would call friends or family before the police.

"As crazy as it seems, it could be something for the better," Ms. Brazelton said of abolishing the police. "They kill black people."

There is a difference between defunding the police and abolishing the police, said Arianna Nason, a member of the MPD150 Collective, a coalition of community activists in Minneapolis.

She envisions a city where community watch groups or app-based safety groups could respond to crimes.

The prospect that neighborhood watch groups could stereotype and endanger people of color is also a concern among some people. Ms. Nason said she understood that, but that danger already existed in the current system.

"A lot of it is a leap of faith," she said. "I want to choose to believe in humanity. I want to choose to believe that this moment feels different because it is different."

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HEADLINE	06/08 Since 2015, police fatally shot 5,400 people
SOURCE	https://www.washingtonpost.com/investigations/protests-spread-over-police-shootings-police-promised-reforms-every-year-they-still-shoot-nearly-1000-people/2020/06/08/5c204f0c-a67c-11ea-b473-04905b1af82b_story.html
GIST	<p>Protests against the use of deadly force by police swept across the country in 2015.</p> <p>Demonstrators marched in Chicago, turned chaotic in Baltimore, and occupied the area outside a Minneapolis police station for weeks. Protesters repeatedly took to the streets of Ferguson, Mo., where a white police officer had killed a black teenager the previous year and fueled anew a national debate about the use of force and how police treat minorities.</p> <p>That year, The Washington Post began tallying how many people were shot and killed by police. By the end of 2015, officers had fatally shot nearly 1,000 people, twice as many as ever documented in one year by the federal government.</p> <p>With the issue flaring in city after city, some officials vowed to reform how police use force.</p> <p>The next year, however, police nationwide again shot and killed nearly 1,000 people. Then they fatally shot about the same number in 2017 — and have done so for every year after that, according to The Post's ongoing count. Since 2015, police have shot and killed 5,400 people.</p> <p>This toll has proven impervious to waves of protests, such as those now flooding American streets in the wake of George Floyd's death at the hands of police in Minneapolis. The number killed has remained steady despite fluctuating crime rates, changeovers in big-city police leadership and a nationwide push for criminal justice reform.</p>

Even amid the [coronavirus](#) pandemic and orders that kept millions at home for weeks, police shot and killed 463 people through the first week of June — 49 more than the same period in 2019. In May, police shot and killed 110 people, the most in any one month since The Post began tracking it.

The year over year consistency has confounded those who have spent decades studying the issue.

“It is difficult to explain why we haven’t seen significant fluctuations in the shooting from year to year,” former Charlotte police chief Darrel Stephens said. “There’s been significant investments that have been made in de-escalation training. There’s been a lot of work.”

The overwhelming majority of people killed are armed. Nearly half of all people fatally shot by police are white. Most of these shootings draw little or no attention beyond a news story.

Some become flash points in the country’s ongoing reckoning about race and police. The ones prompting the loudest outcries often involve people who are black, unarmed, or both, shootings that have brought the harshest scrutiny onto police.

Since The Post began tracking the shootings, black people have been shot and killed by police at [disproportionate rates](#) — both in terms of overall shootings and the shootings of unarmed Americans. The number of black and unarmed people fatally shot by police has declined since 2015, but whether armed or not, black people are still shot and killed at a disproportionately higher rate than white people.

Some of the most incendiary moments in recent years involving police and race occurred without a gunshot.

Eric Garner was videotaped pleading for air with a New York police officer’s arm around his neck before his death in 2014. Freddie Gray died of a severe spinal injury in Baltimore the following year, suffered when he was transported in a police van wearing shackles but not a seat belt.

The outrage now rippling across America began when a video from Minneapolis showed Floyd, hands cuffed behind his back and prone on the ground, gasping “I can’t breathe” as a white police officer drove his knee into the black man’s neck. The officer held it there for nearly 9 minutes, prosecutors said. For almost three of those minutes, Floyd was not responsive, they said.

It was the kind of use-of-force incident that might have gone otherwise unnoticed. Minneapolis police initially reported that Floyd “physically resisted officers” and then “appeared to be suffering medical distress.” No weapons of any kind were used, police added.

Then the [video footage](#) emerged. It showed Floyd pinned on the street, begging for air, calling for his mother, for minute after minute. He was pronounced dead not long after. The officer and three others with him at the scene were fired and all face criminal charges.

His death became a spark, setting off anger that spread quickly, extending into big cities and small towns, red states and blue. Protests and unrest — mostly peaceful, sometimes violent and destructive — expanded into dozens of cities, taking aim at not just policing tactics but broader racial inequities embedded in American life.

Floyd’s death was “one event in a continuous system of oppression,” said the Rev. Graylan Hagler of the Plymouth Congregational United Church of Christ in the District. “We know some names now, but there are thousands of those we do not know.”

Hagler, who has been organizing protests and talking to activists, said the emergence of video footage showing controversial police encounters has been pivotal in transforming the national conversation.

Recordings from across the country showing some of these moments have gone viral again and again since 2015, documenting deadly encounters on city streets and during traffic stops filmed by police cameras and bystanders alike.

“White Americans generally thought police to [be] friendly protectors and . . . generally looked at stories of police misconduct cynically, and all of a sudden they have to come face-to-face with the myth that they have been living with,” Hagler said.

'The past-due notice for unpaid debts'

The nationwide frustration with police has exploded amid a pandemic that has taken a [particularly brutal toll](#) on black Americans. It also has emerged following a spate of incidents again highlighting issues involving race and justice in America — including the death of [Breonna Taylor](#), an aspiring nurse in Louisville killed by police serving a no-knock warrant who shot her eight times in her home; the death of [Ahmaud Arbery](#), a black jogger chased down and shot to death in Georgia; and the viral video of [a white woman](#) wielding the police as a threat against a black birdwatcher during a confrontation in Central Park.

After Floyd’s death, these incidents and other tensions already enveloping America unleashed pent-up anger, fear and pain.

“This is generational, what we’re seeing on the streets of America,” said Phillip Atiba Goff, a professor in policing equity at the John Jay College of Criminal Justice. “This is the past-due notice for the unpaid debts this country owes black America. And as always, law enforcement is just the spark, right?”

Fatal police shootings are relatively rare events in a country where nearly 40,000 people die from firearms each year. Hundreds of thousands of police officers work in America, [most of whom](#) will never fire their guns on duty.

When fatal shootings occur, police officials often contend that officers, facing mortal threats, had to make split-second decisions to protect themselves and others. Police patrol a country with almost as many guns as people, and they never know if the next traffic stop, 911 call, or search warrant will be the one where someone comes out shooting.

Los Angeles Police Chief Michel Moore said he would rather his officers never have to use deadly force.

“But last year, I had officers in eight instances that were shot at,” he said. “So those are difficult circumstances in which to ask an officer to not defend himself. In fact, they’re not difficult. They’re impossible.”

Since 2015, 70 percent of the 5,400 people fatally shot by police were armed with a knife or a gun, according to The Post’s database. More than 3,000 of them had guns.

White people, who account for 60 percent of the American population, made up 45 percent of those shot and killed by police. Black people make up 13 percent of the population but have accounted for 23 percent of those shot and killed by police. Hispanic people, which account for about 18 percent of the population, make up 16 percent of the people killed. For 9 percent of people, The Post was unable to determine their race.

The Post started tracking fatal shootings by on-duty police officers after a Ferguson police officer killed Michael Brown, an unarmed black teenager, during an altercation after a convenience store reported a robbery in August 2014. That shooting set off demonstrations and sparked calls for reform.

Amid the turmoil, nobody could answer a simple question: How often do police shoot and kill someone? No one [knew for sure](#), because no government agency kept a comprehensive count.

When The Post began tracking these shootings, it became clear that police were shooting and killing people about [twice as often](#) as numbers reported by the FBI, which collected voluntary reports from police departments. The Post's database, which is regularly updated, relies on a collection of news media accounts, social media posts and police reports.

In 2015, the first year The Post tallied these numbers, officers killed 94 unarmed people, the largest group among them black men: 38.

The following year saw a large drop in the number of unarmed shootings, declining to 51, with 22 of those killed being white and 19 black. The number has remained relatively steady each year since. In 2019, 56 unarmed people were shot and killed by police, with white people accounting for 25 of them, while 15 of them were black.

"The reduction in fatal shootings of unarmed suspects is much more of an important factor than the overall number," said Geoffrey P. Alpert, a criminology professor at the University of South Carolina and co-author of ["Evaluating Police Uses of Force."](#) "That shows real progress. . . . That probably is a better barometer of what's going on with police in the black community than the total number of fatal shootings."

'This is without question a murder'

The cycle kept repeating. A shooting or other deadly encounter with police would propel the issue back into the news. Graphic video of it would go viral. People would mobilize and march. Again and again, activists called for the justice system to punish those involved.

Sometimes the flash points for demonstrations have not involved police officers — such as the 2012 death of Trayvon Martin, a black teenager shot to death in Florida by a neighborhood watch volunteer who had followed him, an incident that [helped fuel](#) the Black Lives Matter movement.

In most cases, the protests, marches, pleas and painful moments followed an incident involving a person with a badge captured on video.

It happened in November 2014 in Cleveland, where a police officer shot 12-year-old Tamir Rice. A 911 caller reported a boy playing with a gun that was likely fake — information that never made it to the officers who responded. A grand jury declined to charge the officer.

Two days before that shooting, a grand jury made the same decision about Darren Wilson, the Ferguson police officer who shot and killed Michael Brown.

After Ferguson, some prosecutors moved quickly to charge officers, though those have been the exceptions.

Michael Slager, a white police officer in North Charleston, S.C., was recorded in 2015 firing bullets into the back of Walter Scott, an unarmed black man fleeing after a traffic stop.

The officer said he feared for his life. He was charged with murder. The jury deadlocked. Slager wound up pleading guilty later to a federal civil rights charge.

Not long after Slager was arrested, another video came out. This one showed Ray Tensing, a white University of Cincinnati police officer, shooting Samuel DuBose, an unarmed black man, during a traffic stop.

Joe Deters, the Hamilton County prosecutor, said his office had reviewed more than 100 shootings by police and it was the first where they concluded, "This is without question a murder."

Juries deadlocked twice. Deters decided against seeking a third trial.

Even when officers are prosecuted, convictions are difficult to obtain, according to Philip M. Stinson, a criminologist at Bowling Green State University in Ohio, who tracks such cases.

Since 2005, 110 nonfederal law enforcement officers have been charged with murder or manslaughter for shooting someone on duty, Stinson's records show. From those ranks, 42 officers were convicted of a crime — often a lesser offense — while 50 were not, their cases usually ending with acquittals or dismissals. More than a dozen cases are pending, according to Stinson.

One of the convictions happened in Chicago in 2018. Officer Jason Van Dyke had shot and killed Laquan McDonald, a black 17-year-old, four years earlier. When video footage eventually came out, it showed the teenager moving away when the officer started shooting. The day the video became public, Van Dyke was arrested and charged with murder. Demonstrators took to the streets.

The Chicago police superintendent was forced out, the prosecutor who waited to charge the officer lost her reelection bid, and the Justice Department investigated and assailed the police department for its [use of excessive force](#). Van Dyke was sentenced last year to more than six years behind bars.

The more typical outcome is what happened in Minnesota and Louisiana after two police shootings on back-to-back days in 2016.

On July 5, 2016, police in Baton Rouge shot and killed Alton Sterling, who had a loaded gun in his pocket. The next day, a police officer in the suburbs outside St. Paul and Minneapolis shot and killed Philando Castile, who was licensed to carry a gun and [told the officer](#) he had one in the car.

Local and federal authorities later declined to charge the Baton Rouge officers. Prosecutors in Minnesota charged Jeronimo Yanez, the officer who killed Castile. He was acquitted.

Video footage from both cases quickly spread online and sent shock waves across the country. Marches and rallies spread from city to city, presaging the demonstrations that followed Floyd's death.

In Dallas, one of the peaceful protests was suddenly riven by bloodshed: A gunman, who police said was angry about the recent police shootings, opened fire on officers, killing five. Less than two weeks later, a man who had called for violence against police killed three more officers in Baton Rouge. Police killed both attackers.

Policing has gotten safer in recent decades, with line-of-duty deaths dropping, records show. But police patrol a country with nearly one gun for every person, and recent studies from professors at Harvard and Carnegie Mellon universities have found that areas with higher rates of gun ownership have higher rates of police shootings.

"The overwhelming majority of those shooting situations are . . . both lawful and within policy and are situations that we hope that we can minimize and avoid," said Stephens, the former Charlotte police chief, who also used to lead the Major Cities Chiefs Association.

'No national standards'

The outcries and criticism have led to reforms.

Some departments have issued new use-of-force policies, vowed to outfit officers with body cameras and added training to address implicit bias. After Stephon Clark was [shot and killed](#) by Sacramento officers in 2018, California adopted [stricter rules](#) for use of force.

But the momentum stalled. Some departments decided to [drop or postpone](#) their body-camera programs, concluding it was too costly to store the data.

The thousands of police departments nationwide each have their own policies covering everything from how officers use force to whether they can wear nose rings on duty.

Chuck Wexler, executive director of the Police Executive Research Forum, which works with law enforcement officials, said there are “no national standards” regarding training or use of force.

“There is a need for some kind of national approach to retraining police,” Wexler said.

In Minneapolis, the police had been making reforms long before Floyd’s death in the custody of its officers.

The city was one of the program sites for an initiative meant to tackle mistrust of police in minority communities. Officers underwent training and education aimed at addressing implicit bias.

“Minneapolis put in a lot of work,” said Jesse Jannetta, a senior policy fellow at the Urban Institute, which evaluated the work. “They did the intervention. They did, and that was not sufficient to prevent George Floyd from losing his life.”

Minneapolis police shot and killed Jamar Clark, a 24-year-old black man, in November 2015. An officer said Clark was grabbing his gun. His death prompted demonstrators to occupy the area near the department’s 4th Precinct for 18 days. Some witnesses had said Clark was handcuffed when shot, which authorities denied. Prosecutors cleared the officers involved.

The extended demonstration near the police precinct was itself targeted by gunfire. Five protesters were shot by a white man authorities later said was fueled by racial animosity. He was sentenced to 15 years behind bars.

In 2017, the Minneapolis police were the subject of international criticism for another shooting. An Australian woman named Justine Damond, who was white, had called the Minneapolis police to report a possible sexual assault near her home. When police responded and she approached their car, one of the officers fired through the open car window, killing her.

The officer, Mohamed Noor, was charged with murder. He was convicted last year and sentenced to more than 12 years in prison. That case spurred additional unease among critics of the criminal justice system.

“Many saw that as kind of a mixed bag in terms of what it implied about the potential of the legal system of Minneapolis to create justice of accountability,” said Michelle Phelps, an associate sociology professor at the University of Minnesota. “Here’s the first officer who gets a real conviction in recent memory and it’s a Somali officer and a white victim.”

Fatal shootings by police drifted out of the public spotlight after President Trump’s election in 2016. What had dominated headlines day after day, now took a back seat to other news.

The Post’s database relies significantly on reporting from local media outlets on shootings in their own communities. The amount of reporting done on individual shootings has declined, likely a victim of the continued cuts by local media outlets.

But fatal shootings by police have not slowed — even though the pandemic closed businesses, shuttered schools and effectively shut down much of American life for weeks on end. In May 2019, police shot and killed 74 people. In May of this year, police shot and killed 109 people.

Another consistent statistic from The Post’s examination is the number of people killed by police while in mental distress. About one in four had some mental-health issues.

One explanation for the overall consistency in the number of fatal shootings — and the inability of reforms in individual departments to make much of a dent — comes from [probability theory](#), which suggests that the number of rare events in huge populations will achieve stability absent larger societal changes.

Moore, the Los Angeles police chief, said police need to hear the public's frustrations about shootings. His department has had more fatal shootings than any other in The Post's database — 79 overall. Moore said significant time and money has been invested in training officers to de-escalate standoffs and emphasizing the sanctity of life in public interactions.

The number of fatal shootings by his department has declined annually, from 21 in 2015 to 11 in 2019, according to The Post's data.

"It makes me frustrated because there will be a tendency to think nothing has changed, when I know so many instances of police chiefs that have told me that six months ago we would have shot that guy, and we didn't because of the training that they've received," Wexler said.

Advocates of police reform said part of the problem is the lack of a full, nationwide accounting of police use of force.

Government officials pledged years ago to start collecting more data on the use of force, but that effort has not produced any better awareness.

After The Post demonstrated a dramatic undercount by the FBI of fatal police shootings, the bureau's then-director, James B. Comey, called the lack of federal data "embarrassing and ridiculous."

An FBI policy board recommended that the agency track fatal and nonfatal shootings. The new effort was soon widened to catalogue all use-of-force incidents that result in serious bodily harm or death.

That data collection only began in earnest in January 2019. The program also suffers from some of the same shortfalls as the FBI's Uniform Crime Reporting Program — chiefly that participation is voluntary. So far, only 40 percent of the 18,000 police departments nationwide submit data on police use-of-force incidents, according to the FBI.

No nationwide data on use of force

Fatal shootings by police are a limited metric for answering larger questions about how police use their powers, experts said. Whether a shooting is fatal may depend entirely on a few centimeters in the trajectory of a bullet.

No nationwide data exists on how often police shoot and wound someone, or how often they fire and miss. And no comprehensive national data exists on how other kinds of force — like chokeholds or the use of batons or Tasers — are used.

"The fatalities is a very good measure of some things, but doesn't include the kinds of events and activities that we're seeing all over the country that normally don't lead to death," said Alpert, the criminology professor. "Unless there's an injury or unless there's a complaint that gets traction, either we don't know, or it doesn't matter."

Floyd's death is a prime example of that, Alpert said.

"If this were to happen and he hadn't died, you'd read the report: 'He was resisting, we had to control him,' " Alpert said. " 'We use our trained tactic . . . and he was taken to jail.' End of story, no one would know, no one would care."

Janeé Harteau, the ex-Minneapolis police chief ousted after Damond's death, said watching the Floyd footage "makes me question what could we have missed" in other instances involving police that were not captured on video.

During the current wave of protests, police have been filmed again and again [using force against people](#). "We're in the middle of an international pandemic," said Goff, the professor. "People are risking their lives to have their voice heard."

	<p>Dominic Archibald, a retired Army colonel whose son was killed by a San Bernardino County sheriff's deputy in Barstow, Calif., said she hopes the outcome of the current wave of demonstrations will be different.</p> <p>"What bothers a lot of families . . . unless something is sensationalized, perhaps in the media largely, we're just fighting the battle alone," Archibald said.</p> <p>Her son, 29-year-old Nathaniel Harris Pickett Jr., was shot and killed in 2015 after an altercation with the deputy. He was unarmed. In 2018, a jury in a federal civil rights trial awarded his family \$33.5 million over the killing. Authorities concluded the shooting was justified. The deputy faced no charges.</p> <p>The sheriff's department did not respond to a request for comment.</p> <p>"No action has been taken," she said. "They haven't even pretended as if they are considering action. Have I given that up? No. I have not given up pressing this. But I shouldn't have to."</p>
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HEADLINE	06/08 'Cruise ships on land'; Las Vegas reopens
SOURCE	https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/08/us/las-vegas-coronavirus-casinos.html?action=click&module=Top%20Stories&pgtype=Homepage
GIST	<p>It was among the last of the big conferences before the coronavirus pandemic shuttered the massive casinos lining the Las Vegas Strip in March. More than 1,000 people gathered at MGM Resorts International's Mirage Hotel & Casino for the Women of Power Summit, after organizers of the networking event for executive women of color assured attendees that the risk of attendance was "extremely low."</p> <p>That seemed a reasonable bet, given that Las Vegas had yet to record a single coronavirus case. What no one realized was that one of the conference speakers, a New Yorker, had already contracted the virus by the time she landed at McCarran International Airport on March 6. Two days later, she was in the hospital.</p> <p>Nevada's case count now stands at more than 9,600, and as of Sunday afternoon, 438 people had died. But the case involving the Women of Power speaker is nowhere to be found in those grim totals, despite the fact that she stayed, tested positive, was hospitalized and recovered in Las Vegas.</p> <p>That is because the state's coronavirus tally does not include visitors who get sick there or soon after returning home. Instead, only state residents who test positive are counted.</p> <p>If one of the trickiest aspects of containing the pandemic is figuring out when and where people contract the virus and then quickly tracing their contacts, then there is perhaps no place in the nation where that is as tricky a task as in Las Vegas, where last year guests outnumbered residents by 20 to 1.</p> <p>Casinos along the Strip last week reopened their doors to a flood of visitors, masked and unmasked but equally eager to test their luck after a 78-day hiatus. An over-the-top water show set to Elvis' "Viva Las Vegas" at the Bellagio Hotel marked the occasion, and a marquee sign at the Aria Resort & Casino summed up Sin City's new social distancing ethos: "Think dirty thoughts, but keep your hands clean."</p> <p>As Nevada embarks on one of the most epidemiologically complex reopening experiments in the nation, Gov. Steve Sisolak says he is confident that "every precaution possible" has been taken to ensure that the famed resorts can both serve guests and protect public health. Dealers and players are separated by Plexiglas, dice are doused in sanitizer after every throw, and guests, encouraged though not required to wear masks, are subject to mandatory temperature checks.</p>

“I don’t think you’ll find a safer place than Las Vegas,” the governor said during a recent call with reporters. But he added that he is closely tracking the state’s case numbers and will “pull back if it causes any type of problem.”

But as the MGM case illustrates, those numbers offer only a partial picture of virus spread, one that could prevent officials from seeing and acting upon dangerous spikes in real time. Moreover, the state cannot readily identify clusters of cases among employees at a given casino. And while the contact-tracing challenges faced by Las Vegas are extreme, they highlight larger national systemic problems.

The resident-focused tallying method used by Nevada is shared by states across the nation, adopted to avoid counting the same cases multiple times.

The problem with that methodology, experts say, is that it can obscure whether a venue with super-spreading potential is becoming a hot spot, particularly in tourist destinations where visitors from around the world gather en masse.

Michael T. Osterholm, the director of the Center for Infectious Disease Research and Policy at the University of Minnesota, said the system, which assigns the lead investigatory role to officials in a person’s state of residence, worked fine for past outbreaks of diseases such as Legionnaires’ disease. But Covid-19, he said, is different.

“Here you have not only an issue of magnitude, but also a long incubation period and the factor of super-spreaders — one person can go into a casino and infect 200 people,” he said. “It’s a real challenge for any place with a high concentration of visitors, and it needs to be addressed.”

A handful of states keep a separate, public log of cases involving visitors who test positive for Covid-19 within their borders. Florida, home to snowbirds and Disney World, is one. Nevada is not.

“If you are drawing a map, you don’t leave out mountains because that would be an incomplete map,” said Alberto Moscoso, a spokesman for the Florida Department of Health. “It’s the same thing here.”

Last year, 42.5 million visitors flocked to Las Vegas. A little over one-fifth came from California, while another fifth were foreigners. Only a very small percentage of guests on the Strip were from Nevada.

Much depends on Las Vegas’ ability to lure those visitors back: Nevada casinos generated nearly \$8.8 billion in revenue last year, and the state’s unemployment climbed to 28 percent during the shutdown, the highest in the nation.

Rebecca Katz, director of the Center for Global Health Science and Security at Georgetown University, is an infectious disease expert advising the Vatican as well as Wynn Resorts, which operates two casinos in the city, on reopening risk mitigation. Asked which was more complicated, she didn’t hesitate: “Vegas!”

“This is a group of folks working to find a way to reopen in a way that is safe, but it’s really hard,” she said. “If I get on a plane and show up in Las Vegas, and I go to three restaurants and play cards and go to a pool, there’s no national system in place to say, ‘Hey whoever came into contact with me needs to get tested.’”

In the case of the Women of Power Summit at MGM’s Mirage, casino executives said the woman who became sick initially felt unwell on the plane, but did not immediately realize what was wrong. She gave her speech and interacted with guests and staff before telling hotel security she needed to go to the hospital.

After she tested positive for the coronavirus, Dr. Fermin Leguen, the acting chief health officer for the Southern Nevada Health District, said he notified New York that it had a case involving a woman hospitalized in Nevada, issued a public notice and asked summit organizers to notify attendees.

It is unclear what organizers did with that information or if other participants got sick; Caroline Clarke, chief brand officer for Black Enterprise, which hosted the event, declined to comment.

But John McManus, MGM's general counsel, said that when the resort did its own contact tracing it found that three senior resort employees who had been in contact with the woman were infected, two of whom had to be hospitalized.

That cluster was not, however, readily apparent to either health officials or the public, even though it involved Nevada residents.

That is because while local health districts are capable of tracking cases to certain workplaces — they currently do so for nursing homes, prisons and preschools — the database they use does not allow officials to sort cases by casino.

“That information might be available within the history of a case, but we'd have to go over each case to find it,” said Dr. Leguen.

That is what Dr. Leguen's staff did when asked by The New York Times to provide case totals involving casino employees from the beginning of the outbreak through April 2, to include the two-week incubation period after the governor's March 18 shutdown order. The answer, he said, was at least 27.

But Dr. Leguen seemed unaware of the three MGM cases linked to the conference presenter's case, incorrectly stating that “none of the hotel employees” in contact with the woman had developed coronavirus. He declined to explain that discrepancy, saying he could not comment on individual cases.

He did, however, note that the district uses the Center for Disease Control and Prevention's Covid-19 Case Report Form to collect case information, a form that does not require health departments to list a person's employer. Understanding a casino's role in virus spread is made more difficult by the fact that what happens in Vegas does not necessarily stay there; guests, who on average spend three to four nights in Las Vegas, might contract the virus at a casino but become symptomatic only after returning home.

Reopening regulations require casinos to notify health authorities if they learn of a Covid-19 case at their property. But they are under no obligation to follow up with guests after they leave, and different resorts have adopted different policies.

MGM is providing a contact email and asking guests to voluntarily notify the company if they test positive within two weeks of their stay. But other casinos, including two owned by Wynn Resorts, have decided to leave that job to health officials.

Dr. Leguen said that ultimately he relies upon health officials in other states or countries to notify him if a person who visited Las Vegas during the incubation period tests positive after they leave.

But understaffed health departments can barely keep up with what is happening within their own states. Dr. Leguen received only 17 such out-of-state notifications through April 2, according to a spokeswoman, even though by that point the virus was raging.

And visitors to Las Vegas tend to mill about in ways that present a contacting tracing nightmare. Nearly three-quarters of visitors to the Strip gamble, according to the Las Vegas Convention and Visitor Authority, hopping not only from table to table but from resort to resort, and more than half of them see shows.

Consider the scale of Wynn Resorts alone: On any given day before the shutdown, some 10,000 visitors walked through its doors, where they consumed an average of 34,000 drinks and 17,000 meals among 19 restaurants.

	<p>“Cruise ships on land” D. Taylor, the president of UNITE HERE, a union representing casino workers, calls the mega-casinos.</p> <p>Mariano Minterero, 64, works in housekeeping at the Bellagio, another MGM property. He was eager to return to work after so long without a paycheck, but worried, too. In the days following the shutdown, he said, he had heard that a number of housekeeping employees had contracted the virus.</p> <p>“I know we are working for a good company,” Mr. Minterero said, “but I’m a little scared.”</p> <p>Both MGM and Wynn Resorts are going beyond Nevada’s minimum reopening requirements. Wynn required all returning employees to be tested, for instance, while MGM will offer on-site tests to guests who feel unwell. Both said they also would be willing to support making it easier to track employee cases by casino.</p> <p>“I’m in favor of anything that gives all of us more information during this period of time,” Mr. McManus said. “You have to come at this virus from every angle, because the last thing we want is for people to get sick and for us to have to shut down again. No one wants to go through this again.”</p>
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HEADLINE	06/09 SPD tear gas moratorium; then used it
SOURCE	https://apnews.com/a99028ede1c6ea8be59a1d6fd762e183
GIST	<p>SEATTLE (AP) — Just days after Seattle’s mayor and police chief promised a month-long moratorium on using a type of tear gas to disperse protesters, the department used it again during an overnight demonstration, bringing severe criticism Monday from City Council members, vows to overhaul the department and calls for the mayor to consider resigning.</p> <p>Under pressure from councilors, protesters and dozens of other elected leaders who have demanded that officers dial back their tactics, the Seattle Police Department said it would remove barricades near the East Precinct building in the Capitol Hill neighborhood, where protesters and riot squads have faced off nightly. The department said protesters could march past the building and it would remain staffed to prevent damage.</p> <p>Council President Lorena Gonzalez and others expressed their frustration with Mayor Jenny Durkan and the police, signaling radical change could be on the way. Gonzalez said the council must think in a “transformational way” about how the city views public safety and funds the police.</p> <p>“When I hear people say there’s just a few bad apples on the police force, I adamantly disagree with that,” said Council Member Debra Juarez, a former King County judge. “It’s just not a healthy tree. We need to plant a new tree.”</p> <p>Council member Kshama Sawant had already called for Durkan to resign, and members Teresa Mosqueda and Tammy Morales said Monday the mayor should at least think about it.</p> <p>“How many people need to write in about being gassed in their own homes? How many people have to be sprayed in the street every night or experience getting hit with flash bombs or rubber bullets?” Mosqueda said during a council briefing. “The mayor should ... ask herself if she is the right leader, and resign.”</p> <p>In a subsequent interview, Mosqueda said that while she believes the mayor should consider resigning, changing who heads the city is less important than systemic change in its approach to public safety.</p> <p>As the council’s budget chair, Mosqueda announced an inquest into police spending. She said she wants to cut police funding by half and reinvest the money “in communities that we’ve failed,” including in affordable housing and mass transit.</p>

Durkan has a history of working on police reform. Most significantly, as Seattle U.S. attorney she led the Justice Department in forcing Seattle police to make reforms in training, use of force and accountability under a 2012 consent decree. Her office betrayed no intention of her stepping down and said she “will not be distracted from the critical work that needs to be done.”

“As the person who originally investigated the Seattle Police Department for the unconstitutional use of force, Mayor Durkan believes that SPD can lead the nation on continued reforms and accountability, but knows this week has eroded trust at a time when trust is most crucial,” spokeswoman Kamaria Hightower said in a written statement.

The developments in Seattle came soon after Minneapolis City Council members said they intend to disband the city’s police department following the killing of George Floyd and protests against police brutality and racism that have erupted around the globe.

Washington Gov. Jay Inslee said he was convening an advisory group of black leaders and law enforcement representatives to develop police reform proposals. Among the topics on the table are an independent, statewide investigative unit for officer-involved killings; rethinking police use of force; and creating a legally binding obligation that officers report misconduct by fellow officers.

Sunday was the second night in a row that problems occurred in Seattle’s Capitol Hill neighborhood. Police used flash bangs and tear gas to break up a crowd after authorities said people threw rocks and fireworks at officers.

Earlier Sunday evening, in an incident captured in dramatic video, a man drove a car at protesters, hit a barricade and is suspected of shooting a 27-year-old protester who had reached into the driver’s side window in an attempt to stop him. The protester, who was shot in the shoulder, walked away from the scene while being attended to by medics, and police said they arrested the driver, identified as Nikolas Fernandez, for investigation of assault after he got out of the car brandishing a handgun.

At his court hearing Monday, Fernandez initially had bail set at \$200,000, which was later reduced to \$150,000 after family members spoke of his community ties and inability to pay. It wasn’t clear if he had retained a lawyer.

According to a police report, he told officers his brother works at the East Precinct; he thought he could drive through the area; and that he feared for his life when the protester reached in his window, so he grabbed the gun — which was unholstered on the passenger seat — and fired.

Durkan and Best have apologized over the use of tear gas and pepper spray on nonviolent protesters but have said police must deal with a small criminal element within the demonstrations.

Durkan on Sunday night said she would freeze spending on police technology, weapons, vehicles and buildings until further talks with community members and find \$100 million in budget allocations for community needs. That money will not come from police budgets, as many protesters have demanded, Durkan said.

Protesters gathered again Monday night in the city’s Capitol Hill neighborhood near the boarded-up police precinct. At one point early in the evening, people chanted at police, “We don’t trust you.”

More than two hours after police as promised withdrew from their nightly face-off with protesters, people remained just outside the precinct listening while speakers called it a victory to be there and listed demands for systemic change.

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SOURCE	https://apnews.com/07b2b288f59996d22f25074f686c1f7b
GIST	<p>MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — To truly understand the rage people in this city felt as they watched a video of George Floyd begging, gasping and slowly succumbing beneath the weight of a police officer’s knee, it’s necessary to step back in time.</p> <p>Seven years before Floyd’s cheek was smashed against the pavement, Terrance “Mookie” Franklin cowered behind a water heater in a dark basement after fleeing police who were trying to confront him about a burglary. With flashlights mounted on their guns and a police dog leading the way, they thumped down the stairs and soon found him hiding.</p> <p>Fourteen minutes later, the 22-year-old African American was lying in a puddle of his own blood. Seven bullet holes pockmarked his head and neck, and three more pierced his upper torso.</p> <p>As with so many allegations of police brutality in Minnesota, exactly what happened in that basement on May 10, 2013, may never be known.</p> <p>The official account said two officers were shot and wounded after Franklin grabbed a police gun. But no gunshot residue testing was conducted and an examination of defense evidence suggests friendly fire may have been to blame. A \$795,000 settlement reached with Franklin’s family last year kept those details out of court.</p> <p>What’s clear is this: The deaths of Floyd, Franklin and other black men at the hands of Minneapolis police have exacerbated the corrosive relationship between people of color and a criminal justice system they feel is stacked against them. At every step along the way, they feel choked.</p> <p>It’s a story that dates back more than four decades, to when Minnesota’s small, flourishing black community fell victim to redlining and discriminatory denial of services, including bank loans. Soon after, drugs and guns started flooding the area and crime rates soared.</p> <p>When a fragile truce between gangs and police was shattered in 1992 by the execution-style hit on officer Jerry Haaf, a crackdown followed. It has perpetuated a culture of brutality and impunity that continues to this day, partly because the department has avoided reform, said Michelle Gross of the city’s non-profit Communities United Against Police Brutality.</p> <p>The force did not respond to questions for this story. But police union president Lt. Bob Kroll has steadfastly defended officers’ conduct over the years. In 2019, when the city’s mayor banned “warrior-style” training for police, Kroll said the union itself would pay for the instruction.</p> <p>An AP review of Minneapolis Police Department data found force has been used 11,000 times in the past five years. Black people accounted for 60% of those cases, even though they represent only 19% of the city’s population. Body pins were most commonly used, followed by punching, kicking and shoving.</p> <p>In 2015, the U.S. Justice Department released a report addressing ways to prevent police misconduct, provide more transparency and improve community relations following a request from Minneapolis’ then-police chief. It found there were no clear criteria on the use of force and de-escalation tactics, and that law enforcement agencies either lacked the will or the authority to remove bad officers.</p> <p>SWAT team member Lucas Peterson, who fired five shots into Franklin’s skull, had already been involved in 12 other excessive force cases — including the death of another black man.</p> <p>In 2002, not long after joining the force, Peterson, who is white, used a choke hold on Christopher Burns after responding to a domestic dispute. The medical examiner’s office ruled the death a homicide, and a \$300,000 settlement was paid, though a grand jury chose not to indict.</p>

Four years later, Peterson lied in a police report, saying a woman had jumped on his partner's back during a traffic stop. The charges were dropped after surveillance video proved she didn't. That cost the city \$100,000.

Peterson remains on the job.

Incidents that have drawn national attention since then include the shooting of Philando Castile, 32, during a 2016 traffic stop in nearby Falcon Heights as his girlfriend live-streamed the aftermath on Facebook. The Latino officer was acquitted.

And the death of Jamar Clark, 25, shot in 2015, when police responded to a report of an assault on a woman at a birthday party. Police said Clark struggled with two police, and that his DNA was found on an officer's gun. But witnesses gave accounts that conflicted with that narrative. No charges were brought against the white officers involved.

Mohamed Noor, a black Somali-American, is the only officer known to face murder charges in an on-duty killing, and his victim was white. Justine Ruszczyk Damond was shot in 2017 as she approached his car to report a possible rape behind her home. Noor was sentenced to 12½ years in prison, and the woman's family received a record \$20 million settlement.

Castile's family settled for \$3 million. Clark's family accepted \$200,000.

"There it is, right there, in those numbers," said Kevin Reese, founder of the Minneapolis activist group Until We Are All Free. "It is a prime example of how, here, white life is valued more than black lives."

In the mid-1990s, skyrocketing homicide rates briefly earned the city the grim nickname Murderapolis.

A gang strike task force was formed to push down crime. But a class-action lawsuit exposed widespread allegations of misconduct, and the city agreed to a \$3 million settlement. The unit was dismantled in 2009, but many people put away by testimony from its gang experts remain in prison.

In their heyday, police compounded the terror and despair of those living in neighborhoods already devastated by income disparities, underperforming schools and environmental blight. Harassment was constant. Some recalled police stopping youths from playing outside, ordering them to lift up their shirts to prove they weren't packing guns or dope.

One police duo, nicknamed Batman and Robin, is remembered by many in the neighborhood. They'd roll up blasting the "Bad Boys" theme music from the TV show "Cops," taunting residents through their car speakers. Others known as Red Dog and Wild Wild West were equally feared.

At 18, Adrian Riley recalled officers becoming enraged when he refused to give up the name of a friend who ran from the cops. He said they took him to a nearby alley where they kicked and stomped him, before bringing him to the precinct. He said he was charged with disorderly conduct and released.

His mom, Mary Ann Riley, said she found him curled up in bed, moaning in pain.

"I snatched the cover off him and I said, 'Oh my God. Who did this to you?' I didn't even know who my son was, they beat my son so bad," she said. Hospital staff told her there was urine in his blood, and he might have died without treatment.

Though Minnesota is viewed as progressive, it ranks among the country's worst when it comes to racial disparity. That extends to prisons -- black people represent about 7 percent of the state's population, but make up 36% of those behind bars.

“I believe that all of us -- police, prosecutors, defense attorneys, judges, corrections officials -- are complicit. I am complicit,” said Perry Moriearty, a University of Minnesota Law School professor. “We continue to operate within a system that, from its earliest days, has disproportionately criminalized, arrested, prosecuted, locked up and executed black and brown people.”

Laws enacted 30 years ago have led to over sentencing. In Minnesota, it’s possible to get life in prison just for being at the scene of a murder. And violent crimes are almost never commuted because a unanimous vote is required by the governor, attorney general and chief Supreme Court justice.

When Sen. Amy Klobuchar -- seen as a possible vice presidential pick -- was Hennepin County’s top prosecutor in 1998, her office worked to convict the alleged killers of two black kids hit by stray bullets in drive-by shootings.

The AP spent a year investigating one of those cases. Myon Burrell was 16 in 2002 when he was accused of firing a gun that killed 11-year-old Tyeshia Edwards as she sat at her dining room table doing homework.

It happened blocks away from where Floyd was killed. In fact, Burrell maintained from the moment he was taken to the police station that Cup Foods -- the same convenience store where Floyd is accused of passing a counterfeit \$20 bill -- was his alibi.

Surveillance tapes were never reviewed to check Burrell’s story, and friends with him that day were not interviewed. No DNA, fingerprints, or weapon was found in the case. Most of the jailhouse snitches used to convict Burrell have since recanted, and police are shown on a video offering a man \$500 for every name he provides -- even if it’s hearsay. Burrell, now 34, was sentenced to life.

“Either an unarmed black man is being snuffed out by a racist white cop, or an innocent black boy is being railroaded ... and having his life stolen,” he said.

The second case trumpeted by Klobuchar involved the 1996 gang-related shooting of 11-year-old Byron Phillips. Two years after his death, Klobuchar put up billboards requesting information.

Not long after, a man named Kawaskii Blanche was arrested.

The AP only received police reports about his case Monday, after four months of asking. The trial transcripts alone point to a dubious police probe and prosecution.

There was no physical evidence linking Blanche to the crime, and the sole hotline tip came from a woman who had 11 felony convictions and 13 aliases. She received \$3,700 after saying she saw a gun and overheard Blanche, her nephew and others talking about the shooting. Before her nephew was scheduled to take the stand, a police officer encouraged the woman to write a letter to her nephew in jail, ensuring his story would be the same. The key eyewitness wasn’t asked to testify.

Blanche, now 46, has been locked up for more than two decades. He is serving life.

“There are two judicial systems here in Minnesota,” said Burrell, who is housed in the same facility and has now served 18 years. “One for blacks and one for whites.”

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HEADLINE	06/08 Chronic US economic racial gap
SOURCE	https://apnews.com/2f549d22162d9d1104c3f402c71e0c44
GIST	WASHINGTON (AP) — The United States has been here before, staring into the deep chasm that divides white and black Americans.

It happened after cities burned in 1967, after Los Angeles erupted with the 1992 acquittal of police officers who beat Rodney King, after the 2014 police killing of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri.

After those upheavals came talk of change — of reforming policing, yes, but also of expanding economic opportunity to black Americans who have been disproportionately left behind in one of the world's richest countries. Yet despite big pledges and high hopes, economic progress has come slowly, if at all, for black America.

African Americans still earn barely 60 cents for every \$1 in white income. They have 10 cents in wealth for every \$1 whites own. They remain more than twice as likely to live in poverty. And they're about as likely to own a home as they were when Richard Nixon was president.

Now, demonstrators are out in the streets again, this time to protest what happened in Minneapolis to George Floyd, dead after a police officer pressed a knee into his neck for eight minutes and 46 seconds.

Once again, racial inequality underlies rage and despair, especially because the unrest coincides with an economic and health calamity, one that's falling hardest, yet again, on African Americans.

"We've got a perfect storm," said Cecelia Rouse, professor of economics and public affairs at Princeton University. "COVID is wreaking economic havoc" for African Americans.

Black Americans are far more likely than whites to die of COVID-19. They work disproportionately in low-paying service jobs — the ones that were slashed when restaurants and movie theaters closed as a health precaution and customers stayed away from hotels and airports.

"We've been blindsided by the pandemic," said Imani Fox of the Washington community group ONE DC.

Black workers who remain employed are more likely to work as front-line workers in warehouses, grocery stores and takeout eateries — jobs that leave them exposed to the virus.

"People are mad as hell," said Monica Lewis-Patrick, president of the community group We the People of Detroit. "We can't be the wealthiest nation or declare ourselves the wealthiest nation in the world and still have these major inequities and disparities that are glaringly based on race."

Rouse said she has reread portions of the Kerner Commission report, issued in 1968 to call for reform in the wake of the urban unrest of the late '60s. "It was so depressing," she said. "What has changed?"

A month after the Kerner report, for example, Congress passed the Fair Housing Act, meant to eliminate housing discrimination. Assessing the act on its 50th anniversary two years ago, Margery Turner of the Urban Institute wrote that African Americans and other minorities continued to face discrimination, though the "most blatant" forms of bias had declined.

"We still live in starkly segregated neighborhoods," she wrote, noting that the typical white Americans lives in a neighborhood that is 75% white and 8% African American; a typical black American lives in a neighborhood that is 35% white and 45% black.

The coronavirus recession is especially disheartening because African Americans finally seemed to be making headway in the aftermath of the Great Recession of 2007-2009. The unemployment rate for black Americans hit a record low last fall. And black wealth, decimated by the financial crisis of the late 2000s, had in recent years outgrown white wealth.

Then came COVID-19.

"When something goes wrong for all American workers, it's going to disproportionately affect African Americans, who are often the most fragile in the economy," said Democratic Sen. Cory Booker of New Jersey.

Amid the anger and anguish is optimism that policymakers will use this moment to find ways to narrow the economic gap between black and white Americans. Among the hopes is that political leaders can deliver reforms to America's economic system: Paid sick leave. A higher federal minimum wage. Perhaps even direct payments to the needy — test-run, perhaps, by the \$1,200 stimulus checks the government sent to many Americans as the economy shut down in the face of the pandemic.

But the United States has had watershed moments before. And the big changes didn't come.

Here's a look at America's economic racial divide and how it has and hasn't changed after decades of protests:

INCOME

From 1968 to 2018, median income for black households, adjusted for inflation, rose 37% from \$30,155 to \$41,361. In percentage terms, that outpaced the 31% growth in household income for whites (from \$51,138 to \$66,943), according to the Census Bureau. But black households still earn just 62 cents for every \$1 earned by white households.

The income gap remains wide even though African Americans have vastly upgraded their educational attainment: The proportion of black Americans with a high school diploma has surged from 54% in 1968 to 92% in 2018. The share with a college degree rose from 9% to 23% over that period, according to government figures compiled by the Economic Policy Institute.

Yet black people are still more than twice as likely as whites to live in poverty. Their poverty rate has dropped from 55% in 1959 to 35% in 1968 to 21% in 2018. The white rate has barely budged at around 10%. The official poverty rate may understate African Americans' progress because it excludes the effect of non-cash government programs such as food stamps and Medicaid.

JOBS

The unemployment rate for African Americans has typically hovered around twice the rate for whites. But beginning last year, the record-breaking economic expansion that began in June 2009 had finally begun to pay off for African Americans. Their jobless rate dropped from 16.8% in March 2010 to an all-time low of 5.4% in August last year.

That progress ended abruptly once the coronavirus recession wiped out tens of millions of jobs in March and April. Black workers, disproportionately laboring in low-wage service jobs, were less likely to be among the fortunate: The office workers who could keep their jobs while working from the safety of home. African Americans were likelier to either lose their jobs or to work as essential front-line employees who are more vulnerable to the virus.

On Friday, the government issued a surprisingly upbeat jobs report for May: The national unemployment rate unexpectedly dropped from 14.7% to 13.3%. But the jobless rate for African Americans ticked up, from 16.7% to 16.8%, the level where it had been 10 years earlier.

WEALTH

Black Americans face an even bigger long-term problem than lagging incomes and higher unemployment. They have struggled to build wealth — home equity and investment portfolios — that could be tapped in times of need, used as collateral for loans to start a business or passed on to children.

"Income helps you pay your bills," said Olugbenga Ajilore, senior economist at the liberal Center for American Program. "Wealth moves you from poverty to the middle class to the upper class."

The median black family has wealth of just \$17,200 — perhaps enough to buy a car — versus \$171,000 for the median white family. The wealth gap persists even for African Americans in the top 10% of U.S. incomes: Their wealth comes to \$343,160, less than one-fifth of the \$1.79 million for whites in the top 10%, according to government numbers compiled by the Brookings Institution.

One ongoing culprit was the housing bust of the late 2000s. Commerce Department figures compiled by the Urban Institute show that black homeownership rose from 41.8% in 1970 to 47.3% in 2000 before being swept away by the financial crisis and the ensuing recession. As of 2015, black homeownership was 41.2% — lower than it had been 45 years earlier and far below the 71.1% for whites.

In February, researchers at the Brookings Institution reported other reasons for the wealth deficit: African Americans inherit far less money than whites. Even those who become top earners are likelier than whites to fall out of the ranks of the rich. And they are more likely to have to provide financial help to friends and family.

As a Democratic presidential candidate, Sen. Booker pushed a plan for “Baby Bonds” to provide \$1,000 to every American child at birth. After that, they would receive up to \$2,000 a year, depending on their family income. The idea would be to create a nest egg that could eventually be used to finance a college education or buy a home.

Bradley Hardy, a professor in American University’s School of Public Affairs, said that researchers and activists are working on plans like Booker’s to narrow the divide between black and white Americans, between rich and poor.

The current protests could provide momentum for those efforts.

“It’s absolutely an opportunity,” Hardy said. “And, yes, it could be squandered.”

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HEADLINE	06/09 French minorities anger at police abuse
SOURCE	https://apnews.com/5c1a4d28863827f644b3d2eff647541c
GIST	<p>PARIS (AP) — With France confined to fight the virus, a video circulated online in April showing a young man lying on the bloody ground next to two police officers — and quickly set off protests in struggling neighborhoods around the Paris region.</p> <p>Sometime before, the man had been on a motorcycle. Then, he crashed into a suddenly opened police car door. Whether the door was opened on purpose or not is unclear, but what was clear was the anger the video sparked. A protest that night in the town of Villeneuve-la-Garenne led to others in a dozen Paris suburbs and similar neighborhoods around France in the ensuing days.</p> <p>The relationship between police and marginalized residents of France’s low-income neighborhoods, many of whom are Arab or black and trace their roots to former French colonies, has long been tense. Safety measures intended to curb the spread of COVID-19 further empowered police — but also empowered community activists using apps or online sleuthing to track and challenge what they see as an abuse of police power.</p> <p>George Floyd’s death in the U.S. has resonated especially loudly in places like Villeneuve, one of many banlieues, or suburbs, where poverty and minority populations are concentrated in France. Floyd-related protests against police violence and racial injustice have been held around France, and more are planned for Tuesday evening.</p> <p>In a pivotal moment for modern France, rioting engulfed the country for three weeks in 2005 after two boys who were running from police, Zyed and Bouna, were electrocuted while hiding in an electric</p>

generator in the Paris suburb of Clichy-sous-Bois. A state of emergency was declared and almost 3,000 people were arrested.

Despite billions of euros in government improvement programs for the banlieues since 2005, tensions with police persist, and the deaths of other young men periodically rekindles anger. Protesters marching in solidarity with Floyd notably called for justice for Adama Traore, whose death in police custody in 2016 is still under investigation.

“The anger (in those neighborhoods) is so present and police impunity so frustrating that we don’t need much for it to blow up,” said Ilyes Ramdani, editor-in-chief of the Bondy Blog, which was founded in 2005 to tell the stories of young black and Arab French people in the banlieues.

Under France’s strictest virus lockdown measures, from March 17-May 11, the government restricted people’s movements to a kilometer (half-mile) around their homes and required that anyone leaving their homes carry a signed paper stating why. Punishments included fines starting at 135 euros (about \$150), or even prison.

On the first day punishments were doled out, 10% of the fines given in the entire country were given in the region of Seine-Saint-Denis on Paris’ northern edge, where unemployment is twice the national average, almost one person out of three is an immigrant, and many others are the descendants of immigrants.

Government officials defended the fines as necessary to fight the virus in a region with especially high infection rates.

But police union leader Yves Lefebvre lamented that the lockdown measures “again made the police a repressive tool.”

“Public services have deserted these neighborhoods,” and police are the only presence left, which “necessarily leads to confrontation,” he said.

Lefebvre, general secretary for Unité SGP Police-Force Ouvrière union, said trust has been broken because “police only enter those neighborhoods to restore order.”

The Villeneuve incident is being investigated by prosecutors and by the French state police watchdog agency, which said it received 166 citizen reports of problematic police behavior and seven formal complaints of police abuse during the 54 days of France’s coronavirus lockdown.

Under pressure to act, Interior Minister Christophe Castaner pledged Monday to ban police chokeholds and said more officers will be equipped with cameras to help ensure that identity checks don’t lead to discrimination against minorities.

Frustrated activists are taking matters into their own hands.

At the start of the lockdown, Sihame Assbague, an anti-racial profiling activist and journalist, started to collect reports of police harassment, citing “a multiplication of police violence videos on social media.”

She’s cross-referencing and verifying about 40 cases, most of them from videos she’s received. “I don’t expect much from the state or public authorities, but what I know is they respect strength. That’s why it’s important to organize,” she said.

Amal Bentounsi, whose brother Amine was shot in the back and killed by the police in 2012, founded a group to support families of victims and provide legal help to bring abusive police to court. The officer who killed her brother was sentenced to a five-year suspended prison sentence — a rare legal victory for families like hers.

	<p>In March, Bentounsi and three other families launched an app called Emergency-Police Violence designed to record abuses.</p> <p>“The idea is for people to develop the habit of filming, not to make buzz, but to create a tool for citizens to contradict the police’s version of events and dissuade police who will be filmed” from abusing their authority, Bentounsi said.</p> <p>Users can record arrests live, and the videos are directly uploaded onto the app’s server so they can be salvaged if the phone is seized or broken.</p> <p>Since March, the app has been downloaded more than 30,000 times.</p> <p>Their group wants to encourage people to press charges, even if chances of conviction are slim, Bentounsi said. The government says numbers of police abuses “aren’t big enough for it to be an issue. We want to change that. Because if there are no charges, there are no statistics.”</p>
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HEADLINE	06/09 Germany: racism complaints rose 10%
SOURCE	https://apnews.com/4e1cdc8a9e360c05d42800a43f46b906
GIST	<p>BERLIN — Germany’s official anti-discrimination watchdog says it received significantly more complaints about racism in 2019 than the year before.</p> <p>The Federal Anti-Discrimination Agency said Tuesday that it received 1,176 complaints about racism last year, an increase of 10% compared to 2018.</p> <p>This represented about a third of all 3,580 complaints received by the agency. Others concerned discrimination based on gender, disability, age, religion, sexual identity and world view.</p> <p>The number of complaints about racism has more than doubled since 2015.</p> <p>Bernhard Franke, the head of the agency, called for changes in the law to improve the legal standing of those affected by discrimination, saying that “Germany needs to do more in the fight against racist discrimination.”</p> <p>He noted that the coronavirus pandemic has further exacerbated some forms of discrimination, with his office receiving numerous reports of racist abuse suffered by people of Asian background in recent months.</p>
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HEADLINE	06/09 Hong Kong seethes one year on
SOURCE	https://www.afp.com/en/news/3954/hong-kong-seethes-one-year-protesters-back-foot-doc-1t447q3
GIST	<p>Hong Kong on Tuesday marked a year since pro-democracy protests erupted, as mass arrests, coronavirus bans on gatherings and a looming national security law kept a lid on any return to city-wide unrest.</p> <p>Seven months of massive and often violent rallies kicked off on June 9 last year when as many as one million people took to the streets to oppose a bill allowing extraditions to mainland China.</p> <p>As city leaders dug in, battles between police and protesters became routine, leaving the financial hub's reputation for stability in tatters and swathes of the population in revolt against Beijing's rule.</p> <p>On Tuesday, organisers of last year's huge rallies called on the government to lift anti-virus restrictions on public gatherings and allow Hong Kongers to march once more.</p>

"After Hong Kongers spared no effort to resist, the Chinese Communist Party's persecution went to every length to force us to give in," Jimmy Sham, from the Civil Human Rights front, a group that espouses non-violence, told reporters on Tuesday.

"This movement has not finished yet."

Flash-mob protests were held during the lunchtime break in multiple malls but crowds were just a few hundred strong. Messaging groups also called for gatherings in the evening.

City leader Carrie Lam, an unpopular pro-Beijing appointee, was peppered with questions from reporters on Tuesday about the unrest during her tenure.

"Hong Kong cannot afford such chaos," she said, adding residents needed "to prove that Hong Kong people are reasonable and sensible citizens of the People's Republic of China" if they want their freedoms and autonomy to continue.

The city has largely stopped local coronavirus transmissions and avoided lockdowns but Lam has denied keeping restrictions in place to stop protests.

- 'Anti-virus software' -

Under a deal signed with Britain ahead of the 1997 handover, China agreed to let Hong Kong keep certain freedoms and autonomy for 50 years.

Protests over the last decade have been fuelled by fears those freedoms are being prematurely curtailed, something Beijing denies.

Analysts say the space for dissent has rapidly diminished in the last year.

"I don't think the passion has subsided much, but the problem is that many actions are now not allowed in the current circumstances," Leung Kai-chi, an analyst at the Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK), told AFP.

Beyond a withdrawal of the extradition bill, the protest movement's core demands -- such as universal suffrage and an inquiry into police tactics -- have been rejected by the city's leadership and Beijing.

Instead, China has unveiled plans to impose a more sweeping law -- one that will bypass the city's legislature entirely -- banning subversion, secession, terrorism and foreign interference.

China says an anti-subversion law will only target "a small minority" and will restore business confidence.

Opponents fear the law will bring mainland-style political oppression to the business hub. Anti-subversion laws are routinely used on the mainland to stamp out dissent.

"First (Beijing) loses the hearts and minds of Hong Kong's people and then it seeks to force them to be loyal," said Kong Tsung-gan, an activist who has published three books on the protest movement.

Over the last year, around 9,000 people have been arrested and more than 500 people have been charged with rioting, which would face up to 10 years in jail if convicted.

Two prominent activists had their charges upgraded to rioting on Tuesday for entering the city's legislature when it was broken into by protesters last July.

The protest movement was already on the back foot before emergency coronavirus laws banned gatherings of more than eight people.

	Still, demonstrations have bubbled up again since the security law plans were announced -- including tens of thousands defying a ban on a June 4 gathering to mark the anniversary of the 1989 Tiananmen crackdown.
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HEADLINE	06/08 Texas virus hospitalizations record high
SOURCE	https://www.cnn.com/2020/06/08/texas-reports-a-record-high-number-of-hospitalized-coronavirus-patients-after-state-reopened-early.html
GIST	<p>Texas reported a record number of coronavirus hospitalizations Monday — weeks after Gov. Greg Abbott took the lead among governors in easing social distancing measures to help bring jobs back.</p> <p>There are currently 1,935 Covid-19 patients in hospitals across the state, topping the previous hospitalization record of 1,888 patients on May 5, according to new data from the Texas Department of State Health Services.</p> <p>Texas was among the first states to relax its statewide stay-at-home order, allowing it to expire April 30 and some businesses to resume operations May 1.</p> <p>The coronavirus has infected more than 75,400 people in Texas, according to data from Johns Hopkins University. The positivity rate for Covid-19 tests in Texas reached a low of 4.27% toward the end of May but has since jumped to 7.55%, according to the state's health department.</p> <p>While hospitalizations are increasing, there are more than 1,600 open intensive-care beds and more than 5,800 ventilators available for critically ill patients.</p> <p>Some infectious disease experts say hospitalization numbers could be a better way to track a state's reopening performance since it's more difficult to skew than testing data, which fluctuates depending on how many tests are being run.</p> <p>"Looking at things like how many ICU admissions and deaths are probably some of the strongest and most reliable (data points) because they are the worst outcomes that could happen," said Dr. David Hardy, an adjunct professor of medicine at Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine who specializes in infectious diseases.</p> <p>Texas opened hair salons on May 8 under certain restrictions, such as maintaining six feet of distance between beauty stations. Gyms and exercise facilities, nonessential manufacturing plants and office buildings could reopen with 25% capacity and other social-distancing guidelines on May 18.</p> <p>The state later allowed bars to reopen at 25% capacity and restaurants at 50% capacity. Infectious disease and public health experts warn that indoor settings where people may not be wearing a face covering and the air circulates less could increase the risk of the virus spreading.</p> <p>Coronavirus cases in the United States have been slowly ticking up since the Memorial Day holiday, according to a CNN analysis of data compiled by Hopkins. The coronavirus has now infected more than 1.95 million people in the U.S. and has killed at least 110,700.</p>
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HEADLINE	06/08 Higher rates of virus cases 22 states
SOURCE	https://www.cnn.com/2020/06/08/health/us-coronavirus-monday/index.html
GIST	CNN)While states lift more restrictions and more Americans go out to socialize or protest , almost half of US states are seeing higher rates of new coronavirus cases.

But the situation would have been much worse had states not shut down, [a new study](#) says.

More than 1.9 million Americans have been infected, and [more than 110,000 have died](#) in just over four months, according to data from Johns Hopkins University.

Nationwide, 22 states are seeing upward trends in coronavirus cases. About 20 states have seen decreases in recent days, and eight states are holding steady.

One of the states with the biggest spikes in new cases is Florida. The number of new cases reported each day has increased an average of roughly [46% over the past week](#), just as [most of the state entered a second phase of reopening](#).

And there's global proof that the coronavirus pandemic is nowhere near over.

Sunday marked the most Covid-19 cases reported to the World Health Organization in a single day during this pandemic, WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said.

"Yesterday, more than 136,000 cases were reported -- the most in a single day so far," Tedros said Monday. "Almost 75% of yesterday's cases come from 10 countries, mostly in the Americas and South Asia."

Shutdowns and school closures have helped

About 60 million US coronavirus infections were likely averted through early April thanks to emergency orders, [researchers from the University of California, Berkeley](#) said.

"The findings come as leaders worldwide struggle to balance the enormous and highly visible economic costs of emergency health measures against their public health benefits, which are difficult to see," [UC Berkeley](#) said.

Those emergency orders included business and school closures, travel restrictions and shelter-in-place orders.

"The study did not estimate how many lives might have been saved by the policies because, with so many infections, fatality rates would be much higher than anything observed to date," UC Berkeley said.

Concerns grow over Covid-19 spread at protests

While protesters flood streets to demand an end to [systemic racism](#) and [police brutality](#), health officials emphasize the need to take precautions.

This coronavirus is [transmissible by talking or even just breathing](#). Carriers of the virus [can be contagious even if they don't have symptoms](#).

So doctors say it's extremely important to wear a face mask and try to keep your distance from others as much as possible.

The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said Sunday it was closely monitoring the protests. CDC Director Dr. Robert Redfield said earlier this month that protesters should be evaluated and tested for the virus.

"I do think there is a potential, unfortunately, for this to be a seeding event," especially in metropolitan areas where there has been significant transmission, Redfield said.

More inland states are getting hit hard

While big cities on the coasts were hit hard early in the pandemic, the [past few weeks have seen wider spread in inland states](#), including Arkansas, Texas and Arizona.

In Utah, state Rep. Suzanne Harrison called a recent spike of cases "very concerning (and) approaching exponential."

"Today's 18.5% positive test rate is double yesterday's (9.4%)," she [tweeted](#) over the weekend.

Friday, health officials in Utah said they were "very concerned" about the rise in new cases over the past week.

The state has recorded more than 12,000 infections, according to Johns Hopkins.

"When you're away from home, please avoid close contact with others, and [wear a mask when other social distancing measures aren't feasible](#)," the Utah Department of Health tweeted.

[Several universities](#) have also reported new cases within their athletic programs -- including Arkansas State University, Auburn University and Oklahoma State University.

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HEADLINE	06/08 Police unions dig in amid calls for reform
SOURCE	https://www.cnn.com/2020/06/08/politics/police-union-reform-protests/index.html
GIST	<p>Washington (CNN)A crowd of police officers in Philadelphia gathered outside their local union headquarters on Monday to show their support for one of their own -- a staff inspector facing assault charges after allegedly beating a college student at an anti-racism protest last week.</p> <p>Like all criminal defendants, Philadelphia Police Staff Inspector Joseph Bologna is innocent until proven guilty. But it seemed like the crowd of more than 100 applauding officers already made up their minds, despite viral footage of Bologna hitting the student in the back of the head with a metal baton, sending him to the hospital.</p> <p>Following the rally, the union that represents Bologna issued a statement, saying it "will not stand-by and watch Inspector Bologna get railroaded."</p> <p>As public opinion shifts on issues of police violence and racial discrimination, and cities begin to rethink their approach to law enforcement, powerful police unions across the country are digging in, and preparing for a once-in-a-generation showdown over policing.</p> <p>The flashpoint has been seemingly brewing for years and has flared in intensity with each high-profile police killing involving an African American. Elected officials, facing more pressure than ever after last month's police killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis, are pledging to take action.</p> <p>"Let me be clear, we're going after the police union," Minneapolis Mayor Jacob Frey said Monday on ABC's Good Morning America, after members of the city council said they wanted to go even further and dismantle the local police department to pursue other models of policing.</p> <p>But that might be easier said than done. Police unions in the US wield significant power and enjoy higher membership rates than many other unions, which have declined in recent years. Government officials and labor experts also tell CNN that police union contracts often make it tougher to remove officers that have been flagged for misconduct -- a key roadblock to reform.</p> <p>"They've become far too powerful. They form political action committees. They donate to district attorneys' race or state attorneys' race, state senators and representatives and so forth," Charles Ramsey, a former DC police chief and former Philadelphia police commissioner, said Sunday on CNN. "And then we wonder why you can't get anything done."</p>

For the first time, police unions will need to grapple with a skeptical public that doesn't automatically support law enforcement. New polls indicate that most Americans now acknowledge that African Americans are more likely to be mistreated or even killed by police.

"This is big," legendary GOP pollster Frank Luntz [tweeted on Monday](#) about a dramatic shift in how Americans are viewing police violence. After Eric Garner died in police custody in 2014, 33% of Americans said they believed police were more likely to use excessive force against African Americans. That figure now stands at 57%, according to a poll from last week.

In response to the public sentiment over the past two weeks, Jim Pasco, executive director of the national Fraternal Order of Police, the largest law enforcement union in the country, told CNN that his organization is willing to sit down with "anybody, anytime who wants to have a fact-based discussion" on public and police safety, and that these discussions were ongoing.

'Corrosive' police culture

For years, lawmakers from both parties passed police-friendly laws and empowered police unions in their cities. But in this moment, there could be limited opening for bipartisanship.

"We need reform in the area of the police unions to make sure that the chief can actually have disciplinary control over the force," said Minnesota Attorney General Keith Ellison, who is personally handling the prosecution of the four police officers involved in Floyd's death.

House Democrats unveiled a sweeping proposal on Monday to address racial disparities in policing. The bill would establish a national registry for police misconduct, among other things.

It's not clear that any Republicans will support that bill, but some are breaking from President Donald Trump's hardline stance toward the protests, which he has focused on more than Floyd's killing. Utah Sen. Mitt Romney [marched in a Black Lives Matter protest](#) over the weekend in Washington, DC.

And the Texas Public Policy Foundation, a conservative think tank, [released a report](#) last year that said many police unions "run counter to the best practices of professional law enforcement standards" and are more concerned with sustaining the union than with promoting public safety.

Ronal Serpas, the former police chief in New Orleans and Nashville, said unions nationwide have successfully negotiated for control over disciplinary processes, creating a "corrosive" culture where problematic officers know their union will protect them from consequences.

"To change police culture, we have to change the way contracts are handled," said Serpas, who oversaw police reforms in New Orleans after years of corruption and after Hurricane Katrina.

Decades of collective bargaining has resulted in police forces where department chiefs have little control, and the unions have set the terms for internal investigations. Even if an officer is formally punished, nuances in the contract often help officers prevail on appeal, Serpas said.

For instance, some police union agreements have outlined how long police leadership must wait to investigate an incident, how they can ask the police officers questions and what they can ask, and how quickly the department must complete an investigation. Taken together, it puts the disciplinary power in the hands of the unions, which are set up to protect police officers' jobs.

Sometimes, police officers of color face discrimination within their own departments, and police unions have been complicit in allowing these inequalities to fester and survive, experts tell CNN.

As local governments look to pass new reforms, they'll need to rewrite many of these policies and claw back some of the powers they've ceded to the police unions, Serpas explained.

"The unions are doing what they are supposed to be doing -- finding ways to protect their employees," Serpas said. "They'll go as far as the local government will let them go."

Taking action in New York

New York, home to the largest police department in the country, has sprung into action.

Answering a question Monday from CNN's Mark Morales on police unions and reform, New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo said that "every union argues the interest of their employees, their workforce," and that he will "listen to all voices," including the unions, as he pushes reforms.

Lawmakers in New York are moving forward this week with a series of measures to address police misconduct. This includes repealing a state law commonly known as 50-A, which prevents the public from seeing disciplinary records for officers, including those who kill civilians.

Activists have said this law has made it harder to hold abusive police officers accountable, while police unions have said that this change could jeopardize the privacy of individual officers. Cuomo cast those concerns aside Monday, saying the bill includes ample privacy protections.

"All its doing is reversing an exemption on police records, so now a police officer is like a schoolteacher," Cuomo said. "It's just parity and equality with every other public employee."

[The legislation](#) is being taken up by the Democrat-controlled state legislature, along with other bills that would establish a new office under the New York attorney general to investigate police misconduct, and also would require officers to turn on their body cameras in specific situations.

The spotlight in this state isn't only on efforts by the New York Police Department to enforce curfews and maintain order in New York City. Last week, two officers from the Buffalo Police Department were charged with assault after allegedly shoving an elderly man at a protest.

After the officers were suspended, all 57 members of the police force's emergency response team [resigned from that team](#). The local union said they quit in solidarity with the two officers, though some officers [told local news outlets](#) that the union's public statements weren't accurate.

"The Buffalo police union is on the wrong side of history, they are wrong in this situation, they have been a barrier to further police reform in the city of Buffalo and that barrier that the police union presents needs to be addressed," Buffalo Mayor Byron Brown said Saturday on CNN.

Unions flex their muscle

While union membership has declined nationally, membership among law enforcement remains high. Those membership dues can be funneled toward litigation, support for political candidates or lobbying on legislation that can impact police forces. Police unions also say they work to secure better pay and benefits for officers, and that they have a duty to defend their members.

"Police unions have a tremendous amount of influence," said Jonathan Smith, executive director of the Washington Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights and Urban Affairs, and a former Justice Department official who worked on police issues. "There's a lot of police officers in this country and the dues accumulate a large war chest that can be used to enhance their political agenda."

Local officials have also benefited from endorsements and donations from police unions, making it less politically palatable for some officials to try to take on police unions or cases involving individual officers.

In an interview with the New York Times, one Minneapolis city councilman even recently compared the local police union to a "protection racket" that slows down services in areas with unfriendly officials. A spokesman for the Minneapolis Police Department declined to comment on the accusation to the Times. To flex their political muscle, police unions have used aggressive and at-times threatening rhetoric to attack elected officials who were trying to rein in their local police departments.

The head of a St. Louis police union [said last year](#) that the city's chief prosecutor, an African American woman, should be removed "by force or by choice" because she was supposedly sowing distrust of law enforcement. And after an attempted assassination of NYPD officers in February, a major police union in New York City said its members were ["declaring war"](#) on liberal-leaning Mayor Bill de Blasio because they blame him for creating a dangerous climate for police officers.

In 2016, the Fraternal Order of Police threw its support behind then-candidate Trump. The organization counts more than 300,000 members nationwide.

In an interview with the Washington Post last year, Pascos said, "I would say at least 80% of our membership nationwide is solidly supportive of President Trump."

Across the country, the actual work of a police union can be much more mundane than it appears in this moment, when tensions are high after a spate of high-profile incidents.

Like other labor unions, police unions will advocate for better benefits and workplace conditions for their members, through collective bargaining. When officers face issues, ranging from citizens' complaints to criminal charges, the police union will often provide legal representation.

Brian Luciano, the president of the Police Benevolent Association in Virginia Beach, Virginia, said police officers facing accusations of misconduct can often become victims of political considerations and a public rush to judgment. Police unions will step in to make sure that officers in trouble get the same consideration as a civilian under arrest, Luciano said.

"Municipalities don't always have the officers' best interest at heart. They will do what's expedient for them for their political purposes," Luciano said. "We see our role as protecting the rights of the accused. And in some cases, the accused is the police officer."

As the political winds change, police unions are set to face more scrutiny than ever. Some union leaders, like Edward Mullins, president of the Sergeants Benevolent Association in New York City, say that politicians are changing their views about policing for political expediency.

"The elected officials who are now anti-police almost all of them have taken money from police unions," Mullins said. "They were all pro-law enforcement until they realized November is coming up. Now because the narrative is anti-police and they are becoming anti-cop, you really have to question that. If you're trying to make changes now, why did it take riots to get you to do something that should have been done a long time ago?"

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HEADLINE	06/08 Seattle commissions urge defund police
SOURCE	https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/seattle-area-protests-live-updates-for-monday-june-8/
GIST	<p>Five Seattle commissions have signed onto an open letter addressed to Mayor Jenny Durkan, City Attorney Pete Holmes and Police Chief Carmen Best, supporting the demands of Black Lives Matter activists outlined in a post published June 6.</p> <p>Members of the Seattle Immigrant and Refugee Commission, Seattle Commission for People with disAbilities, Seattle Human Rights Commission, Seattle LGBTQ Commission and the Seattle Women's Commission called on the city to discipline police who commit acts of violence during the protests, release and decline to prosecute arrested protesters and defund the police department by 50%, among other requests.</p> <p>Earlier on Monday, Seattle employees advocating for racial justice around the city's Race and Social Justice Initiative (RSJI) sent a letter to the mayor echoing similar demands.</p>

	<p>"I show up to work and I'm Black," said LaKecia Farmer, policy analyst and legislative aide for Seattle City Councilmember M. Lorena González. "I go home and I'm Black. I'm always going to be Black. And it hurts to see my community hurt and the city not responding that the way they should be."</p> <p>"If this is just one thing we can do as city employees, to hold our leaders accountable to community, then I am all for it," Farmer said of the city employees' letter. "We need to center voices that have been left out of the conversation for too long."</p>
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HEADLINE	06/08 Court orders immediate change Minn. PD
SOURCE	https://www.foxnews.com/us/court-orders-immediate-changes-minneapolis-police-department
GIST	<p>The Hennepin County Court approved a proposed court order Monday that requires the Minneapolis Police Department to implement immediate structural changes to protect local communities following the death of George Floyd.</p> <p>It was filed by the Minnesota Department of Human Rights (MDHR) and comes amid an ongoing civil rights investigation. The court said it has the power to enforce these "preliminary measures" and failure to comply with the order could lead to penalties.</p> <p>"Today's court order will create immediate change for communities of color and Indigenous communities who have suffered generational pain and trauma as a result of systemic and institutional racism and long-standing problems in policing," said Minnesota Department of Human Rights Commissioner Rebecca Lucero in a release by her department.</p> <p>Lucero had filed a charge of discrimination against the city of Minneapolis police department on Jun. 2, alleging a violation of the Minnesota Human Rights Act.</p> <p>The charge alleged the department discriminated in the area of public service based on race, specifically when George Floyd died in police custody May 25 after an officer knelt on his neck for more than eight minutes, according to the order. She also alleged that the department had engaged in a pattern of race-based policing.</p> <p>Under the court order entered by Hennepin County District Court Judge Karen Janisch, the City of Minneapolis must implement a series of measures which include banning neck restraints, chokeholds, and reporting of "unauthorized use of force" by fellow officers.</p> <p>Any police officer, regardless of tenure or rank, must now report if they observe another police officer use any unauthorized use of force while on-scene, including any chokehold or neck restraint, the release said.</p> <p>It added that any officers must also intervene by verbal or physical means if they see a member of their department using those tactics.</p> <p>Use of crowd control weapons, such as chemical agents, rubber bullets, flash-bangs, batons, and marking rounds can only be approved by the police chief or their designee at the rank of deputy chief, according to the release.</p> <p>"The Police Chief must make timely and transparent discipline decisions for police officers as outlined in the order," it added.</p> <p>Changes will also be made in terms of reviewing body camera footage, which the proposed court order said would help "identify discriminatory practices in policing, including officer misconduct." Plans on how to utilize the audit function will be submitted within 90 days of the order's effective date.</p>

	<p>"Civilian body-worn camera footage analysts and investigators in the City's Office of Police Conduct Review have the authority to proactively audit body-worn camera footage and file or amend complaints on behalf of the Minneapolis Civil Rights Department," the release said.</p> <p>The court order also requires the Minneapolis Police Department to fully comply with the ongoing civil rights investigation. The release added that any resident of Minnesota who witnesses violations of the order should contact the Minnesota Department of Human Rights.</p>
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HEADLINE	06/08 Snohomish police chief reassigned
SOURCE	https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/times-watchdog/snohomish-police-chief-reassigned-after-antifa-rumors-spurred-armed-response/
GIST	<p>The police chief of Snohomish was replaced on Monday following a week of mounting tension over how he handled a rumored but unrealized threat that antifa activists planned to riot and damage storefronts in the community.</p> <p>A divide in Snohomish, a city of 10,000 near the Cascade foothills, had come to light early last week as citizens armed with semi-automatic weapons and displaying a Confederate flag gathered in the city's historic downtown.</p> <p>Some clashed with protesters who have been holding nightly demonstrations against racial injustice and the death of George Floyd at the hands of Minneapolis police. The armed demonstrators included members of right-wing groups, according to interviews with group members, and multiple witnesses said many people had been drinking while carrying weapons on May 31.</p> <p>The next night, violence broke out when a man demonstrators believed was linked to the armed group was shown on video throwing punches and striking at least one teenager who had joined a protest against police misconduct, and another protester said he was pushed to the ground where two people then choked and hit him.</p> <p>Keith Rogers, now the former police chief of Snohomish, faced steep criticism for not taking the armed crowd's presence more seriously. At a recent Snohomish City Council meeting, he had described the evening as "festive."</p> <p>"The current events in Snohomish did play a role in the decision between the city and the sheriff's office," said Courtney O'Keefe, spokeswoman for the Snohomish County Sheriff's office, which contracts with the city for police services. "The sheriff and mayor thought that at this time in history it would be best to find a replacement police chief just due to the nature of recent events."</p> <p>Rogers will be reassigned to a new position within the Snohomish County Sheriff's Office as a result, said O'Keefe. The county and city have partnered since 2012 to provide law enforcement services in the city, popular with tourists for its antique shops.</p> <p>Rogers, a lieutenant, will retain his current rank within the Sheriff's Office, though specifics about his new assignment haven't been determined yet, O'Keefe said. His replacement, Snohomish County Sheriff Capt. Robert Palmer, will serve as interim police chief for about three months, the city said in a statement on its website. The city and the Sheriff's Office will work together on a permanent replacement.</p> <p>Snohomish County Sheriff Adam Fortney and Snohomish Mayor John Kartak praised Rogers in their announcement of his reassignment, with the sheriff calling him a tremendous leader during his three years as police chief. Kartak said Rogers had focused on homeless outreach, community policing programs and other initiatives.</p>

	<p>“Chief Rogers has provided outstanding leadership and exemplary service to the city of Snohomish and will be deeply missed,” Kartak said.</p> <p>A week ago, Kartak told The Seattle Times in an interview that the threat on social media that protesters with antifa — short for “anti-fascists,” and used to describe far-left activists known to confront neo-Nazis and far-right groups — were coming to town was considered viable, even though the Police Department had first described as a rumor on Facebook on May 31.</p> <p>Some 50 police officers had been staged at an emergency operations center in Snohomish “ready to converge if necessary” in response to any attempts at destruction, said Kartak.</p> <p>He also said the city had positioned officers on the roof of City Hall, which is around the corner from where the crowd proclaiming to protect Snohomish had gathered.</p> <p>Kartak wrote on the city’s website that over 500 people had come together in town to deter “violence and vandalism.” Kartak said he saw “one Confederate flag on a truck,” though he could tell from photographs that there was more than one Confederate flag at one point.</p> <p>He called the flag’s presence “really unfortunate” and “sickening,” while criticizing portrayals of his town as racist.</p> <p>The group Snohomish for Equity, which had helped organized anti-racism protests in town on May 30 and again Friday, said replacing Rogers represented city action at a time when many in the community, especially protesters in support of the Black Lives Matter movement, are calling for change. In a statement, the group said it looked forward to working with the interim chief.</p> <p>The scene in Snohomish was one of a handful across the country last week in rural areas, where local leaders raised alarm that antifa activists were targeting their communities. The threats in Snohomish and elsewhere, however, did not materialize.</p>
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HEADLINE	06/08 Protest demands: change, social justice
SOURCE	https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/seattle-area-protests-live-updates-for-monday-june-8/
GIST	<p>Shortly after Seattle police withdrew from the East Precinct on Capitol Hill, a crowd of protesters gathered outside the building to voice their list of demands for change, a list they'll eventually make public and send to city officials.</p> <p>One by one, people stepped up to take the microphone and share the issues they want to see the city and the community address. Their main demand is to abolish and defund the Seattle Police Department, but protesters also touched on a wide array of topics, including the city's police budget, education systems, mental health services, voting reform, affordable housing options, prisons and health care systems.</p> <p>"Realistically, we know not every demand is going to be met, but we're going to come with a big list," one of the main facilitators said to the crowd.</p> <p>One woman stepped up to the mic to share a story about her son, who is Black and autistic.</p> <p>"This is extremely important," she said. "The kids matter."</p> <p>"I demand police abandon this building," she said, gesturing to the East Precinct. "And that they give this building to Black Live Matter Seattle-King County, or to a Black-based organization to be a community center."</p>

	<p>She added that the city must look at its education system and dedicate more time and energy to developing programming that would prevent a school-to-prison pipeline.</p> <p>Also on the list of demands for local, state and federal governments: See more affordable housing for people of color. Invest in more doctors of color. Train special officers to de-escalate situations involving those with mental illnesses. Provide a list of names of all officers involved in killing Black people. Discontinue the federal government's supply of military weaponry to all law enforcement agencies. Provide reparations for all victims of police brutality. Defund ICE.</p> <p>"I demand we de-gentrify Seattle," another woman said to the crowd. "We need to take care of financial literacy for Black people ... We need to put power behind Black businesses."</p> <p>And the list wasn't directed only to public officials.</p> <p>"I demand more people step up and speak up when they see ignorance and hate," one protester said. "I demand more people stand up to their bosses when they see ignorance and hate."</p>
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HEADLINE	06/08 Sawant pushes defund police 50%
SOURCE	https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/seattle-area-protests-live-updates-for-monday-june-8/
GIST	<p>Seattle Councilmember Kshama Sawant stepped up to the microphone Monday night on Capitol Hill to urge protesters to continue building their movement and pledge to help them follow through on their demands.</p> <p>"(Police and National Guard members) have face shields, body shields, rifles, chemical weapons, and yet here we are," Sawant said. "We don't have those weapons. We have umbrellas. We have cell phones. But you know what else we have? We have multiracial working class solidarity."</p> <p>She continued to praise the time and effort demonstrators have given over the past week.</p> <p>"Let's recognize one thing first," she said. "This was and is a victory. Yes, it was only one battleground, but it was a key battleground, because what we forced to push back was not just the police force. It was more than that. The honest truth is the police force is just the outward face of oppression under capitalism."</p> <p>Sawant later asked the crowd to join her at a public meeting with other community leaders Tuesday at 6 p.m. in Cal Anderson Park. The crowd erupted in cheers.</p> <p>She continued on to promise that her office will bring legislation to defund police by 50% and fund racial justice organizations instead, though some protesters pushed back.</p> <p>"We don't need any more lies," one protester told her, adding that the group wanted to see police defunded 100%.</p> <p>The same protester briefly mocked Sawant's accent, but the group largely chose to use the incident as a teaching moment.</p> <p>After moving out of the main crowd surrounding the East Precinct, Sawant continued addressing a smaller group of protesters.</p> <p>Citizen journalist Omari Salisbury, who has consistently provided protest livestreams over the past week, took Sawant aside to ask her more about her demands.</p>

	<p>She responded by again emphasizing her belief that abolishing the police cannot happen in a capitalist society, and used the moment to push for a socialist system.</p> <p>"I absolutely am fighting for a society free of racism, free of sexual violence, free of police — but that will only happen when we fight capitalism," she said.</p>
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HEADLINE	06/09 Seattle police leave East Precinct
SOURCE	https://patch.com/washington/seattle/seattle-police-leave-east-precinct-remove-barricades
GIST	<p>SEATTLE, WA — Following more than a week of protests outside the East Precinct that often ended in tear gas, pepper spray and flashbangs, the Seattle Police Department boarded up its windows, took down the barricades and opened up the streets.</p> <p>Seattle Police Chief Carmen Best announced a "decreasing footprint" around the area Monday afternoon, citing calls from demonstrators and local leaders for the department to adjust its posture. Demonstrators have gathered near a fortified barricade at 11th Avenue and East Pine Street daily, which the police chief has repeatedly called a "flashpoint."</p> <p>"Protesters have requested it, they want the streets open for peaceful marches and we're going to facilitate that opportunity for them," Best said. "This is an exercise in trust and de-escalation."</p> <p>Earlier in the afternoon, neighbors shared several photos and videos of police unloading items from the building into vehicles and putting up fencing.</p> <p>As police left the neighborhood, protesters moved down a stretch of East Pine Street previously guarded by rows of officers in riot gear.</p> <p>After the initial march, a group assembled outside the precinct to hear some impromptu remarks from various speakers, featuring a crowd-sourced list of demands for policing. Later in the evening, Seattle City Councilmember Kshama Sawant addressed the audience, calling for the demilitarization of Seattle's police department.</p> <p>While a police presence was notably absent from the blocks surrounding the precinct, social media accounts reported large groups of officers in riot gear, with buses and armored vehicles, staged at nearby schools.</p> <p>The school district strongly condemned police presence on their property Monday night, which they said was unauthorized.</p> <p>"We did not allow, nor condone, school property being used to stage any militarized police or actual military. We did not give permission and will continue to figure out how this happened. We are working to ensure that this staging is not repeated on SPS property."</p> <p>Earlier in the day, Seattle city councilmembers roundly condemned recent police actions at protests and voiced support for a bill seeking to ban use of most crowd control devices. Councilmember Teresa Mosqueda promised an inquest into the SPD budget, with plans to re-direct spending into community health and safety programs.</p>
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HEADLINE	06/08 Protester: 'they've given us the precinct'
SOURCE	https://www.kuow.org/stories/they-gave-us-east-precinct-seattle-police-backs-away-from-the-barricade

GIST

The Seattle Police Department announced Monday afternoon that the barricade near the East Precinct -- where officers have used pepper spray, tear gas and flash bang grenades on demonstrators for eight days -- would be removed.

During a press briefing, Police Chief Carmen Best said Seattle Police would try something new.

"We're not going to evacuate or abandon the East Precinct," she said. "We will be hardening the East Precinct facility by boarding up the exterior windows, and applying fire retardant to the building exterior and installing fencing."

Best said demonstrators should be able to walk freely around Capitol Hill.

"This is an exercise in trust and de-escalation," she said.

On Monday evening, a protester addressed the crowd: "They've given us the precinct, and we've got to be smart, and we have to work together. And we have to remain peaceful, and we have to remain strong. This is the message that we are trying to deliver.

"That if they give us the precinct, we're not going to try to destroy it. We're not going to do what they want us to do.

"We're not going to do what they want us to do. We're going to take care of it, because this is our street."

The change comes after more than 12,000 complaints about the police response to the mostly peaceful demonstrations. Seattle Police has said officers have had to use pepper spray, tear gas and flash bangs because demonstrators had hurled bottles, rocks and used incendiary devices against police.

City council members on Monday said it was unclear how many of these had actually been used, citing evidence of one candle thrown.

Many people are also calling for defunding the department.

Later in the afternoon, Omari Salisbury depicted the scene on his livestream. He described it as a "view we haven't seen for eight days."

Salisbury, a journalist, said that earlier in the day, Seattle Police were building a fence across Pine Street. A few hours later, they stopped working on the fence and began moving out of the East Precinct.

"We saw moving trucks in and out," Salisbury said on his stream. "Officers moving bags. I know that the city is calling it a reduction in footprint. It's impossible for me to say there's nobody in this building, but I don't think that there's anybody home."

He said they had expected a fireproofing foam to be sprayed onto the East Precinct, but that no such fireproofing appears to have happened.

Salisbury continued: "Pine Street, for the first time in eight days, is open."

But lest anyone feel that the city would sleep easy tonight, Salisbury said that many people were wearing bulletproof vests because of credible threats made from white supremacists.

The threats felt much more real after the shooting on Sunday, when 31-year-old Nikolas Fernandez sped his car into the crowd and shot a man, 27-year-old Daniel Gregory. Gregory was in satisfactory condition at Harborview.

As the police left, the protesters claimed the area and barricaded it themselves.

	<p>“We are seeing quite a few bullet proof vests out here,” Salisbury said on his stream. “A lot of protesters out here before, not armed, who are now armed. It’s a different situation.”</p> <p>And then he signed off to get a bulletproof vest for himself.</p> <p>Around 10 p.m., two other livestreams showed protesters wearing body armor. One protester called for people with guns and know-how to go to the barricades, in case there was a threat from white supremacists known as Proud Boys.</p>
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HEADLINE	06/08 SPD prepares to abandon East Precinct
SOURCE	https://mynorthwest.com/1929763/spd-east-precinct/
GIST	<p>A source has confirmed to KIRO Radio that preparations are underway to secure the Seattle Police Department’s East Precinct building in the Capitol Hill neighborhood in the event that it needs to be abandoned.</p> <p>The East Precinct is near 11th and Pine, where protesters have gathered every day for nearly two weeks. Any valuable items will be removed from the precinct.</p> <p>Mike Solan, president of SPOG, spoke to media Monday morning outside the East Precinct and workers could be seen boarding up the windows of the building in the background.</p> <p>Seattle Police Chief Carmen Best said the department is taking all safety precautions for the facility. She added that the deployment and footprint in Capitol Hill on Monday night will be different.</p> <p>The SPD wants to protect the precinct facility and allow protesters their right to free speech. According to SPD, the streets surrounding the East Precinct will be reopened, allowing demonstrators to march on Capitol Hill. The building will remain staffed.</p> <p>Best said she is looking forward to a night of peaceful protests.</p> <p>“We don’t want to be the center of the story,” she said.</p> <p>Anything considered sensitive will be removed from the precinct area, according to Best. She said this is the first time they’ve tried to protect the facility in this fashion.</p> <p>“We will meet peace with peace,” Best added.</p>
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HEADLINE	06/08 School board president condemns police
SOURCE	https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/seattle-area-protests-live-updates-for-monday-june-8/
GIST	<p>Zachary DeWolf, president of the Seattle School Board, took to Facebook on Monday evening to condemn the Police Department for using the Seattle World School parking lot as a place for "staging militarized police."</p> <p>"I saw Seattle SWAT teams at Seattle World School just a block from my home," DeWolf said in his post. "I do not condone the use of Seattle Public Schools property for staging militarized police against peaceful protestors. The bare minimum is to protect our first amendment right to protest."</p> <p>He urged the city to contact Mayor Jenny Durkan and Seattle City Councilmembers to demand that public schools' property not be used for "staging."</p>

	<p>"When schools in our neighborhoods are filled with militarized police activity as a show of force against people exercising their first amendment rights, our school buildings no longer feel safe to many of our students," he wrote.</p> <p>The district's official Twitter also called the police action "concerning."</p>
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HEADLINE	06/08 L.A. teachers union: remove school police
SOURCE	https://www.foxnews.com/us/california-teachers-union-calls-removal-school-police-report
GIST	<p>Leaders of a Los Angeles teachers union said Monday that they support a movement to eliminate the Los Angeles School Police Department, with the funds instead used to help support the mental health of students, according to a report.</p> <p>The law enforcement agency has about 410 police officers that serve the L.A. Unified School District, which enrolls more than 600,000 students. It accounts for roughly \$70 million of the district's \$7.9 billion budget.</p> <p>"We have to dismantle white supremacy. We must ... defund the police and bring in the mental health services that our students need," said Cecily Myart-Cruz, the incoming president of United Teachers Los Angeles (UTLA), according to the Los Angeles Times.</p> <p>Their decision to call for the elimination of school police comes amid requests to defund the entire Los Angeles Police Department following the death of George Floyd, who died in police custody on May 25 in Minneapolis.</p> <p>The union's board of directors voted 35-2 last week to begin a process that will lead to the school board voting on whether to "take money out of the school police department and put it directly into mental health support, counselors, academic counselors," current UTLA president Alex Caputo-Pearl told the paper. "We can have 800 mental health supporters by using that money."</p> <p>Critics argue that school police are necessary because they are trained to deescalate situations better than other officers, with many being graduates of the school district who work closely with counselors, according to the L.A. Times.</p> <p>"We are trained different. We have a vested interest ... we had restorative justice [training], our police officers come from the communities they serve," said Gil Gamez, president of the school police union. "To see us be demonized and ostracized, I don't get it."</p> <p>Meanwhile, Sarah Djato, 16, a local high school student said she saw law enforcement pepper spray a student last year and believes witnessing violence by school police impacts them in a negative way.</p> <p>"When you're having this continuously happen ... to black students, it becomes in our minds that that is normal and that's the way we're supposed to treat situations and you defuse it by force, and that violence is OK and violence is normal," she told the paper. "I don't even know how to describe how detrimental that is because I haven't grown yet."</p> <p>The Los Angeles School Police Department's mission "is to assist students, teachers, administrators, and other staff in providing a safe and tranquil environment in which the educational process can take place," according to its website.</p>
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HEADLINE	06/09 New Zealand: no armed police patrols
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SOURCE	https://www.cbsnews.com/news/new-zealand-eyeing-us-drops-plans-armed-police-patrols/
GIST	<p>Wellington, New Zealand — New Zealand police on Tuesday scrapped plans for armed patrols prompted by last year's Christchurch mosque shootings, after criticism the change would lead to a U.S.-style militarization of the force.</p> <p>Police in the South Pacific nation usually operate without firearms but gave armed patrols a trial run after a lone gunman murdered 51 Muslim worshippers in Christchurch in March 2019.</p> <p>At the time, police said the worst mass shooting in modern New Zealand history meant "our operating environment has changed" and they needed the ability to rapidly deploy armed officers to high-risk incidents.</p> <p>The move was met with unease among sections of the New Zealand public who weren't used to seeing armed officers, particularly the Maori and Pacific communities, which argued they were the most likely to come into contact with firearm-toting officers.</p> <p>Green Party co-leader Marama Davidson, whose background is Maori, said last week that the patrols made her fearful about the safety of her two sons.</p> <p>"We only have to look to the United States to see how violent things can get under a militarized police force," she said in an open letter to Commissioner of Police Andrew Coster. "This is especially so for minorities and communities of color."</p> <p>Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern had also said she was "totally opposed to the routine arming of the police," although she argued the patrols were an operational matter for the force to decide on.</p> <p>Coster said Tuesday that the armed patrols wouldn't continue. He said police had listened to feedback from the community.</p> <p>"It is clear through the course of the trial that armed response teams do not align well with the style of policing that New Zealanders expect," he said.</p> <p>Coster said he was committed to police remaining "generally unarmed" and operating with public support. "How the public feels is important -- we police with the consent of the public, and that is a privilege," he said.</p> <p>Policing methods worldwide are under the spotlight after African-American man George Floyd was killed while being arrested in the United States, sparking civil rights protests around the globe.</p> <p>Christchurch shooter Brenton Tarrant is being held in a high-security jail after pleading guilty to 51 charges of murder, 40 of attempted murder and one of terrorism.</p> <p>The Australian, a self-avowed white supremacist, has yet to be sentenced because of delays in the court system caused by the coronavirus pandemic.</p>
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HEADLINE	06/08 Portland police chief resigns; LT promoted
SOURCE	https://www.cbsnews.com/news/new-portland-police-bureau-chief-lieutenant-chuck-lovell-takes-over-from-jami-resch-today-2020-06-08/
GIST	<p>The Portland Police Bureau chief announced her resignation Monday after six months on the job and 10 straight nights of protests over the death of George Floyd in Minneapolis, CBS Portland, Oregon, affiliate KOIN-TV reports. Lieutenant Chuck Lovell, an African American man, will take over the role previously held by Jami Resch, effective immediately.</p>

The Portland Police Bureau had been facing scrutiny over the lack of black leadership in its ranks. Three black civic groups addressed a letter to Resch, Portland Mayor Ted Wheeler and City Council commissioners to address the issue. Monday's announcement also came after a [weekend of protests](#) over Floyd's death, racial injustice and police brutality. In Portland, there were almost 100 arrests in recent days during the protests, KOIN-TV said.

"To say this was unexpected would be an understatement," Lovell said of Resch's resignation. "I told Chief Resch I would do everything in my power to help her during these challenging times."

Lovell also praised Resch's leadership as selfless, saying, "I don't know if I've worked directly for anyone who cares more for the people in our organizations or the people in the community."

"I'm humbled. I'm a public servant. I'm going to show up every day with a servant's heart," Lovell said. "All I can do is be me. I'm looking forward to this journey."

The protests in Portland were mostly peaceful during the day, but unrest grew after dark over the last three nights and the gatherings were declared an unlawful assembly. Officials said "agitators" threw items at officers, including a powerful firework that exploded near two Multnomah County deputies near downtown Portland's Justice Center, KOIN-TV reported.

Lovell spoke about Floyd's fatal encounter with police — which was caught on camera May 25 as a [white police officer in Minneapolis kneeled on Floyd's neck](#) for eight minutes and 46 seconds — and described it as agonizing.

"When I watched the video of what happened to Mr. Floyd ... I remember the big takeaway I had ... it wasn't the tactics, it wasn't the number of officers who were there ... it was really the lack of care and compassion," he said. "The thought that this is an idea that could exist ... it almost felt like you're not important. To me, the fight is not with each other. The fight for all of us is against that idea that people, institutions, agencies ... can harbor that feeling and it has bad outcomes for people."

Lovell's assignment comes after Congressional Democrats [unveiled legislation Monday](#) to offer a blueprint for reforming policing policies, improving law enforcement accountability for any misconduct and increasing transparency.

Meanwhile, some protesters have called for [defunding police departments](#), but the House bill does not include any funding specifically for police and instead would implement grants to community organizations with the aim of building partnerships which allow for greater accountability.

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HEADLINE	06/08 New Orleans PD admits force violations
SOURCE	https://www.nola.com/news/crime_police/article_c73d0244-a9dd-11ea-b790-bf6d706f9ed4.html
GIST	<p>Without permission and without immediately reporting it up the chain of command, New Orleans Police Department officers fired hard rubber balls at a crowd of protesters whom they also subjected to two authorized rounds of tear gas near the Crescent City Connection on Wednesday night, Superintendent Shaun Ferguson acknowledged Monday.</p> <p>Ferguson's remarks contradicted earlier denials from him and an NOPD spokesman when they were asked if officers used anything besides tear gas to disperse the demonstration. Many protesters immediately challenged those denials, producing video and pictures of projectiles and injuries as evidence.</p> <p>Ferguson said he wanted to "formally apologize to the citizens" for having given out wrong information, stressing that he believed it was true when it was provided to him shortly after the bridge was cleared. The superintendent added that his agency would investigate where its protocols faltered, correct them if</p>

necessary, and discipline any officers who may have violated policies requiring the immediate reporting of uses of force.

But Ferguson also asked the public to not let Wednesday night fray the NOPD's relationship with the city, noting that — since signing a 2012 reform agreement with the federal government — the agency has adopted many of the changes sought by people protesting the May 25 police killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis. Ferguson mentioned the NOPD's bans on chokeholds and knee pins, and he said the agency for years has required officers to report misconduct by their peers.

“This is a dark hour, that particular night, but this does not define the city of New Orleans — this does not define the New Orleans Police Department,” Ferguson said. “We are against social injustice. We are against systemic racism. ... We are with you. We stand with you.”

Bilal Ali-Bey, who took pictures of a thigh wound that he said one of the projectiles caused, said Monday that the sentiments Ferguson expressed don't square with what he and others experienced.

“I have physical wounds and trauma that (show) it is a joke if you think I'm protected by this system,” said Ali-Bey, 33. “This doesn't correlate at all.”

A graduate student who requested that his full name not be published said he'd moved toward the front of Wednesday's crowd in an effort to protect others with his body after NOPD's line of officers in riot gear threw tear gas. He saw what he described as a baseball-sized hole ripped through a woman's sign and then got nailed on his forearm by a projectile.

The man, who is studying public health at Tulane University, said the round tore open a large cut as well. “I definitely didn't deserve to get shot like that,” he said. “Any night that didn't have police set up a line against us ended perfectly fine.”

Wednesday's faceoff marked the first time in at least a generation that the department resorted to tear gas for the purposes of crowd control, something the Carnival-tested agency excels at. The NOPD more commonly uses tear gas in situations involving barricaded suspects and occasionally hostages.

But things began unraveling when NOPD rejected a request from informal leaders of the march for officers to put down their riot gear, escort the several hundred protesters across the nearby bridge and walk back with them as a show of solidarity.

Protesters in turn wouldn't entertain NOPD's counter-offer for everyone to kneel together in a repeat of what had happened on Interstate 10 the previous night.

Police officials said they had warned the leaders that the demonstration needed to turn around when some marchers in the front advanced toward a skirmish line of cops, chanting, “Hands up! Don't shoot!” Video shows at least one slipped past the line of officers, who used their shields to block several other demonstrators from going further.

The NOPD said supervisors ultimately signed off on using two tear gas canisters to disperse the crowd. Video shows a demonstrator picked up one of the canisters shortly after it was deployed and threw it off the side of the expressway.

While Ferguson hasn't said who gave the tear gas order, he said officers were under the command of Capt. Bryan Lampard, who heads NOPD's tactical division, and Capt. Lejon Roberts, head of one of the city's eight patrol districts.

Both men report to Ferguson's second-in-command, Chief Deputy Superintendent John Thomas, who the previous night had personally spoken with demonstrators on I-10 before they agreed to kneel with the police and then leave afterward. But Ferguson on Monday said Lampard and Roberts had the authority to deploy the tear gas if they viewed it as necessary.

What neither commander authorized was firing projectiles at the crowd, Ferguson said. Yet, Ferguson said, investigators have identified the officer or officers who did fire so-called stinger rounds: rubber balls scattered from a canister of the same caliber as the “riot gun” that fires tear gas canisters.

The investigation of what happened there will be two-pronged. One prong will involve determining whether officers were justified in firing the stinger rounds. The other will involve establishing why that use of force wasn’t reported up the chain of command before an NOPD spokesman and even Ferguson himself explicitly denied, multiple times, that any projectiles were fired at the crowd.

Any officers who are found to have violated agency regulations would face a wide range of penalties, ranging from a letter of reprimand to termination, Ferguson said.

A video provided to The Times-Picayune | New Orleans Advocate on Thursday contradicted NOPD’s initial claims about what police fired on the bridge, clearly showing an unidentified round zooming from the cops’ line toward a crowd of protesters amid smoke clouds as they heckled officers. A slowed-down version of the clip suggests the round may have come from above an armored police truck with a tank-like hatch atop it.

Veteran civil rights attorney Katie Schwartzmann on Sunday also sent a letter to the NOPD, as well as two outside monitors, demanding police reveal what weapons they used to break up the march. Schwartzmann attached photos of a rubber pellet, identical to the kind expelled by stinger rounds, that allegedly struck someone on the bridge. She also attached pictures of demonstrators’ wounds.

Others at the bridge had also photographed at least one other kind of projectile — seeming to match the appearance of a “sponge” round — that they said police fired. Ferguson said as of Monday he could only confirm that stinger rounds were fired. But he stopped short of ruling out that additional projectiles had been shot.

Tim Caldwell, a restaurant kitchen worker who’s out of work because of coronavirus and attended protests all week as an informal medic, said he got a close look at someone who got hit with “one of those pepper rounds — that explode like chalk and burns where the powder dissolves on your skin — hit her directly in the chest.”

“I was washing my friend’s eyes out when” it happened, Caldwell said. He said he got hit in the foot and realized it, too, was apparently a round made of chemical irritant when he got home and noticed an impact mark and the same powder on his shoes.

Along with Gov. John Bel Edwards, Mayor LaToya Cantrell has staunchly supported NOPD’s handling of Wednesday’s demonstration.

“A small group of individuals made the deliberate decision to escalate a physical confrontation with our officers (and) produced an outcome that no one wanted,” a statement from Cantrell’s office said Monday. “Tear gas is never a first option, and never a choice anyone in our leadership takes lightly.”

Yet other voices, both in and out of City Hall, were critical.

In a statement, Orleans Parish Prison Reform Coalition Executive Director Sade Dumas said, “NOPD and other city leaders must do more to demonstrate that the department’s main priority is truly the safety of the community rather than the preservation of the status quo.”

Caldwell said he watched Ferguson’s press conference with incredulity.

“If we don’t have all this irrefutable evidence of wrongdoing, what other crimes are getting swept under the rug?” Caldwell said.

	<p>City Councilman Jay Banks has said he is pursuing legislation to ban tear gas in New Orleans. His council colleague, Jason Williams, has called a special criminal justice committee meeting for this upcoming Thursday to discuss last week's bridge protest, the only one of several demonstrations in New Orleans since Floyd's murder to end in chaos.</p> <p>Williams said he was particularly troubled that NOPD turned to tear gas and scattershot projectiles bound to affect many when, by all accounts, only a few demonstrators tried to force their way across.</p> <p>"It's hugely problematic, especially when people are protesting police abuse and the use of excessive force," Williams said.</p> <p>Five demonstrators were arrested on counts of illegally crossing a police cordon, which is a misdemeanor. Police didn't book anyone with obstructing a highway, a felony count that protesters marching on Louisiana roadways can face.</p> <p>Additionally, a smoking tear gas canister struck a schoolteacher in the crowd in her head before medical workers among the demonstrators bandaged her wounds.</p> <p>NOPD late Monday said it would hold a session Tuesday informing the public on the weapons it used to clear the bridge last week.</p>
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HEADLINE	06/09 Covid-19, rumors, fear devastate Yemen
SOURCE	https://abcnews.go.com/Health/wireStory/yemens-rebels-crack-covid-19-rumors-spread-71146196
GIST	<p>CAIRO -- In the darkness, the bodies of suspected victims of coronavirus are carried in silence, one after the other, to be buried in several cemeteries across northern Yemen. Flashlights flicker as mourners make their way through the shadows.</p> <p>The corpses are washed with disinfectants, wrapped in layers of plastic sheets and white linen before being laid to rest in six-foot deep pits. There is no one around except for a handful of relatives in masks, gloves, and white gowns. Large gatherings are not permitted. Phones are not allowed.</p> <p>Grave diggers and guards at the cemeteries are warned not to speak about the causes of the deaths. If asked, they are told to say that the dead are "unidentified bodies from the war," according to several residents and one gravedigger. Families are never really told if their relatives died from the coronavirus, which is believed to be the culprit. Test results are never released. These daily funeral rituals come as social media are flooded with condolences and photographs of the dead.</p> <p>The coronavirus is spreading throughout Yemen, a country that has been devastated by five years of civil war. The fighting is between the Iranian-backed Houthi rebels who control the capital, Sanaa, and much of the country's north, and a U.S.-backed, Saudi-led coalition fighting on behalf of the internationally recognized government.</p> <p>The fighting has already killed more than 100,000 people and displaced millions. Years of aerial bombings and intense ground fighting has destroyed thousands of buildings, leaving half of Yemen's health facilities dysfunctional. About 18% of the country's 333 districts have no doctors. Water and sanitation systems have collapsed. Many families, especially among the millions displaced by fighting, can barely afford one meal a day.</p> <p>The COVID-19 pandemic has added to the deadly toll of the war in Yemen, crippling a health system already in shambles with little capacity to test those suspected of having the virus. The country has no more than 500 ventilators and 700 ICU beds nationwide. There is one oxygen cylinder per month for every 2.5 million people.</p>

The situation is exacerbated in the Houthi-controlled north, where the rebels have suppressed information about the virus, severely punished those who speak out, enforced little mitigation measures, and promoted conspiracies and claims by the Houthi minister of health that their scientists are working on developing a cure for COVID-19 to present to the world.

Officially, the rebels say that only four cases of coronavirus have been detected in the regions they control, but have resisted making the number of positive cases and deaths public.

“We don't publish the numbers to the society because such publicity has a heavy and terrifying toll on people's psychological health,” said Youssef al-Hadhari, spokesman for the Houthi health ministry, in response to questions by The Associated Press.

His comments come two months after Houthi Minister of Health Taha al-Motawakel painted a bleak picture of the country's readiness to deal with the virus, saying that at some point Houthi officials will have to deal with 1 million people in need of hospital admissions in a two-month period. He told a parliament session that at one point, doctors will have to choose between whom to rescue and whom to let die.

This is “battlefield medicine,” he said.

The World Health Organization believes that there is a significant undercount of total number of people affected by the coronavirus outbreak, which officials say could further hinder efforts to get the medical supplies needed to contain the virus.

Richard Brennan, the WHO's regional emergency director, told the AP that he believes the COVID-19 deaths are in the hundreds and cases are in the thousands, based on what he has heard from numerous health providers in Yemen.

Local health officials, aid workers, residents, and community activists who all spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss the pandemic, say the situation in the war-torn country is worsening fast. Local unions, who have kept their own death tallies from the coronavirus, report that 46 medical staffers, 28 judges, and 13 lawyers died in a three-week period between mid-May and early June, well above the Houthis' official count.

The lack of information about the true number of people infected by the coronavirus in Houthi-controlled areas has led to wild speculation about the nature of the disease and the rebel's response to dealing with the infections and deaths has only added to the confusion.

One widely circulated rumor suggested Houthi rebels have instructed doctors to kill suspected COVID-19 patients with a “mercy injection.”

The rumor, which was given credibility because of a supposedly confidential document allegedly signed by the health minister, gained so much traction that Houthi leaders took the unusual step of issuing an official denial, calling the rumor “lies aimed at spreading fear.” The Houthis themselves have also spread rumors that the virus was spread by outsiders.

Some hospitals, like the Jibla hospital in the northern province of Ibb, one of the worst hit areas, have been called “injection hospitals” because of the high number of deaths happening there, residents and local activists said.

These rumors have caused widespread panic, and residents say they are less likely to notify health officials about suspected cases of COVID-19 .

“People don't go to hospitals for fear of the mercy injection,” said a local activist, referring to the Jibla hospital. “We can't tell the truth from the fallacy but I know many people who died in mysterious ways inside this hospital.”

A lawmaker in Sanaa told the AP that people are afraid to report coronavirus cases, fearing retaliation from Houthi officials.

“The suspected cases are treated like war criminals,” he said.

The lawmaker and a local activist from Ibb province said that the Houthis have gone through great lengths to contain information about the spread of COVID-19 in the rebel-controlled region.

At the Jibla hospital, which has been turned into a COVID-19 isolation facility, the rebels have appointed a security supervisor to control the flow of information in and out of the hospital.

“He is the one in charge, meaning the head of the hospital himself is powerless in the face of this official. All staffers in the hospital fear him,” the activist said.

In a phone call with the AP, Abdullah al-Matari, the head of the hospital, declined to comment. He referred questions to the ministry's top officials.

Residents said militiamen working as security personnel in the hospital also search visitors for phones and prevent them from carrying the devices inside the quarantine wards.

The Houthi information blackout extends beyond the hospitals. When a local activist posted a picture of an ambulance on social media of two medical workers in protective gear washing the vehicle in a pond, one of the men said they just finished transferring eight bodies to the cemetery named Jarraf.

When the picture went viral on social media, the man who spoke was interrogated and suspended from his job, the activist said. The AP could not independently verify his account.

In several cemeteries in Sanaa, Yemen's capital, burials occur almost daily, according to local residents and doctors.

Deaths from suspected coronavirus cases have surged to the point that, at the end of May, the Houthi religious endowment ministry, which is in charge of cemeteries, hung a sign on one of Sanaa's largest cemeteries that read: “Khazima cemetery is full.”

Residents say it's hard to find a burial plot for less than a quarter million rials, or 500 dollars — five times the salary of a government employee. Burials are spread out all over Sanaa cemeteries so as not to attract any attention to the numbers, residents said.

Secretly filming the burials on smartphones in defiance of the Houthi orders has become an act of heroism, local resident said in interviews, adding that the amateur videos give Yemenis the only true glimpse of the true impact of COVID-19 in the region.

The outbreak in the Houthi-held territory is taking place amid simmering tension between the rebels and the U.N. agencies, which are running short of funding for aid programs.

Last week, the United Nations announced that it was about a billion dollars short of what aid agencies say is needed to address Yemen's humanitarian needs and a deteriorating health care system made worse by the coronavirus.

“The situation is catastrophic,” said one aid worker of an international agency working in Yemen. “Now the COVID-19 outbreak, the suspension of funding, the tension between donors and the authorities, we have less money, and more needs. It's terrible.”

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HEADLINE	06/08 Nearly 600 healthcare workers died; virus
SOURCE	https://abcnews.go.com/Health/600-us-health-care-workers-died-covid-19/story?id=71132667
GIST	<p>Nearly 600 front-line health care workers appear to have died of COVID-19, according to Lost on the Frontline, a project launched by The Guardian and KHN that aims to count, verify and memorialize every health care worker who dies during the pandemic.</p> <p>The tally includes doctors, nurses and paramedics, as well as crucial health care support staff such as hospital janitors, administrators and nursing home workers, who have put their own lives at risk during the pandemic to help care for others. Lost on the Frontline has now published the names and obituaries for more than 100 workers.</p> <p>A majority of those documented were identified as people of color, mostly African American and Asian/Pacific Islander. Profiles of more victims, and an updated count, will be added to our news sites twice weekly going forward.</p> <p>There is no other comprehensive accounting of U.S. health care workers' deaths. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has counted 368 COVID deaths among health care workers, but acknowledges its tally is an undercount. The CDC does not identify individuals.</p> <p>The Guardian and KHN are building an interactive, public-facing database that will also track factors such as race and ethnicity, age, profession, location and whether the workers had adequate access to protective gear. The database — to be released this summer — will offer insight into the workings and failings of the U.S. health care system during the pandemic.</p> <p>In addition to tracking deaths, Lost on the Frontline reports on the challenges health care workers are facing during the pandemic. Many were forced to reuse masks countless times amid widespread equipment shortages. Others had only trash bags for protection. Some deaths have been met with employers' silence or denials that they were infected at work.</p> <p>The number released today reflects the 586 names currently in the Lost on the Frontline internal database, which have been collected from family members, friends and colleagues of the deceased, health workers unions, media reports, unions, among other sources. Reporters at KHN and The Guardian are independently confirming each death by contacting family members, employers, medical examiners and others before publishing names and obituaries on our sites. More than a dozen journalists across two newsrooms — as well as student journalists — are involved in the project.</p> <p>Many of the health care workers included here studied physiology and anatomy for years. They steeled themselves against the long hours they'd endure. Emergency medical technicians raced by ambulance to help. Others did the cleanup, maintenance, security or transportation jobs needed to keep operations running smoothly.</p> <p>They undertook their work with passion and dedication. They were also beloved spouses, parents, friends, military veterans and community activists.</p> <p>None started 2020 knowing that simply showing up to work would expose them to a virus that would kill them.</p> <p>This project aims to capture the human stories, compassion and heroism behind the statistics. Among those lost were Dr. Priya Khanna, a nephrologist, who continued to review her patients' charts until she was put on a ventilator. Her father, a retired surgeon, succumbed to the disease just days after his daughter.</p> <p>Susana Pabatao, one of thousands of Philippine health providers in the United States, became a nurse in her late 40s. Susana died just days after her husband, Alfredo, who was also infected with COVID-19.</p>

Dr. James Goodrich, [a renowned pediatric neurosurgeon](#), acclaimed for separating conjoined twins, was also remembered as a renaissance man who collected antique medical books, loved fine wines and played the didgeridoo.

Some of the first to die faced troubling conditions at work. Rose Harrison, 60, [a registered nurse](#), wore no mask while taking care of a COVID-19 patient at an Alabama nursing home, according to her daughter. She felt pressured to work until the day she was hospitalized. The nursing home did not respond to requests for comment.

Thomas Soto, 59, [a Brooklyn radiology clerk](#) faced delays in accessing protective gear, including a mask, even as the hospital where he worked was overwhelmed with COVID-19 patients, his son said. The hospital did not respond to requests for comment.

The Lost on the Frontline team is documenting other worrying trends. Health care workers across the U.S. said [failures](#) in communication left them unaware they were working alongside people infected with the virus. And occupational safety experts raised alarms about CDC guidance permitting workers treating COVID patients to wear surgical masks — which are far [less protective](#) than N95 masks.

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration, the federal agency responsible for protecting workers, has launched dozens of fatality investigations into health workers' deaths. But recent [agency memos](#) raise doubts that many employers will be held responsible for negligence.

As public health guidelines have largely prevented traditional gatherings of mourners, survivors have found new ways to honor the dead: In Manhattan, a medical resident played a [violin](#) tribute for a fallen co-worker; a nurses union placed 88 pairs of [shoes](#) outside the White House commemorating those who had died among their ranks; fire departments have [lined up](#) trucks for funeral processions and held [“last call” ceremonies](#) for EMTs.

The Lost on the Frontline death toll includes only health care workers who were potentially exposed while caring for or supporting COVID-19 patients. It does not, for example, include retired doctors who died from the virus but were not working during the pandemic.

The number of reported deaths is expected to grow. But as reporters work to confirm each case, individual deaths may not meet our criteria for inclusion — and, therefore, may be removed from our count.

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HEADLINE	06/08 Germany: US troop reduction harmful
SOURCE	https://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/germany-us-troop-withdrawal-harm-nato-security-71131412
GIST	<p>BERLIN -- Germany's defense minister suggested Monday that U.S. President Donald Trump's reported plans to withdraw more than a quarter of American troops out of Germany could weaken not only the NATO alliance but the U.S. itself.</p> <p>Trump is said to have signed off on a plan to reduce the total of troops stationed in Germany from 34,500 to no more than 25,000, according to reports by The Washington Post and The Wall Street Journal, but German Defense Minister Annegret Kramp-Karrenbauer told reporters that Berlin hasn't yet been informed of any such move.</p> <p>A White House official, speaking on condition of anonymity to discuss internal matters, confirmed to The Associated Press that there are plans to move troops, saying some could go to Poland while others could go elsewhere.</p> <p>The decision is part of the president's and Department of Defense efforts to review combatant commands around the globe, the official said.</p>

If the U.S. goes ahead, Kramp-Karrenbauer suggested the move would do more harm to NATO as a whole than to Germany's own defense.

"The fact is that the presence of U.S. soldiers in Germany serves the entire NATO alliance security, including America's own security," she said. "That is the basis on which we work together."

In Brussels, NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg sidestepped a question on the decision, saying that in general "over the last few years we have actually seen an increase in the U.S. presence" in Europe.

"What I can say is that we are constantly consulting with the United States, with other NATO allies on the military posture and presence in Europe," he said.

The Trump administration has been urging Germany to spend more on its defense to meet the NATO goal of spending 2% of gross domestic product on defense, and American officials in the past had raised the possibility of moving troops out as a veiled threat.

As such, the government's coordinator for trans-Atlantic relations, Peter Beyer, said if the plan is confirmed it wouldn't be a surprise, but that it was irritating to first learn of the possibility through media reports.

"The German-American relationship could be severely affected by such a decision of the U.S. president," Beyer told the dpa news agency.

"It's not just about 9,500 soldiers, but also about their families, so about 20,000 Americans. This would break down trans-Atlantic bridges."

The days are long gone when hundreds of thousands of American troops were stationed in Germany as a bulwark against the possibility of a Soviet invasion.

Today, the country is much more a hub for wider American military operations.

Facilities include Ramstein Air Base, critical for operations in the Middle East and Africa and headquarters to the U.S. Air Forces in Europe and Africa; the Landstuhl Regional Medical Center, which has saved the lives of countless Americans wounded in Iraq and Afghanistan; and the headquarters of both U.S. European Command and U.S. Africa Command in Stuttgart.

Germany is also home to the headquarters of U.S. Army Europe in Wiesbaden, an F-16 fighter base in Spangdahlem, and the Grafenwoehr Training Area, the largest NATO training facility in Europe.

"If this is confirmed, you have to ask yourself what impact this will have on NATO and the security architecture in Europe," Beyer said.

Germany has been increasing its defense spending and the issue of troops had lain dormant for many months.

It wasn't immediately clear why it was being brought up again, but Trump's decision came shortly after Chancellor Angela Merkel said that she wouldn't attend a Group of Seven summit in person in the U.S. if the president decided to go ahead with it. Shortly after the chancellor's announcement, Trump said he was postponing the summit.

German Foreign Minister Heiko Maas acknowledged over the weekend that current ties with Washington were "complicated."

He voiced concerns in an interview with Bild newspaper that the U.S. presidential election campaign could further polarize Washington and stoke populist politics.

	“Then co-existence within the country doesn’t just become harder, it also fuels conflicts on the international level,” he was quoted as saying. “That’s the last thing we need.”
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HEADLINE	06/08 South Africa virus cases ‘rising fast’
SOURCE	https://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/president-worried-south-africas-virus-cases-rise-fast-71131173
GIST	<p>CAPE TOWN, South Africa -- South Africa's numbers of COVID-19 are “rising fast,” according to President Cyril Ramaphosa, who says that he's worried.</p> <p>More than half of South Africa’s more than 50,000 confirmed cases have been recorded in the last two weeks, prompting concerns that Africa’s most developed economy is about to see a steep rise in infections. South Africa has the most cases in Africa, whose 54 countries have reported more than 190,000 cases including more than 5,000 deaths, according to the Africa Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.</p> <p>South Africa, with a population of 57 million people, saw its COVID-19 deaths climb above 1,000 Monday.</p> <p>"Like many South Africans, I, too, have been worried as I watch these figures keep rising," Ramaphosa wrote in his weekly letter to the nation.</p> <p>“While these numbers are broadly in line with what the various models had projected, there is a big difference between looking at a graph on a piece of paper and seeing real people becoming infected, some getting ill and some dying,” he wrote.</p> <p>Even as South Africa braces for increased cases and rising numbers of those hospitalized, the country is easing many restrictions of its 10-week-old lockdown.</p> <p>South Africa's lockdown, imposed on March 27, is credited with slowing the spread of the virus but because of the drastic economic effects Ramaphosa's government has had to lift many restrictions to allow people to return to work. Most of South Africa's workforce returned to their jobs at the start of this month after two months when only essential businesses were allowed to operate fully.</p> <p>Ramaphosa wrote the nationwide lockdown had achieved “the objective we had of delaying the spread of the virus” and “gave us time to prepare our health facilities.”</p> <p>But hospitals are coming under pressure, especially in the Western Cape province, which contains the city of Cape Town, and in the mainly rural Eastern Cape.</p> <p>Ramaphosa visited the Western Cape where a new 850-bed field hospital has been opened in a converted convention center in Cape Town. Another field hospital, a large tented facility, has been erected adjacent to the Khayelitsha District Hospital in a densely packed township to cope with expected overflow.</p> <p>The Western Cape has more than 65% of the national total, making it the hotspot for the virus in South Africa, as well as in all of Africa.</p> <p>The disease has risen dramatically in the neighboring Eastern Cape province, which will severely test South Africa's ability to deal with the virus in poor, rural areas.</p> <p>Both provinces have more cases than the province of Gauteng, which is South Africa's commercial hub including the biggest city, Johannesburg, and the capital, Pretoria.</p>

	Confronted by long delays in getting test results and shortages of kits, the Western Cape province announced it will only test those over the age of 55, health workers, those being admitted to hospital and those with serious health conditions. People younger than 55 who displayed symptoms should “presume” they have COVID-19 and isolate themselves to prevent further spread, said the provincial health authorities.
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HEADLINE	06/08 Turkey: agreements w/US on Libya
SOURCE	https://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/erdogan-turkey-us-reached-agreements-libya-71140500
GIST	<p>ANKARA, Turkey -- Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said Monday that he has reached agreements with his U.S. counterpart Donald Trump that could herald a “new era” concerning Libya.</p> <p>Erdogan made the comment in a television interview following a telephone call with the U.S. president, but did not elaborate on the agreements reached.</p> <p>"After our talks on the transition process in Libya, a new era can begin between Turkey and the U.S.," Erdogan told state broadcaster TRT. "We had some agreements."</p> <p>Earlier, a statement from his office said Erdogan and Trump had agreed to continue their close cooperation on Libya.</p> <p>Turkey's support for Libya's U.N.-supported government in Tripoli has helped shift the balance in the country, allowing the Tripoli-based forces to retake the capital's airport and gain the upper hand against the rival east-based forces, led by Khalifa Hifter.</p> <p>Hifter's forces are backed by the United Arab Emirates and Egypt, as well as France and Russia. The Tripoli-based government receives aid from Qatar, Italy and Turkey, which stepped up its military support in recent months.</p> <p>Erdogan said he would soon also discuss the situation in Libya with his Russian counterpart, Vladimir Putin.</p>
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HEADLINE	06/08 Black youths file 64% complaints on NYPD
SOURCE	https://abcnews.go.com/US/black-youth-complaints-nyc-police-including-year-arrested/story?id=71130498
GIST	<p>Amid a series of nationwide protests over police treatment of African Americans, a report released Monday shows that 64% of civilian complaints against New York City police officers were filed by or on behalf of young black people ages 8 to 18 who claimed to have been mistreated after being stopped for innocuous activities like high-fiving and carrying backpacks.</p> <p>The report by the New York City Civilian Complaint Review Board (CCRB), a police watchdog agency, analyzed 112 completed investigations between Jan. 1, 2018 and June 30, 2019, showing an overwhelming number (nearly 90%) of grievances involved children of color (black and Hispanic youth).</p> <p>The report also found that the number of complaints by youth of color was significantly larger than in the overall population (69.1%) and that nearly half of the complaints (46.3%) came from or were made on behalf of black male youth.</p> <p>“Sadly, after years of witnessing news about police misconduct and possibly experiencing it themselves, even the youngest among us have an awareness of the tension that too often exists between the police and</p>

civilians,” CCRB Chairman Fred Davie said in a statement. “As young New Yorkers lead the way in calling for change in our city following the deaths of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and countless others, it’s time for the NYPD to re-consider how officers police our youth, address disparities in law enforcement, and commit to swift discipline when officers engage in misconduct.”

Among the complaints probed was a March 2018 incident in which a group of black and Hispanic boys was stopped by multiple police officers simply for talking, laughing and playing with sticks picked up off the ground as they walked home, according to the report. A lieutenant had two of the boys, an 8-year-old and a 14-year-old, whom officers saw running with sticks in their hands handcuffed and taken to a police station in tears, according to the report.

Two of the officers testified that they were looking for "a group of Hispanic men in their 20s with a machete and a stick chasing and fighting other individuals" but their stories were inconsistent.

"The mother of the 8-year-old complained that her son was not treated properly and that his dreams of being a police officer were over," the report reads, adding that the complaint was substantiated and two of the officers and a lieutenant are facing a trial on administrative charges brought against them.

Other complaints substantiated by the board, include:

-- An 11-year-old black boy who was stopped and frisked by an undercover officer after they saw him shaking hands with and high-fiving a group of adults he knew in a housing project. "One of the bystanders told the officer that he should not be searching the victim as he was under the age of 13, but an officer replied that drugs can be given to younger children," the report reads. "The officers then got back into their vehicle and drove away."

-- A 16-year-old Hispanic boy stopped for jaywalking by an officer and a sergeant in plainclothes and searched without probable cause, according to the report. The officers discovered a small pocket knife on the boy. While the teenager was not arrested or issued a summons, the board "determined by a preponderance of the evidence" that the officers wrongfully invoked their authority because the boy's behavior did not amount to founded suspicion of criminality allowing the officer to question him.

-- A 15-year-old black boy was holding a deli bag and walking to a homeless shelter when a plainclothes detective and sergeant in an unmarked vehicle ordered him to stop without announcing they were police. The teenager ran but was tackled and handcuffed, suffering minor injuries. The bag the boy was holding contained a cheese roll and a piece of cake, according to the report.

In response to the report, NYPD officials said just one case of substantiated police misconduct is unacceptable.

“A top priority Commissioner (Dermot) Shea has set for the NYPD is to reimagine doing all we can to protect and serve New York City’s kids," the police department said in a statement. "After careful review, we accept each of the CCRB’s thoughtful and constructive recommendations -- some of which are already in the process of being implemented and all of which will strengthen our new Youth Strategy.”

The report showed that 407 total complaints were filed against New York City police by or on behalf of youth between Jan. 1, 2018 and June 30, 2019. Of the 112 fully-investigated complaints analyzed, 72% were filed by young people ages 10 to 18.

The report says that 42% of the fully-investigated complaints were unsubstantiated and 29% were substantiated. About 93% of the fully-investigated complaints involved young people ages 10 to 18 that were filed on their behalf by adults.

The CCRB also noted that between Jan. 1, 2018 and June 30, 2019, the NYPD reported 15,279 interventions with children ages 10 to 18. Of those interventions, 88% were with black or Hispanic children while just 6% were with white children.

The report was released along with a public service announcement encouraging young New Yorkers who experience police misconduct to call the CCRB.

	The CCRB recommended that the NYPD use the report in taking steps to avoid the “over-policing” of New York City youths of color and make public its use-of-force data, including breaking it down by age and race.
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HEADLINE	06/08 Several cities announce police reforms
SOURCE	https://abcnews.go.com/US/cities-us-announce-police-reform-mass-protests-brutality/story?id=71130499
GIST	<p>After two weeks of protests following the death of George Floyd, several U.S. cities are looking to reform their police departments and budgets.</p> <p>While Congress is slated to introduce reforms that include a chokehold ban, a limit on qualified immunity for officers and a restriction on military weapons, local governments have begun to take action.</p> <p>Although many of these reforms will be subjected to a long debate among local officials, some activists say it is a good start.</p> <p>Here are some of the cities that have promised reform so far:</p> <p>Minneapolis The Minneapolis City Council announced Sunday that it would disband its police force in light of Floyd's death and long-standing issues with police conduct.</p> <p>In a statement, nine city council members said they will be taking immediate steps to disband the Minneapolis Police Department through "the budget process and other policy decisions."</p> <p>"We're committed to engaging with every willing community member in the City of Minneapolis over the next year to identify what safety looks like for everyone," the members said in a statement.</p> <p>Although plans for defunding the police are veto-proof, Minneapolis Mayor Jacob Frey told "Good Morning America" Monday he is not in support of disbanding the police. Frey, who was booed by protesters Sunday, said he is aiming to address police abuses through internal changes.</p> <p>"And so let me be very clear, we're going after the police union, the police union contract, the arbitration provisions that mandate that we have arbitration at the end of the process and oftentimes that reverts the officer right back to where they were to begin with," he said.</p> <p>Last week, the city council unanimously voted on several police reforms including the banning of chokeholds and restrictions on the use of weapons such as tear gas on crowds.</p> <p>Kandace Montgomery, director of Black Visions, one of the local groups that have been in discussions with the council since the protests began, said the city should have done this long ago.</p> <p>"George Floyd should not have been murdered for so many people to wake up," she said in a statement.</p> <p>New York City On Sunday, Mayor Bill de Blasio announced a sweeping set of reforms that would shift funding from the NYPD to other sectors of the city's budget.</p> <p>De Blasio said he will work with the city council to hammer out the details over the next three weeks, but told reporters Monday that the amount would be "something substantial."</p> <p>"We will do that as a negotiation," he said.</p>

As part of the budget proposal, the money will be taken from the NYPD and given to "youth development and social services for communities of color," according to the mayor. The city will also shift enforcement of its street fairs out of the NYPD's jurisdiction and push for the state legislature to remove provisions in its 50-A law that the mayor says limits police transparency.

NYPD Commissioner Dermot Shea told several New York news stations he still needed more details about the plan, especially the dollar amount, but he was on board for "smart cuts."

"I fully support moving money to youth programs," he told NY1 Monday morning. "Every city agency needs to tighten its belt."

Seattle

Seattle Mayor Jenny Durkan announced Sunday short- and long-term changes to the city's police force to address the concerns about police from residents.

She said she will review the Seattle Police Department's budget with a "special focus on listening community voices throughout the process."

"Mayor Durkan concurred with many [activist groups'] requests and is working to quickly implement changes, including establishing and...resourcing of a Seattle Black Commission and investing \$100 million in community-driven programs for black youths and adults," her office said in a statement.

In addition to the budget proposal, Durkan has called for an independent prosecutor at the state level to investigate and prosecute any police officers as well as updating the department's procedures for mass protests.

Sacramento

The Davis Police Department announced Saturday that it will prohibit its officers from using chokeholds. Chief Darren Pytel said Floyd's death prompted questioning over current police tactics and more reforms were coming.

"The police change affects the strong thoughts and public demand for change in contemporary policing today," Pytel said in a statement.

The Davis PD also put out other policy changes including one that requires an officer to intercede if they see a fellow officer use excessive force.

New Jersey

New Jersey Attorney General Gurbir Grewal announced on June 5 that the state will ban police departments from using chokeholds, carotid artery neck restraints or similar tactics. Grewal said their use has led to several incidents where a suspect suffered asphyxiation.

"Because these tactics create a substantial risk of death or serious bodily harm, officers who cause a subject's death or injury while performing them face potential criminal liability," Grewal's order said.

The order provides an exemption "in the very limited situations when deadly force is necessary to address an imminent threat to life."

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HEADLINE	06/08 Boogaloo movement appeal to US troops
SOURCE	https://www.thedailybeast.com/the-disturbing-appeal-of-boogaloo-violence-to-military-men?ref=home

A decade ago, Stephen Parshall served in the Navy as an aviation mechanic. His four-year stateside stint earned him the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, standard fare for members of the Armed Forces supporting the sprawling conflict that began in September 2001.

On May 30, Parshall and two other men [were arrested for allegedly plotting several attacks](#) on protests, government facilities, and electrical infrastructure. His alleged accomplices were also current or former military members. According to prosecutors, the three were drawn together by the Boogaloo, an emerging, violent ideology that's gaining popularity among some troops and veterans.

Fantasies of a violent tipping point feature prominently in the Boogaloo scene, which—while relatively new and not an ideological monolith—generally trends right-wing or fringe libertarian, with many of its memes and aesthetic markers borrowed from more explicitly racist alt-right and [4chan culture](#). The movement is broadly anti-government, and talks often of sparking a civil war.

In the midst of that are current and former service members talking about waging war on U.S. soil. Participation by military members in an anti-government movement might seem counterintuitive on its face, but the Boogaloo movement is only the latest in a long series of fringe paramilitary scenes that court American troops.

Parshall, 35; Andrew Lynam, 23; and William Loomis, 40, were arrested at a Black Lives Matter protest in Las Vegas. But the trio weren't there to protest the [death of George Floyd](#), prosecutors say. Instead, they allegedly planned to throw Molotov cocktails and incite violence, in the hopes of sparking greater unrest.

Their Las Vegas cell came under investigation in April, when one of Parshall and Lynam's associates contacted the FBI about what that person claimed was the two men's interest in conducting a terror attack, prosecutors said. The person agreed to become a confidential informant in the group, and gathered with members as they allegedly discussed plots to commit violence and overthrow the government.

The trio allegedly went heavily armed to a "re-open" rally in Las Vegas—one of the largely conservative protests attended by people who wanted to end COVID-19 business closures. There, they allegedly talked of targeting government infrastructure, like a ranger station at a nearby lake.

During later meetings, they allegedly planned to blow up a power station and throw smoke bombs at a different re-open protest. (They allegedly went to the protest but got cold feet when they saw cops watching them.) Finally, on May 30, they allegedly attended the Black Lives Matter protest with Molotov cocktails and a plot to spark chaos. The FBI arrested all three on the spot.

The trio's arrest contributed to growing scrutiny of the Boogaloo movement, as well as the military records of many therein. Parshall was a former Navy seaman, achieving the rank of E-3 during his 2007-2011 service. Lynam is currently a Private First Class in the U.S. Army Reserve, where he is a health-care specialist, an Army spokesperson told The Daily Beast. The spokesperson added that the Army Reserve "is committed to serving the people of the United States, and living the Army values. [Lynam's] alleged actions are in direct contrast to these values and they are not representative of America's Army Reserve."

Loomis was an Air Force veteran. Although details on his dates of service and rank were not immediately available, he pleaded guilty to a traffic violation while living on the Offutt Air Force Base in Nebraska in 2001, records show. Attorneys for Parshall and Loomis did not return a request for comment, and it was unclear if Lynam had retained a lawyer. The Department of Defense did not return a request for comment on how it was handling the Boogaloo movement among troops.

Megan Squire, an Elon University professor researching far-right extremism online, said that, among members of the armed forces, she has noticed a higher rate of Boogaloo participation than in other right-wing movements like the alt-right.

Some of that might be due to fewer Boogaloo participants hiding their involvement, due to the movement's less explicit messaging, Squire noted. "But a bigger reason might be that the Boogaloo

crowd's intense focus on weapons and training requires the ability to talk the talk—there is a huge amount of jargon in the gun groups—and those with military training are therefore more respected and quicker to hit the ground running with anecdotes, familiarity with weapons, understanding of training protocols, and so on.”

[A report](#) by the disinformation-tracking group Network Contagion Research Institute (NCRI) in February described the military community as a potentially hot recruitment ground for the Boogaloo movement. “The military community, in particular, may merit special consideration in risk evaluation and social-climate research because seditious memes are now tailored for infection among veterans and active service members,” researchers wrote.

At its most basic level, Boogaloo is an internet joke, onto which followers have grafted a still-solidifying ideology. Mike Harts, an Army veteran and Boogaloo adherent who spoke to [the Associated Press last month](#), described it as a meme that evolved into a movement. That meme has racist roots, with much of the “Boogaloo” language emerging in extremist Telegrams, the Southern Poverty Law Center [noted last week](#), even though “at times, members of online boogaloo communities have presented their political project as race-blind and, in some instances, actively express solidarity with the black freedom movement.”

The joke-y meme language can conceal some of the movement's true intentions. Members sometimes show up at protests bearing AR-15 rifles and wearing Hawaiian shirts—simultaneously serious and difficult to take seriously.

Much of the movement's appearance is borrowed from 4chan culture and previous far-right communities. The movement has many of its origins in 4chan's “/k/” weapons board, [a Bellingcat investigation](#) noted last month, and many Boogaloo-friendly Facebook groups incorporate “/k/” into their names. Fluency in 4chan-style memes gives the movement common ground with alt-right types who popularized those memes from around 2015 to 2017. And Boogaloo members' military-style riffs on those memes may make them appealing to service members, bringing troops and veterans into conversation with far-right culture.

The end result is something like a military-looking arm patch with a Pepe meme and the words “Boogaloo Boys, Memetic Warfare, 1st [Division],” which members of the movement wore to a [pro-gun rally in Virginia in January](#).

The NCRI noted that “memetic warfare is still very much a mystery to both policy makers and officials working within the American law enforcement community. In this ignorance, the worst actors amongst Boogaloo groups possess a distinct advantage over government officials and law enforcement: They already realize that they are at war.”

Parshall was apparently familiar with ironic alt-right culture. In 2015, he set his profile picture to a swastika on a gay pride flag, surrounded by Stars of David. (Two days earlier, his profile picture had been a Confederate flag.)

As the Boogaloo movement emerged, some of its earliest advocates were military members. The NCRI identified one of the movement's early surges as a November standoff between an Army veteran and a police officer, during which the veteran name-checked the Boogaloo. The veteran's pro-gun Instagram account “only held several thousand followers at the start of the event, it boasted over 130,000 by the time the standoff ended,” the NCRI noted.

During the January pro-gun rally, Boogaloo members associated with the group that wore the “Boogaloo Boys, Memetic Warfare” patch claimed to be active-duty military. “Some of the guys we were with aren't exactly out of the military yet, so they had to keep their faces covered,” a member of the cell said on a podcast, the NCRI noted.

Army veteran Bradley Bunn, who was arrested May 1 for an alleged plot to throw pipe bombs at a re-open protest, did not appear to be an explicit Boogaloo adherent. But he had associates in the movement and became a hero among some Boogaloo followers, [RawStory previously reported](#).

Despite—or even because of—members’ military ties, the Boogaloo movement seems to have a genuine skepticism of police.

“The military or ex-military guys that I have observed in these communities are proud of having done their service but also frustrated with what they perceive to be ineffective policies and hierarchy,” Squire, the Elon University professor said. “More significantly, all the Boogaloo adherents are intensely anti-police (this is a foundational tenet), and the military-affiliated guys are constantly talking about how inept the police are. They express feelings of frustration for having to be subject to police that they feel are over-militarized and under-trained.”

The Boogaloo is far from the first civil war-thirsty movement to recruit military members. After the Vietnam War, the white power movement swelled with former soldiers, some of whom had been radicalized by racial conflict in their units or who blamed their military loss on the government.

In her book [Bring the War Home: The White Power Movement and Paramilitary America](#), historian Kathleen Belew writes that existing white power groups and publications solicited returning soldiers to stamp out what those groups saw as looming threats of progressivism and racial diversity.

Many Boogaloo Bois deny being racist, or even far-right. Some characterize themselves as libertarians, which, while a break from the standard Republican party line, is not a guarantee against holding far-right views. (When the alt-right movement was in a similarly adolescent stage, jokes about the “libertarian-to-alt-right pipeline” became so popular that alt-righters made a Facebook page of that name.)

But heavily armed and calling for civil war, with one foot in 4chan memes and the other in the military, the group could be an ascendant threat.

Loomis, the oldest of the three men arrested in the Las Vegas bust, apparently associated himself with multiple paramilitary groups prior to the Boogaloo, but could never find one that would bomb anything.

“Loomis stated that he wanted the group to take action against the United States government,” the criminal complaint reads. “Loomis stated that he was previously part of several militia groups, but ultimately left due to inactivity.”

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HEADLINE	06/08 Study: Europe lockdowns halted 3M deaths
SOURCE	https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-lockdowns/lockdowns-may-have-averted-3-million-deaths-in-europe-by-curbing-covid-19-study-idUSKBN23F1G3?feedType=RSS&feedName=worldNews
GIST	<p>LONDON (Reuters) - Wide-scale lockdowns including shop and school closures have reduced COVID-19 transmission rates in Europe enough to control its spread and may have averted more than three million deaths, researchers said on Monday.</p> <p>In a modelling study of lockdown impact in 11 nations, Imperial College London scientists said the draconian steps, imposed mostly in March, had “a substantial effect” and helped bring the infection’s reproductive rate below one by early May.</p> <p>The reproduction rate, or R value, measures the average number of people that one infected person will pass the disease on to. An R value above 1 can lead to exponential growth.</p>

The Imperial team estimated that by early May, between 12 and 15 million people in the 11 countries - Austria, Belgium, Britain, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Norway, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland - had been infected with COVID-19.

By comparing the number of deaths counted with deaths predicted by their model if no lockdown measures had been introduced, they found some 3.1 million deaths were averted.

“Measuring the effectiveness of these interventions is important, given their economic and social impacts, and may indicate which course of action is needed to maintain control,” the researchers said in a summary of their findings.

A second study by scientists in the United States, published alongside the Imperial-led one in the journal Nature, estimated that anti-contagion lockdown policies implemented in China, South Korea, Italy, Iran, France and the United States prevented or delayed around 530 million COVID-19 cases.

Focusing their analysis on these six countries, the U.S. research team compared infection growth rates before and after the implementation of more than 1,700 local, regional and national policies designed to slow or halt the spread of COVID-19, the disease caused by the new SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus.

They found that without anti-contagion policies in place, early infection rates of SARS-CoV-2 grew by 68% a day in Iran and an average of 38% a day across the other five countries.

Using econometric modelling normally used in assessing economic policies, they found lockdowns had slowed the infection rate with “measurable beneficial health outcomes in most cases”.

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HEADLINE	06/08 Study: shutdowns averted 60M infections
SOURCE	https://www.washingtonpost.com/health/2020/06/08/shutdowns-prevented-60-million-coronavirus-infections-us-study-finds/
GIST	<p>Shutdown orders prevented about 60 million novel coronavirus infections in the United States and 285 million in China, according to a research study published Monday that examined how stay-at-home orders and other restrictions limited the spread of the contagion.</p> <p>A separate study from epidemiologists at Imperial College London estimated the shutdowns saved about 3.1 million lives in 11 European countries, including 500,000 in the United Kingdom, and dropped infection rates by an average of 82 percent, sufficient to drive the contagion well below epidemic levels.</p> <p>The two reports, published Monday in the journal Nature, provide fresh evidence that aggressive and unprecedented shutdowns, which caused massive economic disruptions and job losses, were necessary to halt the exponential spread of the novel coronavirus.</p> <p>But the overwhelming majority of people remain susceptible to the virus. Only about 3 percent to 4 percent of people in the countries being studied have been infected to date, said Samir Bhatt, senior author of the Imperial College London study.</p> <p>“This is just the beginning of the epidemic: we’re very far from herd immunity,” Bhatt said Monday in an email. “The risk of a second wave happening if all interventions and precautions are abandoned is very real.”</p> <p>The first study, from researchers at the University of California at Berkeley, examined six countries — China, the United States, France, Italy, Iran and South Korea — and estimated how 1,717 interventions, such as stay-at-home orders, business closings and travel bans, altered the spread of the virus. The report concluded that those six countries collectively managed to avert 62 million test-confirmed infections.</p>

	<p>Because most people who are infected never get tested, the actual number of infections that were averted is much higher — about 530 million in the six countries, the Berkeley researchers estimated.</p> <p>Timing is crucial, the study found. Small delays in implementing shutdowns can lead to “dramatically different health outcomes.” The report, while reviewing what worked and what made little difference, is clearly aimed at the many countries around the planet that are still early in their battle against the coronavirus.</p> <p>“Societies around the world are weighing whether the health benefits of anti-contagion policies are worth their social and economic costs,” the Berkeley team wrote. The economic costs of shutdowns are highly visible — closed stores, huge job losses, empty streets, food lines. The health benefits of the shutdowns, however, are invisible, because they involve people not sickened.</p> <p>That spurred the researchers to come up with their estimates of infections prevented. The Berkeley team did not produce an estimate of lives saved.</p> <p>One striking finding: School closures seemed to have no significant effect, although the authors said the issue requires further study. Banning large gatherings had more of an effect in Iran and Italy than in the other countries.</p>
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HEADLINE	06/08 Huawei launches ad blitz in Britain
SOURCE	https://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/chinas-huawei-launches-ad-blitz-uk-reconsiders-role-71130217
GIST	<p>LONDON -- Huawei has launched an advertising campaign in Britain as officials reconsider the Chinese technology company's role in supplying equipment for the country's next-generation high speed mobile networks.</p> <p>The company took out full-page ads in British national newspapers outlining its commitment to providing mobile and broadband companies with equipment for fifth-generation networks, even though “some now question our role in helping Britain lead the way in 5G.”</p> <p>Huawei is stepping up its efforts to win over public opinion as it faces increasing pressure from a U.S.-led campaign aimed at persuading allies to shun its telecom equipment over fears that Beijing could use it for spying or sabotage — a charge the company has consistently denied.</p> <p>Huawei was granted a limited role in January to build the U.K.’s new high-speed 5G networks. However, last week the U.K's National Cyber Security Centre began a review to examine the impact new U.S. sanctions against Huawei could have on the country's networks, officials said.</p> <p>The U.S. restrictions on foreign semiconductor makers unveiled last month are aimed at limiting Huawei’s ability to use American technology, escalating a geopolitical battle between Washington and Beijing over industry development and security.</p> <p>The sanctions “will definitely damage the global supply chain of the semiconductor industry, which lots of industries rely on,” though it's too soon to draw a conclusion about the impact, Huawei Vice President Victor Zhang told reporters on a conference call.</p> <p>Huawei faced a setback last week in Canada, where two of the three major telecommunication companies decided not to use its equipment for their 5G networks.</p>
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HEADLINE	06/08 New Avaddon ransomware campaign
SOURCE	https://www.bleepingcomputer.com/news/security/new-avaddon-ransomware-launches-in-massive-smiley-spam-campaign/?&web_view=true
GIST	<p>With a wink and a smile, the new Avaddon Ransomware has come alive in a massive spam campaign targeting users worldwide.</p> <p>Avaddon was launched at the beginning of this month and is actively recruiting hackers and malware distributors to spread the ransomware by any means possible.</p> <p>As its first known attack, the Avaddon Ransomware is being distributed in a spam campaign reminiscent of February's Nemty Ransomware Love Letter campaign.</p> <p>You like my photo?</p> <p>In a wave of emails using subjects like "Your new photo?" or "Do you like my photo?" containing nothing but a winking smiley face, a JavaScript downloader for the Avaddon ransomware is being distributed.</p> <p>In a related report shared with BleepingComputer, the cybersecurity firm Appriver stated that the Phorphiex/Trik Botnet is distributing the malicious emails.</p> <p>This campaign is not small, as AppRiver security researcher David Pickett told us that they had blocked over 300,000 emails in just a short period.</p> <p>Attached to these emails is a JavaScript file masquerading as a JPG photo with names like IMG123101.jpg.</p> <p>Before you ask why someone would open a JavaScript file that was emailed to them, it is important to remember that Windows hides file extension by default, even though it is a known security risk.</p> <p>That means to the recipient, it would just appear as a .jpg file...</p> <p>When executed, the JS attachment will launch both a PowerShell and Bitsadmin command to download the Avaddon ransomware executable to the %Temp% folder and run it.</p> <p>In the sample tested by BleepingComputer, once executed, the ransomware will search for data to encrypt and append the .avdn extension to encrypted files.</p> <p>In each folder, a ransom note named [id]-readme.html will also be created. This ransom note contains a link to the TOR payment site and a unique victim ID used to login to the site.</p> <p>This TOR payment site includes the ransom amount, which in our cause was \$900, and instructions on how to pay for a decryptor.</p> <p>Other sections of the TOR site include a support chat, free test decryption, and a help page illustrated by Harry Potter characters.</p> <p>Unfortunately, ID-Ransomware creator Michael Gillespie has analyzed the ransomware and stated that it is secure and cannot be decrypted for free.</p> <p>More to come</p> <p>In advertisements posted to Russian-speaking hacker forums at the beginning of the month, Avaddon has stated that they are a new Ransomware-as-an-Affiliate (RaaS) program.</p>

	<p>A RaaS program is when the ransomware creator is responsible for the development of the malware and the operation of the TOR payment site.</p> <p>Affiliates who join the program are responsible for distributing the ransomware via spam, compromising networks, and exploit kits.</p> <p>As part of this arrangement, Avaddon is paying affiliates 65% of any ransom payments they bring in, and the Avaddon operators will receive 35%. Larger affiliates are commonly able to negotiate a higher revenue share depending on the size of their attacks.</p> <p>As is typical with RaaS programs, Avaddon has a series of rules that affiliates must follow when distributing the ransomware. The most common rule is that they cannot target victims in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS).</p> <p><i>It is forbidden to work in the CIS countries (AZ, AM, BY, KZ, KG, MD, RU, TJ, UZ, UA, GE , TM)</i> <i>It is forbidden to indicate or pass on to third parties the address of the admin panel on the .onion network.</i> <i>It is forbidden to upload .exe to unverified scanners that merge AV labs.</i></p> <p>Now that the Avaddon creators have started accepting applications, we should expect to see distribution increase and more advanced attacks to occur.</p>
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HEADLINE	06/08 DARPA launches bug bounty program
SOURCE	https://www.darkreading.com/vulnerabilities---threats/darpa-launches-bug-bounty-program/d/d-id/1338027?&web_view=true
GIST	<p>The Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) wants white hat hackers to try and find weaknesses in new hardware-level security mechanisms that it has developed over the past few years to protect systems from cyberattacks.</p> <p>Between July and September this year DARPA, along with crowdsourced security management firm Synack, will host a bug bounty program where researchers from around the world will have an opportunity to take a crack at technologies developed under DARPA's System Security Integration Through Hardware and Firmware (SSITH) effort.</p> <p>Individuals who qualify for the bug bounty program will be given access to emulated systems running on Amazon's cloud infrastructure. Each emulated system will include SSITH hardware-security controls and run software stacks with known vulnerabilities. Bug hunters who are able to exploit these software vulnerabilities by bypassing DARPA's hardware security mechanisms will be eligible for bounties ranging from thousands- to tens of thousands of dollars.</p> <p>"SSITH hardware defenses are focused on tackling seven vulnerabilities classes identified by the MITRE Common Weakness Enumeration Specification (CWE) and NIST," says Keith Rebello, program manager, DARPA Microsystems Technology Office (MTO). The vulnerabilities include those that enable exploitation of permissions and privilege in the system architectures, memory errors, information leakage, and code injection.</p> <p>"We're asking ethical hackers and analysts to disclose weaknesses in the hardware defenses that could lead to exploitation via one of these vulnerability classes," he says.</p> <p>DARPA launched the SSITH program in 2017 as part of an effort to make it harder for cybercriminals to exploit hardware vulnerabilities through software. The goal is to develop ideas and tools that system-on-chip designers could use to safeguard hardware against all known classes of hardware vulnerabilities, Rebello says.</p>

Organizations that are involved in DARPA's SSITH program include SRI International and the University of Cambridge, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), University of Michigan, and Lockheed Martin.

"Under the SSITH program, researchers are exploring a number of different design approaches that go well beyond patching," Rebello says. Some examples include using metadata tagging to detect unauthorized system access and formal methods to guarantee the security characteristics of integrated circuit systems, as well as encryption and secure enclaves for data protection.

To participate in DARPA's [Finding Exploits to Thwart Tampering \(FETT\)](#) Bug Bounty program, security researchers, reverse engineers, and others will first need to get through a Capture the Flag qualifier. Security researchers who are currently not part of Synack's Red Team will need to pass a technical assessment as well.

Reverse-Engineering Skills

Individuals that are selected to participate in the bounty-hunting program will need to have a good understanding of computer architecture and the software stacks that run on them, in addition to the requisite hacking and security skills, Rebello says.

"This is a much more hardware-focused activity than most bug bounties," he says. "We are asking FETT participants to hack hardware defenses by using software-based exploits, and expect their expertise to be aligned accordingly."

Researchers will need to understand how SSITH defenses work at the hardware level in order to be able to devise ways around them, he says.

Mark Kuhr, CTO and co-founder of Synack, says the hardware-focused nature of the FETT program is not the only thing that makes it different from typical bug bounties. FETT is not about finding software vulnerabilities but about validating the design of a system that DARPA has built to prevent attacks that take advantage of hardware weaknesses.

Program participants will likely include hardware and software engineers and those skilled at reverse-engineering, evasion, and writing customized exploit code for various architectures. "It requires a different set of skills, for sure," Kuhr says.

Crowdsourced bug-hunting programs have become a popular way for organizations to find and address security threats in their applications and software. Last year for example, freelance bug-hunters helped the [US Air Force](#) identify 54 vulnerabilities in one of its computing environments during a six-week long bug-hunting project. The Air Force ended up paying a relatively small \$123,000 in bounties to the researchers who reported the flaws.

Organizations like Synack, HackerOne, and Bugcrowd, which manage bug bounty projects, have reported growing interest in their programs from private and public sector organizations. Investors also have been pouring money into firms managing crowdsourced penetration testing programs. Synack, for instance, has [raised more than \\$111 million](#) from investors so far—including \$52 million in its last financing round in May.

Many of these crowdsourced security firms have thousands of freelance hackers from around the world on their roster and have paid out tens of millions of dollars in bug bounties to researchers over the past few years. In fact, HackerOne last month announced that hackers working for it have so far earned over \$100 million in total as bounties for finding vulnerabilities in applications and systems belonging to HackerOne's customers.

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SOURCE	https://www.bleepingcomputer.com/news/security/maze-ransomware-adds-ragnar-locker-to-its-extortion-cartel/?&web_view=true
GIST	<p>A second ransomware gang has partnered with Maze Ransomware to use their data leak platform to extort victims whose unencrypted files were stolen.</p> <p>Before encrypting a victim's network, most network-targeting ransomware operations will steal a victim's unencrypted files. These files are then used as leverage by threatening to release them publicly on data leak sites if a ransom is not paid.</p> <p>Last week, we reported that the LockBit ransomware had teamed up with Maze Ransomware to use their data leak platform and share intelligence to drive successful extortions.</p> <p>This cooperation essentially created a 'cartel' of independent and competing ransomware operations who collude with each other to increase profits and increase the success of their attacks.</p> <p>Maze ransomware told BleepingComputer that another ransomware operator would be joining in a few days. Others were in discussion to join at a later time.</p> <p>"In a few days another group will emerge on our news website, we all see in this cooperation the way leading to mutual beneficial outcome, for both actor groups and companies."</p> <p>Ragnar Locker joins 'Maze Cartel'</p> <p>Today, BleepingComputer was notified by the 'Ransom Leaks' Twitter account that Maze had added the data for a victim of another competing ransomware named Ragnar Locker.</p> <p>The Maze operators also have adopted the 'cartel' label that we associated with their cooperation with competing ransomware operations.</p> <p>Ragnar Lock victim on Maze's data leak site</p> <p>It should be noted LockBit does not operate a data leak site, and thus benefits from using Maze's platform. Ragnar Locker, on the other hand, does have its own leak site, so it unknown what they gain from this cooperation.</p> <p>It is not known how Maze benefits from this cooperation, but it could be a piece of the profits for victims who fall for this extortion tactic.</p> <p>This continued cooperation between ransomware gangs is a concerning development. The sharing of advice, tactics, and a centralized data leak platform between different ransomware operations will only enable them to perform more advanced attacks, with potentially larger ransoms.</p>
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HEADLINE	06/08 Report: lockdown election hacking issues
SOURCE	https://www.theregister.com/2020/06/08/lockdown_election_hacking/?&web_view=true
GIST	<p>The social distancing measures brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic will weaken election security in the US, according to a non-profit's security check.</p> <p>A report [PDF] from New York University's Brennan Center for Justice warns that as election workers and local officials are forced to do their jobs remotely, the risk of attack skyrockets.</p> <p>"Many government personnel must work and access election infrastructure remotely now; so too must vendor personnel," the Brennan report says.</p> <p>"These changes to work environments, if not properly managed, could create new targets for those interested in disrupting American elections through cyberattacks."</p>

The problem, the Brennan researchers say, is that many of the election security measures put in place over the last few years have been based on the assumption that election officials and workers will either be on-site or working from an office with strengthened core systems.

But the COVID-19 pandemic has led to many of those officials working from home and dialing in to the local networks or using remote management software. Many US states are relaxing their initial isolation restrictions from the Spring COVID-19 outbreak, but health officials warn of a second wave of outbreaks that could arise later this year around the election date of November 3.

This creates a weak point, as those officials are no longer under the protection of firewalls and security appliances and, more importantly, are now prey to phishing attacks as well as more targeted attacks against their laptops and mobile devices.

The problem is not by any means unique to governments and election workers. The entire enterprise space has had to deal with a [litany of problems](#) created by workers who move from offices to remote setups. Among the biggest is that security-employees who have to remotely login to services become targets for phishing operations.

In the case of election workers, however, these risks are magnified, as they were already targets for state-backed hacking crews eager to get at the inner-workings of local and state voting systems.

"This added pressure creates new targets for those interested in disrupting American elections through ransomware or other cyberattacks," the report reads. "Good cybersecurity practices for remote operations are therefore essential."

The report suggests that while phishing would be the easiest and most-likely attack scenario, aggressors who had the resources and motivation could take things a step further and target the actual devices of election officials and workers with ransomware, rogue apps, or even firmware attacks.

There is even, the researchers say, the possibility that attackers could seek to intercept traffic by setting up rogue Wi-Fi hotspots.

Interestingly, the Brennan report says that election officials and vendors are not the only ones that need to be on guard against hackers intent on interfering in November. Because many voters will be registering online to vote for the first time, agencies tasked with handling identification documents could also be in the crosshairs.

"Personnel employed by vendors and state agencies such as the Department of Motor Vehicles can have a significant impact on election security," the report notes. "Election officials should make sure that those personnel are also being held to cybersecurity standards."

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HEADLINE	06/08 CallStranger vulnerability; DDoS attacks
SOURCE	https://www.zdnet.com/article/callstranger-vulnerability-lets-attacks-bypass-security-systems-and-scans/?&web_view=true
GIST	<p>A severe vulnerability resides in a core protocol found in almost all internet of things (IoT) devices.</p> <p>The vulnerability, named CallStranger, allows attackers to hijack smart devices for distributed denial of service (DDoS) attacks, but also for attacks that bypass security solutions to reach and conduct scans on a victim's internal network -- effectively granting attackers access to areas where they normally wouldn't be able to reach.</p> <p>CALLSTRANGER BUG IMPACTS UPNP</p>

According to [a website dedicated to the CallStranger vulnerability](#) published today, the bug impacts UPnP, which stands for [Universal Plug and Play](#), a collection of protocols that ship on most smart devices.

As the name implies, the UPnP feature allows devices to see each other on local networks, and then establish connections to easily exchange data, configurations, and even work in sync.

UPnP has been around since the early 2000s, but since 2016, its development has been managed by the Open Connectivity Foundation (OCF), which controls what makes it in the UPnP protocols, in an effort to standardize how these features work across devices.

CALLSTRANGER -- THE TECHNICAL DETAILS

In December 2019, a security engineer named [Yunus Çadirci](#) found a bug in this extremely widespread technology.

Çadirci says that an attacker can send TCP packets to a remote device that contains a malformed callback header value in UPnP's SUBSCRIBE function.

This malformed header can be abused to take advantage of any smart device that was left connected on the internet, and which supports the UPnP protocols -- such as security cameras, DVRs, printers, routers, and others.

In a CallStranger attack, the hacker effectively targets the device's internet-facing interface, but executes the code on the device's UPnP function, which usually runs on the internally-facing ports only (inside the LAN).

Çadirci says attackers could use the CallStranger bug to successfully bypass network security solutions, bypass firewalls, and then scan a company's internal networks.

Furthermore, other types of attacks are also possible, Çadirci said.

This includes DDoS attacks where an attacker could bounce and amplify TCP traffic on internet-reachable UPnP-capable devices. This also includes data exfiltration where the attacker steals data from the internet-exposed UPnP-capable device.

PATCHING TO TAKE A WHILE

Çadirci said he notified the OCF last year, and that the organization has updated the UPnP protocols since his report. These updates to the UPnP protocols have went live on April 17, 2020, and the CERT/CC team says that some vendors are

"Because this is a protocol vulnerability, it may take a long time for vendors to provide patches," Çadirci said today, suggesting that firmware patches may be a long time away.

Instead, the researcher has published a website today containing basic advice that enterprises can deploy to block any exploitation attempts.

In addition, Çadirci also published [proof-of-concept scripts](#) that companies can use to determine if their smart equipment is vulnerable to any of the CallStranger attacks.

The CallStranger security flaw is also tracked as [CVE-2020-12695](#). There are currently around [5.45 million UPnP-capable devices](#) connected to the internet, making this an ideal attack surface for IoT botnets and [APTs](#).

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HEADLINE	06/09 OSS vulnerabilities doubled in 2019
SOURCE	https://www.helpnetsecurity.com/2020/06/09/oss-vulnerabilities/?web_view=true

Total vulnerabilities in OSS more than doubled in 2019 from 421 Common Vulnerabilities and Exposures ([CVEs](#)) in 2018 to 968 last year, according to a RiskSense report.

Top 10 weaponized CWEs

The study also revealed that it takes a very long time for OSS vulnerabilities to be added to the National Vulnerability Database ([NVD](#)), averaging 54 days between public disclosure and inclusion in the NVD. This delay can cause organizations to remain exposed to serious application security risks for almost two months.

These very long lags were seen across all severities including vulnerabilities rated as ‘Critical’ and those that were weaponized, meaning those where an exploit is present in the wild.

“While open source code is often considered more secure than commercial software since it undergoes crowdsourced reviews to find problems, this study illustrates that OSS vulnerabilities are on the rise and may be a blindspot for many organizations,” said Srinivas Mukkamala, CEO of [RiskSense](#).

“Since [open source is used and reused](#) everywhere today, when vulnerabilities are found, they can have incredibly far-reaching consequences.”

OSS vulnerabilities doubled in 2019

The number of published open source CVEs more than doubled compared to any previous year. Vulnerabilities increased 130% between 2018 and 2019 (from 421 to 968 CVEs), and was 127% higher than 2017 (435). This increase does not appear to be a flash in the pan since the number of new CVEs has remained at historically high levels through the first three months of 2020.

NVD disclosure latency is dangerously long

Vulnerabilities in open source software are taking an extremely long time to be added to the U.S. NVD. The average time between the first public disclosure of a vulnerability and its addition to the NVD was 54 days.

The longest observed lag was 1,817 days for a critical PostgreSQL vulnerability. 119 CVEs had lags of more than 1 year, and almost a quarter (24%) had lags of more than a month. These lags were consistent across all severities of vulnerabilities, with critical severity vulnerabilities having some of the longest average lag times.

Jenkins & MySQL have the most vulnerabilities

The Jenkins automation server had the most CVEs overall with 646 and was closely followed by MySQL with 624. These two OSS projects also tied for the most weaponized vulnerabilities (those for which exploit code exists) with 15 each.

By contrast, HashiCorp’s Vagrant only had 9 total CVEs, but 6 of them were weaponized, making it one of the most weaponized open source projects in terms of percentage. Meanwhile, Apache Tomcat, Magento, Kubernetes, Elasticsearch, and JBoss all had vulnerabilities that were trending or popular in real-world attacks.

XSS and Input Validation

Cross-Site Scripting ([XSS](#)) and Input Validation weaknesses were both some of the most common and most weaponized types of weaknesses in the study. XSS issues were the second most common type of weakness, but were the most weaponized.

Likewise Input Validation issues were the third most common and second most weaponized. Input Validation and Access Control issues were both common and were seen trending in real-world attacks.

Rare does not equal less dangerous

	<p>Some weaknesses were far less common, yet remained very popular in active attack campaigns. Deserialization Issue (28 CVEs), Code Injection (16 CVEs), Error Handling Issues (2 CVEs), and Container Errors (1 CVE) were all seen trending in the wild.</p> <p>The fact that these issues are rare in OSS is a positive sign for the security of open source code, but also serves as a reminder that when problems do arise they can be attacked quite broadly.</p> <p>Providing real-world context</p> <p>Open source software now represents a significant percentage of the average organization's attack surface. And while open source has many benefits, managing vulnerabilities can pose unique challenges.</p>
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HEADLINE	06/08 Honda probes suspected cyberattack
SOURCE	https://news.sky.com/story/japanese-car-giant-honda-probes-suspected-cyber-attack-12002837?&web_view=true
GIST	<p>Honda, the Japanese car manufacturer, is investigating a suspected cyber attack that underlines multinationals' growing vulnerability to such incidents amid the surge in home-based working during the coronavirus pandemic.</p> <p>Sky News has learnt that Honda began experiencing issues with its IT network in Japan and Europe on Monday, with technology sources saying that the company believed it was the result of unauthorised attempts to breach its systems.</p> <p>Sponsored link</p> <p>Further details of the apparent attack, including whether it involved an attempt to access customer data, are unclear.</p> <p>Honda, which is due to close its Swindon factory next year, said in a statement issued to Sky News: "Honda can confirm that there is an issue with its IT network.</p> <p>"This is currently under investigation, to understand the cause. At this point, there is no effect on either Japanese production or dealer activities, and no customer impact. In Europe, we are investigating to understand the nature of any impact.</p> <p>"We can confirm some impact in Europe and are currently investigating the exact nature."</p> <p>The suspected cyber-attack comes three years after Honda suspended production at one of its plants in Japan after discovering ransomware in its IT network.</p> <p>It makes the Japanese carmaker the latest in a string of big corporate names, including easyJet, to be hit by cyber-security issues since the outbreak of COVID-19.</p>
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HEADLINE	06/08 SKorea credit card data leaked
SOURCE	https://en.yna.co.kr/view/AEN20200608011200325?&web_view=true
GIST	<p>SEOUL, June 8 (Yonhap) -- Details of some 900,000 credit cards held by South Koreans were leaked and traded on overseas online black markets, South Korea's credit association said Monday.</p> <p>A Singaporean security firm has informed South Korea's Financial Security Institute of the massive data breach, according to the Credit Finance Association (CFA).</p>

	<p>About 410,000 of the cards are still active, while the remainder are already unusable for reasons including expiration, the CFA said.</p> <p>The leaked information included the card numbers, expiration dates and validation codes, a three-digit security code on the back of cards. No passwords have been leaked.</p> <p>The authorities have yet to figure out how the information was leaked.</p> <p>The credit card companies are aware of the leak; they plan to inform the affected users of the information theft and advise them to get new cards, according to the CFA.</p>
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HEADLINE	06/07 'Cyber pandemic' coming?
SOURCE	https://www.govtech.com/blogs/lohrmann-on-cybersecurity/is-a-cyber-pandemic-coming.html?&web_view=true
GIST	<p>For more than a decade, security leaders predicted that a “Cyber Pearl Harbor” or “Cyber 9/11” was coming that would dramatically change society as we know it. For example, back in 2013, Secretary of Homeland Security Janet Napolitano said, “Our country will, at some point, face a major cyber event that will have a serious effect on our lives, our economy and the everyday functioning of our society.”</p> <p>However, over the past few years, these bold predictions that the Internet sky is falling have largely dropped off the map – until this past week under a new name. As I have chronicled for the past several years in my annual 'Lohrmann on Cybersecurity' security prediction report from top security companies and media organizations, “Very few dire predictions (again) about Cyber 9/11s or Cyber Pearl Harbors or even people dying in hospitals from cyberattacks.”</p> <p>The main reason that most cyber prognosticators dropped these scary predictions seemed to be an overdose of Fear, Uncertainty and Doubt (FUD) was bad for business and seemed to be getting old. Like constantly predicting the stock market will crash, people were getting tired of these messages. Rather, most experts started to shift to more of a pragmatic approach to future cybersecurity predictions, with ample research backing-up claims.</p> <p>But this trend quietly changed this past week, under a new name inspired by COVID-19.</p> <p>While the majority of people were focused this past week on peaceful protests against police brutality and the death of George Floyd, or rioting in some cities, or the surprisingly positive jobs numbers and stock market performance, several well-respected leaders and groups are now predicting that a “cyber pandemic” is coming soon.</p> <p>First, from the Check Point CEO:</p> <p><i>“The founder and CEO of Israeli cybersecurity firm Check Point warned Monday that the new reality created by the coronavirus pandemic will cause threats in the cybersecurity field to rise, and that countries need to protect themselves against the coming ‘cyber pandemic.’</i></p> <p><i>“What happened in the last three months pushed forward five, maybe even 10 years of technological evolution,” he explained.</i></p> <p><i>“More services moved online; companies removed barriers. We allowed developers to work just from within the company physically, so we could keep our intellectual property... In one day, we had to change all of that and allow people to access from home. This rapid change means hackers will find a way... The hackers can find a way to hack a personal computer of an employee and through them get into our Crown Jewels.”</i></p> <p><i>Shwed added that even if the coronavirus pandemic could be less of a concern in Israel, “we need to protect ourselves against the cyber pandemic that is coming. We know it will happen, and we need to secure it.”</i></p>

Next, from the [World Economic Forum](#): “What the COVID-19 pandemic teaches us about cybersecurity – and how to prepare for the inevitable global cyberattack.

COVID-19 shows that the world is at great risk of disruption by pandemics, cyberattacks or environmental tipping points.

We should prepare for a COVID-like global cyber pandemic that will spread faster and further than a biological virus, with an equal or greater economic impact.

The coronavirus crisis provides insights into how leaders can better prepare for such cyber risks.

Lesson #1: A cyberattack with characteristics similar to the coronavirus would spread faster and further than any biological virus.

Lesson #2: The economic impact of a widespread digital shutdown would be of the same magnitude – or greater – than what we’re currently seeing.

Lesson #3: Recovery from the widespread destruction of digital systems would be extremely challenging.”

As far as definitions go, the article says that “the cyber equivalent of COVID-19 would be a self-propagating attack using one or more “zero-day” exploits, techniques for which patches and specific antivirus software signatures are not yet available. Most likely, it would attack all devices running a single, common operating system or application.”

Third, a report was released this week stating that [Maritime Cyberattacks Up by 400 Percent](#).

“Cybersecurity consultancy Naval Dome has reported a 400 percent increase in attempted hacks since February 2020. The primary cause is an increase in malware, ransomware and phishing emails attempting to exploit the COVID-19 pandemic, but Naval Dome says that global travel restrictions, social distancing measures and the economic recession are beginning to cut into companies' self-defense capabilities.

In addition, since OEM technicians have a harder time traveling to service systems on board ships and rigs, they are increasingly making "remote" service calls that require the operator to bypass security protections - creating an opening for a cyberattack.

‘Covid-19 social restrictions and border closures have forced OEMs, technicians, and vendors to connect standalone systems to the internet in order to service them,’ Naval Dome CEO Itai Sela said. ‘As budgets are cut and in the absence of service engineers, we are seeing ship and offshore rig staff connecting their OT systems to shoreside networks, at the behest of OEMs, for brief periods of time to carry out diagnostics and upload software updates and patches themselves.’”

Recent Cyberspace Solarium Commission Actions

Meanwhile, the [Cyberspace Solarium Commission released](#) the “[pandemic annex](#)” [Tuesday](#), the commission is capitalizing on the attention focused on responding to the public health crisis to emphasize and augment its recommendations for digitizing critical services.

“The proposed [Internet of Things Cybersecurity Improvement Act of 2019](#) provides a viable model for a federal law that mandates that connected devices procured by the federal government have reasonable security measures in place, but should be expanded to cover all devices sold or offered for sale in the United States,” the annex reads.

The legislation, as is, has bipartisan sponsorship in the House and Senate and passed the Senate Homeland Security Committee last September.

Final Thoughts

Another interesting development is the resurfacing (or new attention given) to cyberattacks associated with the protests and other recent events around the country. These events were highlighted by the [Washington Post](#) and other news media such as [Government Technology magazine](#).

Over the past few months, I have released several blogs which highlight the Covid-19 cyber themes – without predicting a coming “cyber pandemic.” Some of those blogs include:

- [Cyber Warfare Growing](#)
- [Is COVID-19 Making the Internet Sick?](#)
- [Coronavirus Lessons to Help Fight Cybercrime](#)

	<p>But these articles focus on the growing cyber threats during the pandemic, and not on a major new attack which may well be coming.</p> <p>Perhaps the time to start planning anew for a cyberattack is now, as these global leaders recommend.</p>
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HEADLINE	06/08 Phishing targets German virus task force
SOURCE	https://securityintelligence.com/posts/german-task-force-for-covid-19-medical-equipment-targeted-in-ongoing-phishing-campaign/?web_view=true
GIST	<p>During the course of ongoing research on coronavirus-related cyber activity, IBM X-Force Incident Response and Intelligence Services (IRIS) uncovered a COVID-19 related phishing campaign targeting a German multinational corporation (MNC), associated with a German government-private sector task force to procure personal protective equipment (Task Force Schutzausrüstung). The group has been commissioned to use their international contacts and expertise to obtain personal protective equipment (PPE) such as face masks and medical gear, particularly from China-based supply and purchasing chains.</p> <p>IBM X-Force IRIS' research indicates that the threat actors behind this campaign targeted more than 100 high ranking executives in management and procurement roles within this organization and its third-party ecosystem. Overall, IBM X-Force IRIS observed approximately 40 organizations being targeted in this campaign. Given the extensive targeting observed of this supply chain, it's likely that additional members of the task force could be targets of interest in this malicious campaign, requiring increased vigilance. IBM X-Force IRIS has notified CERT BUND about this activity to further ensure members are aware.</p> <p>This discovery represents a precision-targeting campaign exploiting the race to secure essential PPE. Based on our analysis, attackers likely intended to compromise a single international company's global procurement operations, along with their partner environments devoted to a new government-led purchasing and logistics structure.</p> <p>Targeting New Medical Equipment Procurement Structures</p> <p>On 30 March 2020, German government officials met with several top German MNCs to establish new 'framework agreements' to commission these nine companies to leverage their access to foreign markets to purchase and facilitate the delivery of PPE on behalf of various German Ministries.</p> <p>Our research shows that, on this same date, suspicious activity from a Russia-based IP address toward the MNC began. Specifically, IBM X-Force IRIS discovered over 280 URLs tied to the suspicious Russia-based IP address 178[.]159[.]36[.]183, with more than a third including Base64 encoded email addresses belonging to suspected targets at the MNC and its third-party supply chain partners. Approximately half of the encoded email accounts belong to executives associated with operations, finance, and procurement within the targeted corporation. The remaining half belong to executives at third-party partners, including European and American companies associated with chemical manufacturing, aviation and transport, medical and pharmaceutical manufacturing, finance, oil and gas, and communications.</p> <p>As of the time of publication, this campaign remains an ongoing operation.</p> <p>Credential Harvesting</p> <p>IBM X-Force IRIS discovered that the URLs redirect the target emailed to a fake, actor-controlled Microsoft login page designed to steal and exfiltrate user credentials to several different Yandex email accounts.</p> <p>It is unclear how many of these phishing attacks were successful, however through credential harvesting, threat actors could gain access to the victims' email accounts with the potential to collect or exfiltrate data of interest, and/or move laterally through the network to fulfill other actions on objectives.</p>

Global Race for Resources

A global rush to obtain essential PPE for health care personnel has resulted in an unprecedented leap in prices and competition for [now-critical medical resources](#). To secure vital supplies, nations across the globe have launched a bevy of national buying programs, emergency state export statutes, and contracting initiatives to [acquire the essential equipment](#) to address the rapid spread of coronavirus.

Given the worldwide spread of COVID-19 and fears of a pending second wave of infection, it is highly likely criminal and state-sponsored actors alike will seek to exploit global procurement and supply chains with the intention of either profiting from the crisis or supporting the acquisition activities of their host nation.

Preparation, Planning and Practice

In this extraordinary time, many organizations across the globe are being called upon to perform essential tasks to outfit, equip and support medical professionals on the frontlines of a global crisis. These companies are now part of an emerging high value target group whose reliance on digital technology to enable business practices provides a potential means of compromise to malicious cyber actors. Now, perhaps more than ever, businesses must have an actionable [Incident Response Plan](#) in place to prevent, react and recover from a cyber emergency.

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HEADLINE	06/08 Password-related hacks: 80% attacks
SOURCE	https://ciso.economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/80-hacking-attacks-linked-to-bad-password-habits-report/76256068
GIST	<p>Nearly 80% of hacking attacks are password-related breaches, claims a latest report by Secure Link. As per the report, even in 2017, almost the same amount of hacking-related breaches were linked to passwords. And the trend has continued, says the report terming it a cause of concern.</p> <p>The findings of the report reveal that phishing is a common way that hackers adopt to get access to internet users credentials.</p> <p>“Not only is this an easy way for hackers to get into one account, but if your administrator doesn’t use unique passwords across different platforms (both professionally and personally), then there is a whole wealth of information that is available to take,” says SecureLink’s report.</p> <p>Further, in many organisations, these credentials allow access to different corners of the network. “Neglecting the process of secure access management creates particular vulnerabilities in the case of vendors and former employees – an issue to which many organisations should pay close attention,” said the report.</p> <p>The report further adds that people continue to adopt outdated practices, placing their security at risk. These may include writing down a password somewhere or using passwords that can be easily guessed. In order to make people adopt safe password practices, the report lists some tips that it wants people to adopt:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Ensure you use a strong password.- Implement two-factor or multi-factor authentication.- If the account gets breached, reset all passwords.- Never have the same password for all accounts/logins. This is to ensure that if one of your passwords is stolen or misused, at least the breach will be limited to that platform/account only.
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HEADLINE	06/09 More S3 buckets found compromised
SOURCE	https://www.infosecurity-magazine.com/news/s3-compromised-magecart-malicious/

GIST	<p>Security researchers are once again warning website owners to ensure any cloud storage resources linked to their site are locked down, after discovering Magecart and malicious redirector code lurking in misconfigured S3 buckets.</p> <p>RiskIQ threat researcher, Jordan Herman, said his team made the discovery on May 12, after finding Magecart code residing on three websites all run by a company known as Endeavor Business Media. They apparently host content and chat forums designed for firefighters, police officers and security professionals.</p> <p>Alongside Magecart they found a malicious redirector dubbed “jqueryapi1load” which they first discovered back in July 2019 on compromised S3 buckets that had also been seeded with digital skimming code.</p> <p>On closer inspection, RiskIQ discovered the redirector first appeared in April of last year and is still in use, connected with 362 unique domains.</p> <p>It’s linked to the Hookads malvertising campaign that Herman claimed “has historically been connected to exploit kits and other malicious behavior.”</p> <p>They found the redirector on other sites with misconfigured S3 buckets, including a Colombian football news site that’s in the top 30,000 global Alexa rankings. So far, 277 sites have been identified as affected by jqueryapi1load, potentially exposing countless unsuspected web users.</p> <p>“As attacks involving misconfigured S3 buckets continue, knowing where your organization is using them across its digital attack surface is imperative,” argued Herman.</p> <p>“In today’s threat environment, businesses cannot move forward safely without having a digital footprint, an inventory of all digital assets, to ensure they are under the management of your security team and properly configured.”</p> <p>Back in July 2019, RiskIQ warned that attackers were actively scanning for misconfigured S3 buckets to spread malicious code, seeding skimming code into AWS instances associated with 17,000 domains, including some of the top 2000 Alexa-ranked websites in the world.</p> <p>The latest discovery proves such attacks are ongoing, and represent an immediate threat to organizations.</p>
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HEADLINE	06/08 Animal rights group website hacked
SOURCE	https://www.infosecurity-magazine.com/news/people-for-animals-hacked/
GIST	<p>The website of an animal rights group has been hacked after its founder made accusations regarding the killing of a pregnant elephant in Kerala.</p> <p>The 15-year-old elephant suffered a broken jaw and died on May 27 in the Velliyar River after allegedly eating a pineapple filled with firecrackers. Such traps are commonly set in India's forest fringe areas to keep boars and other wild animals from damaging crops.</p> <p>Following the expectant animal's tragic demise, Indian politician, animal rights activist, and founder of the organization People for Animals Maneka Gandhi said that "action should be taken against everyone who is suspected in Malappuram."</p> <p>The politician's comments were considered to be controversial since it is not yet clear who may have laid the trap and whether it was intended specifically for the elephant, or whether the incident occurred in Malappuram district or in the adjoining Palakkad district.</p>

	<p>According to Asian News International, Gandhi also said: "Kerala government has not taken any action in Malappuram, it seems they are scared. An elephant is killed every three days in Kerala. We have less than 20,000 elephants left in India, they are rapidly declining."</p> <p>On June 4, following Gandhi's comments, a group of cyber-criminals hacked the official website of the PFA. The group, who call themselves Kerala Cyber Warriors, replaced the PFA site with a message that read "Maneka Gandhi dragged the sad death of pregnant elephant for dirty politics."</p> <p>PFA trustee and wildlife activist Gauri Maulekhi said the hacked organization is now considering taking legal action against the malicious hackers.</p> <p>Gauri told THE WEEK: "This kind of bullying, trolling and one-upmanship is not going to work."</p> <p>Maulekhi said the elephant's violent death had transpired as a result of the Kerala government's attitude toward the hunting of wild animals.</p> <p>"Hunting was banned in the country in 1972," said Maulekhi. "The Kerala government, in a recent order, has incentivized hunting. Poor people have started hunting wild boar to make money. They are forced to kill wild animals because of the absurd and wicked policies of the state government."</p>
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HEADLINE	06/08 Ransomware hits 3rd college in week
SOURCE	https://www.infosecurity-magazine.com/news/ransomware-strikes-third-us/
GIST	<p>Columbia College, Chicago has become the third US college in a week to fall victim to a cyber-attack involving the Netwalker family of ransomware.</p> <p>The Illinois educational establishment, along with Michigan State University and the University of California, San Francisco, was targeted by cyber-criminals and given six days to pay a ransom to recover its files.</p> <p>Netwalker, also known as Mailto or as an updated version of Kokoklock ransomware, was first observed operating in September 2019. The malware works by encrypting data and renaming files with the developer's email address and an extension made up of the victim's unique ID.</p> <p>Like the attack on the University of California, the assault on Columbia occurred on June 3, exactly one week after Michigan State University was hit. On the Netwalker blog, the cyber-criminals claimed to have exfiltrated "very highly sensitive data like social security numbers and other private information" from Columbia.</p> <p>Columbia's chief of staff, Laurent Pernot, told the Columbia Chronicle on June 5 that the Netwalker attack was detected by the college's IT systems and contained to a limited number of college servers.</p> <p>"Some college, employee and student data was accessed by the perpetrators, though the exact nature and extent of that is still being determined," wrote Pernot, adding that steps had been taken to prevent further breaches.</p> <p>Updates made to the Netwalker blog yesterday suggest some of the colleges may have succumbed to the attackers' demands.</p> <p>Emsisoft's Brett Callow told <i>Infosecurity</i> magazine yesterday: "UCSF and Columbia are no longer listed on Netwalker's leak site, which likely means they paid (making it a lucrative week for the criminals) or that they asked to be delisted pending negotiations. So it appears only MSU is still holding out and refusing to negotiate."</p>

	<p>Threat group REvil recently switched from publishing data if a ransom isn't paid to auctioning it off to the highest bidder.</p> <p>Asked if Netwalker's operators might follow suit, Callow said: "I wouldn't be at all surprised if Netwalker were to adopt a REvil-like auction process for stolen information. Like other businesses, criminal enterprises adopt each other's strategies and the introduction of mechanisms enabling stolen data to be monetized would seem to be a logical progression. We saw this with data exfiltration and publishing: the strategy was pioneered by Maze and then quickly adopted by multiple other groups."</p>
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HEADLINE	06/08 Barcode reader apps w/ad fraud malware
SOURCE	https://www.scmagazine.com/home/security-news/malware/malware-found-in-popular-barcode-apps-produces-ads-that-instantly-vanish/
GIST	<p>A pair of Android barcode reader apps that were downloaded more than 1 million times were found to contain ad fraud malware that tries to stay hidden by generating advertisements that instantly disappear from view.</p> <p>The malware, detected as AndroidOS_HiddenAd.HRXJA, can operate in the background even when infected devices aren't actively being used, and it attempts to confuse victims as to the source of the infection by disguising itself as other apps.</p> <p>In a recent company blog post, Trend Micro mobile threats analyst Jessie Huang names the offending apps as "Barcode Reader" and "QR & Barcode Scanner." (Trend Micro did not reveal the publisher names.) Huang notes that Google removed the apps from the Google Play Store upon being informed of the scam.</p> <p>Trend Micro says that in the course of its research, it actually identified samples of 51 different apps that demonstrated the same adware behavior; however, Google had either already removed these other apps, or they were distributed through other online marketplaces or websites.</p> <p>While the barcode apps do function as advertised, they also run a malicious background service that's disguised under a package name that falsely impersonates another legitimate app (e.g. com.facebook), the blog post states. As a further attempt to shift the blame elsewhere, the app makes it so that if users review a list of recent tasks on the phone, they will see the name and icon of other apps already stalled on the phone.</p> <p>Using a timer, this service shows an advertisement every 15 minutes. The ad immediately closes upon opening, so the user only sees a brief flash, which may not arouse suspicion. However, that's long enough for a false ad impression to be registered.</p> <p>This behavior is controller via a malicious server, which sends the apps configuration information, ad IDs and other commands. "It may open specified content in the phone's browser or start an activity with the FLAG_ACTIVITY_NEW_TASK intent. If any activity is started this way, the user won't know which app opened the new activity," Huang writes.</p> <p>In a separate blog post, Trend Micro also reported that it found a variant of the Tekya ad fraud family in five malicious apps that had been sneaked into, and later removed from, the Google Play Store.</p> <p>Researchers from Check Point Software Technologies had previously reported on Tekya malware found on children's games and utilities apps made available via Google Play.</p>
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HEADLINE	06/09 Emergency services-related sites targeted
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SOURCE	https://thehackernews.com/2020/06/magecart-skimmer-amazon.html
GIST	<p>Hacking groups are continuing to leverage misconfigured AWS S3 data storage buckets to insert malicious code into websites in an attempt to swipe credit card information and carry out malvertising campaigns.</p> <p>In a new report shared with The Hacker News, cybersecurity firm RiskIQ said it identified three compromised websites belonging to Endeavor Business Media last month that are still hosting JavaScript skimming code — a classic tactic embraced by Magecart, a consortium of different hacker groups who target online shopping cart systems.</p> <p>The unpatched affected websites host emergency services-related content and chat forums catering to firefighters, police officers, and security professionals, per RiskIQ.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • www[.]officer[.]com • www[.]firehouse[.]com • www[.]securityinfowatch[.]com <p>The cyber firm said it hasn't heard back from Endeavor Business Media despite reaching out to the company to address the issues.</p>
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HEADLINE	06/07 Gaining skills virtually; inequality gap
SOURCE	https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/07/technology/virtual-skills-inequality-gap-virus.html?action=click&module=Well&pgtype=Homepage&section=Technology
GIST	<p>When the word came in early March, Ashley Russell recalled his first reaction as “sheer astonishment.” Within a week, Year Up, a nonprofit job-training program in cities across the country, would go entirely online after being held entirely in person.</p> <p>The promise of Year Up is that an intensive regimen of technical and professional training can be an on-ramp to a middle-class career. “You can change your life,” said Mr. Russell, an instructor at Year Up in Chicago.</p> <p>Trying to translate life-changing experiences to computer screens and video classes is the lockdown-induced experiment now being conducted by Year Up and other programs designed for disadvantaged Americans.</p> <p>The future of these programs is in doubt at a time when they would seem to be needed more than ever. Tens of millions of Americans have lost their jobs in the last few months because of the coronavirus pandemic, while the recent unrest over the death of George Floyd, an African-American man killed in police custody in Minneapolis, has been intensified by persistent income inequality and the lack of opportunity for many.</p> <p>Pointing to those issues, Gerald Chertavian, founder and chief executive of Year Up, asked, “As we rebuild and recover, will it be in a way that is more economically inclusive — that brings more Americans along?”</p> <p>Mr. Chertavian and the leaders of other programs, which operate in dozens of American cities, from Seattle to Miami, said they saw opportunity beyond their immediate challenges. The forced march online, they said, has triggered a drastic rethinking across the education-to-employment field and will most likely bring lasting change — and perhaps open the door to significant expansion.</p> <p>Program directors spoke of a post-pandemic model, in a year or so, in which half or even three-quarters of instruction and coaching would be done virtually, and the remainder face-to-face.</p>

“The way our kind of work force development is done has changed permanently,” said Plinio Ayala, chief executive of [Per Scholas](#), a skills nonprofit based in the South Bronx.

The long-held view was that hands-on personal attention was necessary to lift up students who have to fill gaps in their education, overcome life obstacles and then make their way in the corporate world.

But Year Up and others say they have found that much more of their training can be done effectively online than they expected. While the attrition rates for students are higher, they are only slightly higher, they said.

The few dozen nonprofit, upward-mobility programs share certain characteristics. They cater mainly to people in their 20s and 30s. They have forged close ties with local employers and focus on skills that are in demand by companies, particularly in technology but also in health care, finance and advanced manufacturing.

The programs rely on charitable, corporate and some government funding. Some have a national reach, including Year Up, Per Scholas, [NPower](#) and [Generation](#), and some are local, like [Project Quest](#) in San Antonio and [Pursuit](#) in Queens.

But most remain small. Year Up, one of the largest, had 2,900 graduates last year.

Moving a large share of training online would remove barriers to expansion by bringing down costs, requiring less classroom space and reaching more students, program leaders said.

“It could accelerate the growth and increase the importance of this whole category of programs,” said Norman Atkins, who is leading a research project on education-to-employment initiatives for [America Achieves](#), a nonprofit that advises foundations on education policy.

Year Up, founded two decades ago, is a full-year program with six months of course training and a six-month apprenticeship at a company.

The program stands out for the size of the jump in income it has delivered for its graduates, results that have been verified by independent assessments.

Before Year Up, its students’ annual earnings ranged from \$9,000 to \$15,000, depending on where they lived in the country. The graduates typically land jobs that pay from \$35,000 to \$55,000, with the national average \$42,000. Companies that have consistently hired from Year Up include Accenture, JPMorgan Chase, Salesforce, LinkedIn, Bank of America and American Express.

Typically, 75 percent of the graduates are employed within four months. Job placements have slowed this year but by less than 10 percent so far, the program said.

Year Up conducted some online experiments before, but tentative digital steps became a survival sprint in March. It’s unclear how much coursework will eventually be done remotely, though Mr. Chertavian estimated it would be half or more. “And there’s a real opportunity for us to scale up and reach more people,” he said.

The coronavirus shock to the economy has hit many Year Up students. They receive modest biweekly stipends, but most depend on the support of family members or friends or income from side jobs while they are in the full-time program.

Estefan Salgado, a Year Up intern at JP Morgan Chase, lives in the South Bronx with his wife, Carmen, and their two young children. After his wife was laid off in March, Mr. Salgado got \$150 from Year Up’s Covid-19 impact fund to buy groceries and pay bills.

“It really helped me stay in the program,” said Mr. Salgado, 26, whose wife recently got a new job as a home health care worker.

For Mr. Russell, a veteran Year Up instructor in Chicago, the move to online classes had some “train wreck moments” getting students set up with laptops, internet service and video software. But he teaches a computer-support course, and he said he used the problems encountered by his 40 students as learning opportunities.

When teaching, Mr. Russell sometimes found that students’ interest strayed as screen fatigue set in. So he shortened his lecture-and-demonstration sessions to a maximum of 30 minutes, compared with up to two hours before. He also used the interactive features in [Zoom’s video software](#) to pepper students with frequent questions to monitor whether his lessons were being absorbed.

With less class time, Mr. Russell is assigning his students short projects, which they do in teams of five or six. He conducts virtual “office hours” for one-on-one mentoring. And he holds open sessions, where students can ask him any questions they have.

It has gone surprisingly well, Mr. Russell said, but he has misgivings about what is lost without interacting in person, like the informal conversations in hallways and over lunch, often about students’ personal lives and challenges.

“We don’t teach a subject,” he said. “We teach people.”

Marianna Torres, 20, went through the in-person coursework at Year Up last year. The technical training was rigorous and difficult, she said, but there was another side to the program focused on “soft skills.” That curriculum included speaking in public, networking, working in teams, even how to sit and dress. She was taught to wear neutral colors, avoid patterns, skirts no shorter than one inch above the knee, and heels no higher than two inches.

“It was strict but also very supportive,” said Ms. Torres, who in January began a six-month internship in digital marketing at Salesforce in Chicago. “They’re trying to build you into the best professional person you can be.”

A new nonprofit, [Merit America](#), may be a glimpse of the hybrid future of training programs for the disadvantaged. It is run by its co-chief executives, Rebecca Taber Staehelin and Connor Diemand-Yauman, who both previously worked at Coursera, a large online learning network. The duo said they were convinced of the potential for online learning but also realized that online instruction alone didn’t really work for the underserved community.

To overcome that, Merit America combines online training, in-person small-group meetings and one-to-one coaching. The split is roughly 75 percent online and 25 percent in person. Evening and weekend sessions are available, so students can hold onto their current jobs and incomes while completing the program.

The courses began in the fall of 2018, and their early results — before lockdowns forced Merit America to move entirely online — have been encouraging. Courses in technology support and computer programming range from eight weeks to five months, and income gains for graduates in Dallas and Washington have averaged \$18,000.

“It’s a combination of tech and touch,” Mr. Diemand-Yauman said.

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SOURCE	https://abcnews.go.com/Technology/wireStory/internet-vigilantes-falsely-link-officer-teens-attack-71139431
GIST	<p>SILVER SPRING, Md. -- John Damskey's nightmare began with his wife getting emails from strangers telling her she should be ashamed of her husband, a retired police officer. Their phones wouldn't stop ringing with calls from unfamiliar numbers. Some even called his 74-year-old mother.</p> <p>Baffled by the barrage of hate last Thursday, Damskey plugged his name into the internet and made a horrifying discovery: Mobs of Twitter users were falsely accusing him of being the bicyclist on a Maryland trail who accosted three young adults posting flyers protesting the death of George Floyd.</p> <p>Millions of users have viewed a video of last Monday's encounter on the Capital Crescent Trail in Bethesda, a Maryland suburb of Washington, D.C. One of them was Damskey, who knew he wasn't the culprit and did nothing to provoke the death threats and angry messages directed at him.</p> <p>Damskey, 53, was one of at least two men who were falsely accused by internet vigilantes who posted their photos and personal information on Twitter before police on Friday arrested and charged another man, 60-year-old Anthony Brennan III, with assaulting the three protest supporters.</p> <p>Damskey, who served as a Montgomery County police officer for nearly 30 years before retiring in 2016, described the experience as surreal and terrifying.</p> <p>"I've got a wife who is in tears. My mom is scared to death," he told The Associated Press on Monday in his first interview about his ordeal. "It's sad. It's scary. It's something that I don't ever want to go through again."</p> <p>Brennan, a Kensington, Maryland, resident, issued a statement through his lawyers in which he said he was "sick with remorse for the pain and fear I caused the victims on the trail."</p> <p>The Maryland-National Capital Park Police said it received hundreds of tips from the public before detectives arrested Brennan on three counts of second-degree assault. Brennan grabbed the flyers from one of the young women and pushed his bicycle towards a man, knocking him to the ground, the department said in a news release.</p> <p>The three victims, who ranged from 18 and 19 years old, said they were posting flyers promoting justice for George Floyd, the black man who died May 25 after a white Minneapolis police officer pressed his knee on the neck for nearly nine minutes, ignoring his cries of "I can't breathe."</p> <p>After Brennan's arrest, the company that apparently employed him tweeted a statement that it had fired an employee who had "engaged in disturbing, wrongful, and completely unacceptable behavior directed towards peaceful demonstrators."</p> <p>Before Brennan's arrest, Maryland Attorney General Brian Frosh tweeted that another Twitter user, Peter Weinberg, wasn't a suspect in the assault investigation. A day earlier, Frosh had tweeted a link to the viral video and asked the public to contact him or a county prosecutor if they recognized the cyclist.</p> <p>Weinberg posted a police report to prove that detectives had cleared him of any involvement.</p> <p>"We must align in the fight for justice and equality -- but not at the cost of due process and the right to privacy and safety. Let's use Twitter to amplify the positive wave," Weinberg later tweeted.</p> <p>Rene Sandler, an attorney and longtime friend of Damskey, offered to help him. She contacted Twitter's legal department Friday and reported as many "dangerous, harassing, targeted" tweets as she could find. She said Twitter has removed many if not all of those tweets.</p> <p>"They responded swiftly and took it incredibly seriously," she said.</p>

	<p>However, Sandler said she has talked with Damskey about possibly pursuing slander, libel or defamation claims against Twitter users and others who harassed him and his family.</p> <p>“We continue to monitor social media and we will not hesitate to take action against any person who is publishing false information about John and his family,” she said.</p> <p>Damskey said he saw tweets that endangered his son, Michael, a police officer, and other relatives who have served as police officers and firefighters.</p> <p>Damskey didn’t have a Twitter account, but he and his wife deleted their Facebook accounts after the abuse started last week.</p> <p>“I don’t know who has seen it and who hasn’t, but my reputation is shot. Once they see something like this, there’s always going to be that question,” he said.</p> <p>Twitter spokeswoman Katie Rosborough said the social media platform takes enforcement action when tweets violate its private information or abusive behavior policies. The company also has rules against creating accounts to target and harass other users, she said.</p>
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HEADLINE	06/08 DHS memo: attacks on 5G cell towers
SOURCE	https://www.cyberscoop.com/5g-cell-towers-attacks-dhs-coronavirus/
GIST	<p>Telecommunications providers should have robust security measures in place at 5G cell towers following a series of physical attacks from conspiracy theorists and other extremists, the Department of Homeland Security advised industry executives in a confidential memo last week.</p> <p>The advisory from DHS’s Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) comes after a spate of attacks on cell towers in Europe, and as agency officials reckon with other COVID-19-related threats, ranging from data theft to fraud.</p> <p>“While the U.S. has not seen similar levels of attacks against 5G infrastructure linked to the pandemic, the tactics used in Western Europe [have] begun to migrate to the U.S,” says the memo, obtained by CyberScoop.</p> <p>Conspiracy theorists erroneously claim that 5G networking equipment weakens the immune system, or spreads coronavirus. The anti-5G fervor has perhaps been at its most destructive in the United Kingdom, where people have damaged more than 70 cell towers since the coronavirus outbreak. But multiple incidents in the U.S. have caught authorities’ attention, and officials are asking the telecom industry to be on heightened alert.</p> <p>In Tennessee, attackers have physically disabled electrical breakers at more than a dozen cell towers, the CISA memo says. In a separate incident in April, according to the memo, white supremacists used the encrypted messaging platform Telegram to encourage people to outfit drones with explosives and fly them toward tower sites.</p> <p>CISA released the advisory on the eve of a “global protest” that anti-5G activists planned for Saturday. The conspiracy theories — fueled in part by celebrities like Woody Harrelson — risk hindering some deployments of 5G equipment in the U.S., the Federal Communications Commission general counsel warned in a Washington Post editorial.</p> <p>CISA officials advised telecom companies to be vigilant for drones landing on their property and to report that activity to local authorities. Intrusion detection systems and video surveillance can also help secure facilities, officials said.</p>

	<p>The Washington Post reported on a draft version of the CISA memo in May.</p> <p>The memo highlights yet another threat group that U.S. officials have been tracking during the pandemic. In addition to the 5G conspiracy theorists, foreign spies have tried to steal vaccine research while fraudsters have gone after stimulus checks, U.S. officials say.</p>
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Terror Conditions

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HEADLINE	06/09 Australia: convicted terrorists to be freed
SOURCE	https://www.news.com.au/national/record-wave-of-terrorists-to-be-set-free-from-australian-prisons-in-2020/news-story/e9ad4010d5434048abc3f487b56da669
GIST	<p>A record number of convicted terrorists will be released from Australian jails in 2020 and experts fear they may not be reformed.</p> <p>This year will see 11 convicted terrorists released from NSW and Victorian jails.</p> <p>That is over a fifth of the 54 people who were behind bars for terrorism offences in Australia at the start of the year.</p> <p>They include Abdul Nacer Benbrika, the Algerian-born radical preacher at the centre of the 2005 Pendennis plot, which saw conspirators plan to attack targets in Sydney and Melbourne.</p> <p>The plotters stockpiled precursor explosive chemicals, scouted targets and acquired ammunition.</p> <p>Benbrika was infamously overheard in police wire taps exhorting his followers to do “maximum damage” in their attacks.</p> <p>He is due for release on November 4, having been repeatedly denied parole.</p> <p>Peter Moroney, who was involved in the squad which took down Benbrika, told A Current Affair he has doubts as to whether the jailed terrorist no long poses a threat.</p> <p>“When he was put inside, he had very strong convictions,” he said. “It would, in my view, to be swayed or turned, take a lot for that.”</p> <p>“We’re not talking about an everyday crime, we’re talking about a person who was convicted for planning a terrorist attack and for conspiring with others within Australia.”</p> <p>He previously told 2GB, he has received information that Benbrika hasn’t changed his radical beliefs, hence the reason his parole was knocked back on multiple occasions.</p> <p>“There’s been information filtering to me from those that are connected into the prison systems that he hasn’t moved away from his beliefs,” he said.</p> <p>Also to be released this year is Bilal Khazal, a one-time confidant of Osama bin Laden.</p> <p>The former Qantas baggage handler and al-Qaeda supporter from Sydney was developing a terrorist DIY handbook and was sentenced to 12 years in 2008.</p> <p>Terrorism expert Greg Barton told A Current Affair that keeping tabs on the terrorists once they leave prison won’t be easy.</p>

	<p>“If they’re not subject to parole we have very little legal capacity to be able to see what’s going on and to keep them safe,” he said.</p> <p>Under the Commonwealth Criminal Code, courts have the power to order terrorists watched after their sentence has finished for a further three years after.</p> <p>But authorities have found they are hard to obtain as it’s difficult to prove intent.</p> <p>Mr Barton said the enforcement of these orders “sucks a lot of money, that suck resources and it only takes a small gap for them (the terrorist) to fit through.”</p> <p>Judge Antony Whealy, now retired, sentenced nine of the so-called Pendennis terror conspirators to lengthy jail terms in 2009 in what was the longest and most expensive criminal trial conducted in Australia.</p> <p>Mr Whealy told The Australian when the time came, there would be “a powerful argument” for keeping some of the more extreme offenders in jail, such was their commitment to extremist ideology.</p> <p>“I’m speculating but I think there will be a powerful argument that a number of those men will not have renounced their fanaticism and will pose a threat to the community,” he told The Australian.</p> <p>“I am pessimistic. It will be a tough task for the court to make a decision.”</p>
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HEADLINE	06/08 US military plane crashes Iraqi base
SOURCE	https://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/iraqi-army-rocket-hits-baghdad-airport-71139800
GIST	<p>BAGHDAD -- A U.S. military plane crashed into an Iraqi military base north of the capital on Monday without causing fatalities, the U.S.-led coalition said.</p> <p>Separately, a rocket landed on the periphery of Baghdad airport, the Iraqi military said, without providing further details. There were no reported casualties or damages.</p> <p>The crash of the C130 in Iraq's Camp Taji injured four servicemen and was deemed an accident, spokesman for the U.S.-led coalition Myles Caggins told the Associated Press.</p> <p>Caggins said the plane had overshot the runway and crashed into a wall resulting in damage to the aircraft and a small fire.</p> <p>“Four service members on the plane sustained non-life-threatening injuries and are being treated at Camp Taji’s medical facility,” Caggins said in a statement after the incident. “Enemy activity is not suspected; the incident remains under investigation.”</p> <p>There were seven crew members and 26 passengers aboard the flight, Iraqi official said. Among the injured were two pilots. The official spoke on condition of anonymity in line with regulations.</p> <p>In March, two Americans and one British soldier were killed following a barrage of rockets on Camp Taji.</p> <p>Meanwhile, Iraq's military said a missile struck near to Baghdad's airport, which includes a military base frequented by U.S. troops. The statement said the missile was launched from an area south of the airport.</p> <p>Security forces have initiated a search operation to uncover the perpetrators, the statement said. An Iraqi security official said the rocket struck close to the headquarters of the U.S.-led coalition.</p> <p>The attack is the first to target the airport since May 6 when three katyusha rockets struck near its military sector. That attack did not cause any casualties.</p>

	<p>The rockets had struck close to Iraqi forces at the military airport, another near Camp Cropper, once a U.S. detention facility, and the last near to where U.S. forces are stationed at the base.</p> <p>The U.S. has accused Iran-backed militias of carrying out such attacks in the past. Several attacks targeted U.S. interests early in March, including three military bases known to house U.S. troops. The U.S.-led coalition has withdrawn from several bases across Iraq in a planned drawdown.</p>
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HEADLINE	06/08 Taliban: readying for Kabul talks
SOURCE	https://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/taliban-readying-talks-kabul-leaders-71129654
GIST	<p>ISLAMABAD -- The Taliban have started putting together their agenda for negotiations with the political leadership in Kabul, Taliban officials said, a significant first step toward talks seen as perhaps the most critical next phase in the Afghan peace process.</p> <p>No date has yet been set for negotiations but Washington's peace envoy is currently crisscrossing the region in efforts advance the U.S.-Taliban accord signed earlier this year.</p> <p>Zalmay Khalilzad, the architect of Washington's deal with the Taliban, was in Pakistan over the weekend, meeting with the political and military leadership, according to a U.S. Embassy statement on Monday.</p> <p>The Taliban leadership council, meanwhile, began taking proposals from its members in preparation for the start of negotiations, Taliban officials said, speaking on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to speak to the media.</p> <p>They cited Taliban leader Haibatullah Akhunzada, who expressed the insurgent group's readiness to participate in the talks with Kabul.</p> <p>A sticking point ahead of the talks was the exchange of prisoners between the warring sides. After stalling for weeks, the prisoner swaps unfolded and by Monday, the government had released 2,710 Taliban prisoners, according to Javid Faisal, spokesman for the national security adviser's office in Kabul.</p> <p>Taliban spokesman Suhail Shaheen says the insurgents have so far freed 531 Afghan military and civilian government personnel they held captive. Shaheen, however, tweeted that the government freed so far only 2,284 Taliban prisoners. The discrepancy could not be immediately explained, but the Taliban have been counting only those prisoners they had listed as part of the U.S.-Taliban deal.</p> <p>This deal calls for the Kabul government to release 5,000 Taliban prisoners and the Taliban to free 1,000 government and military personnel ahead of the negotiations — an exchange billed as a goodwill gesture.</p> <p>The accord, signed Feb. 29, was seen as Afghanistan's best chance for peace and an opportunity for U.S. and NATO troops to leave the war-torn country after nearly two decades of fighting.</p> <p>The withdrawal of international forces, which has already begun, is tied to promises from the Taliban that they will not allow Afghanistan to be used as a staging arena for attacks against the United States and its allies.</p> <p>Washington also wants Taliban's help in battling the Islamic State group, based in eastern Afghanistan and increasingly active in recent weeks. The U.S. has blamed IS for a horrific attack on a maternity hospital in Kabul last month that killed 24 people, including two infants and several mothers. IS has also claimed responsibility for several attack over the past two weeks, including on a busload of journalists that killed two people.</p> <p>Khalilzad, who was in Doha, Qatar, meeting the Taliban at their political headquarters before going to Pakistan, was expected sometime on Monday in Kabul for a meeting with Afghan President Ashraf Ghani</p>

	<p>as well as his longtime political rival, Abdullah Abdullah. The two have since signed a power-sharing agreement.</p> <p>Sediq Sediqi, a spokesman for Ghani said the president would like to see talks with the Taliban start in one month. However, he did not clarify whether the Afghan government would release the remaining 2,000 plus Taliban prisoners beforehand, which has been a pre-condition for the start of negotiations.</p>
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Suspicious, Unusual

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HEADLINE	06/08 Frustration: unemployment claim delays
SOURCE	https://www.king5.com/article/money/your-money-your-future/unemployment-claim-delays/281-bb6c1cec-1e81-4511-a4b5-37ea0d075ec6
GIST	<p>Of the biggest frustrations voiced from people waiting for unemployment benefits is the lack of communication with Washington's Employment Security Department.</p> <p>Approximately 90,000 claims are being held for review. The Employment Security Department (ESD) plans to resolve around 50,000 claims in the coming days.</p> <p>However, it will take longer for some. And for those people, the department could not provide a timetable.</p> <p>The department previously said it wanted to have all claims in adjudication resolved or paid by mid-June. Now, some of those could be pushed back by at least a few weeks.</p> <p>The department restricted inbound calls to its claim center between May 13-19. Restricting calls was meant to allow agents to focus on outbound calling to "resolve complex issues for customers who have been waiting the longest for their benefits," according to ESD. It will also free up time to process claims with "simpler issues."</p> <p>About a month ago, there was a backlog of 265,000 initial claims. Of those, about 187,000 needed to sign up for Pandemic Unemployment Assistance. Another 57,000 claims were stuck in adjudication.</p>
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HEADLINE	06/09 Other crisis: shortage hospital painkillers
SOURCE	https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-opioids-specialrep/special-report-covid-deepens-the-other-opioid-crisis-a-shortage-of-hospital-painkillers-idUSKBN23G1GM
GIST	<p>(Reuters) - As opioid pills and patches fueled a two-decade epidemic of overdoses in the United States, hospitals faced chronic shortages of the same painkillers in injectable form - narcotics vital to patients on breathing machines.</p> <p>For years, hospitals chased supplies, sometimes resorting to inferior substitutes. The shortfall grew so dire in 2018 that a drugmaker sent letters advising hospitals they could use batches of opioid syringes potentially containing hazardous contaminants - so long as they filtered each dose.</p> <p>Then the novel coronavirus struck, and demand for injectable opioids exploded. By April, more than 16,000 COVID-19 patients a day were on ventilators, the University of Washington's Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation estimated.</p> <p>After a highly public battle to secure enough ventilators, hospitals say they must scramble to obtain the powerful painkillers needed to use them. Opioids help keep patients in severe distress from reflexively ripping out the tubing that forces oxygen into their lungs.</p>

Underlying the persistent shortages - and the present crisis - are the basic economics of the American drug industry. The market discourages production of low-margin hospital injectable opioids in favor of high-profit prescription versions, according to interviews with dozens of government officials, medical practitioners and industry participants, as well as an analysis of government data.

Though deficiencies in the supply of injectable opioids had long been recognized, U.S. drug makers, hospitals, regulators and lawmakers failed to fix the problem and were caught unprepared for a pandemic that suddenly and dramatically escalated demand, Reuters found.

Janet Woodcock, senior adviser to the FDA's commissioner, told Reuters that when hospitals in Wuhan, China, began filling with patients on ventilators, she and her colleagues knew a wave of American cases would overwhelm shallow U.S. supplies.

"We recognized this was going to happen," she said, adding, "We're just trying to get every last vial of product into the system that we can."

Among the thousands of COVID-19 patients wheeled into American intensive care units, some have been intubated for weeks, far longer than is typical. Demand for injectable opioids more than doubled between January and early April, rapidly depleting what hospitals and drugmakers had on hand, according to Vizient, a large hospital purchasing organization. Orders for the commonly used injectable opioid fentanyl roughly tripled, but suppliers were able to ship only half of what hospitals asked for, said Amanda Forster, a spokeswoman for Premier Inc, another large hospital purchasing organization.

Although ventilator use has fallen from the April peak, more than 7,000 COVID-19 patients are estimated to be relying on them each day. Several states are seeing a surge in cases, and many hospitals are resuming elective surgeries that were postponed early in the pandemic - further straining opioid supplies.

For injectables, the supply chain is slow and fragile. Aging plants operated by a small group of manufacturers chug along at nearly full capacity, with little room to ramp up production. The risk of a mechanical breakdown or contamination runs high, and adding another production line or opening a new plant can take a year or more, industry experts said.

"This is no way to run an army," said Jacob Sherkow, a Harvard University research fellow on biotechnology law. "But fixing it is incredibly difficult and extraordinarily complex."

The marketplace, Sherkow and others told Reuters, is hard-wired to reward innovation - new, ostensibly improved products - over older workhorse medications, no matter how vital. According to a October 2019 report by a task force led by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, the price for injectable drugs can dip below the cost of production. By comparison, sales of prescription opioids in pill and patch form such as OxyContin, Opana and Duragesic each exceeded \$1 billion annually before their patents expired.

Production of pills and other prescription opioids used outside hospitals began to explode in the late 1990s as drugmakers pursued new patients, patents and profits. By 2006, production of outpatient prescription opioids was at least nine times that of the low-margin injectable opioids most widely used by hospitals, according to a Reuters analysis of U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration data. The findings were adjusted to account for differences in potency among the drugs.

Through at least 2014, as addiction and overdoses escalated, prescription opioid production grew more than twice as fast as that of widely used hospital injectables, the data show. More recent DEA data show that outpatient opioid production continued to dwarf that of the narcotics most used by hospitals through 2019. The gap persisted even as physicians grew cautious about prescribing opioids to outpatients.

Multiple government agencies, from the FDA to the Department of Defense, knew about the chronic shortages of injectable opioids and other critical care drugs well before the coronavirus pandemic, according to federal documents and interviews with public officials. Injectable opioids in syringes and

various vial sizes, including fentanyl, have been on the FDA's list of drugs in short supply at least since 2017.

After releasing its task force report in October, FDA leaders blamed injectable shortages on "a broken marketplace" in which production is often disrupted and prices remain low, regardless of demand, because of inflexible hospital contracts. Yet proposals for far-reaching changes - such as creating incentives for production of drugs in short supply - have not made it past the discussion stage in Congress.

Sen. Susan Collins, a Republican from Maine, said she had pushed for new incentives to encourage manufacturing of drugs at risk of shortage earlier this year, but federal agencies told her they did not want to pursue substantive action amid the pandemic. "This is a really important issue, and the coronavirus has really shined a light on it," Collins told Reuters.

The shortages have a direct impact on patients. Pharmacists, anesthesiologists and other frontline medical professionals told Reuters they have had to sub in less effective drugs, some with problematic side effects, or to inject crushed opioid tablets into feeding tubes.

The harm to patients is difficult to measure and most likely underestimated, the FDA-led task force found. Fighting for their lives and unable to speak, most patients are sedated and unconscious while ventilated and often have no recall of their experiences afterward.

Several doctors said they were using paralytic agents to keep patients from involuntarily fighting the ventilator. But the powerful drugs also prevent patients even from flinching in pain. Nurses said they must closely watch for signs of pain or distress - such as increased heart rates - when supply problems force them to switch patients from one drug to another.

Patients can have hallucinations and become agitated on a second-line drug, said Dr. Mangala Narasimhan, regional director of critical care at Northwell Health, a 23-hospital system in New York. "You can tell they are really uncomfortable."

For now, hospitals cadge injectable opioid drugs as best they can.

In Cleveland, the University Hospitals group has designated "SWAT teams" to move what supplies it has among its 18 facilities. And they are constantly shopping for more.

"If you don't buy it, you miss it," said Shawn Osborne, vice president for pharmacy services. "If you miss it, you're not going to get to next week."

ONE DRUG, TWO MARKETS

Fentanyl, a pain reliever up to 100 times more powerful than morphine, exemplifies how the same drug, fashioned from the same molecule, can fare very differently in the marketplace depending on the form it takes.

Invented in 1960, fentanyl was long reserved for surgical, cancer and terminally ill patients. But in the late 1990s, drug companies and doctors launched a war on the chronic pain often experienced by outpatients.

The main weapons in this war were old, generic opioids manufactured in novel configurations that allowed their makers to win lucrative patents. Cheap and easy to synthesize in the lab, fentanyl was refashioned in one newly patented form after another - as a lollipop, a fast-dissolving disc and a nasal spray.

Johnson & Johnson's Janssen Pharmaceuticals Inc began promoting fentanyl for this new market in 1997, decades after its invention. J&J's patented, slow-release fentanyl skin patch, Duragesic, competed for blockbuster profits against another old opioid, oxycodone, which Purdue Pharma LP had re-launched in a patented slow-release pill called OxyContin.

In a statement, J&J told Reuters that prescription opioids “are an important option” for pain relief and that U.S. government policies and regulations “recognize the ongoing medical need for these medications.”

After patents on prescription opioids elapsed, generic drugmakers have piled in to profit off volume sales.

Unlike the crowded marketplace for prescription opioids, the injectables sector is highly consolidated, with only a few companies producing the lion’s share of each narcotic. (For the most part, the companies making injectables are not making prescription opioids.)

Still, large hospital chains and purchasing groups have enough market power to drive hard bargains, the FDA-led drug task force found. Generic injectables are largely seen as interchangeable, so hospitals shop by price, not brand. For drugmakers, the report said, it’s “a race to the bottom.”

This week, for instance, the internet-advertised price for a box of 25 small injectable fentanyl vials - enough for a single bedside drip bag for a COVID-19 patient - was \$76.99. By comparison, the price for a single prescription of a new fentanyl nasal spray for breakthrough cancer pain is \$985. That means hospitals are paying 3 cents per microgram for injectable fentanyl. At \$1.23 per microgram, the nasal spray is roughly 40 times higher.

Despite bargain-basement prices, drugs injected directly into the bloodstream are more expensive and more difficult to make than pills, which are mass produced. Injectable drugs are made batch-by-batch, and the risks of contamination are greater. They require a sterile environment, post-production “quarantines” to allow for the growth and detection of any possible bacteria and, finally, testing for any other contaminants.

“Manufacturing a sterile product requires a totally different investment,” said Siggi Olafsson, chief executive of Hikma Pharmaceuticals PLC, which makes 17% of generic injectables used in the United States.

He and other injectable manufacturers told Reuters they remained in the U.S. market because they believed it was the right thing to do. Hikma is still seeing sales growth, reporting that revenues from its injectables business rose 5% in the United States in 2019.

A SHAKY SUPPLY LINE

When the novel coronavirus landed in the United States, the supply line for hospital opioids was still recovering from a setback three years earlier.

In February 2017, Pfizer Inc, one of the nation’s biggest injectable drugmakers, received an FDA warning about several shoddy sterilization procedures at its McPherson, Kansas plant. By the summer, Pfizer warned of extended production delays as it sought to fix the problems, according to a letter the company sent to customers.

As a result, Pfizer’s output of injectable fentanyl, hydromorphone and morphine - three key hospital opioids - was thrown into disarray as other manufacturers were stepping away from the market.

Purdue, for instance, had sharply reduced its injectable hydromorphone output over several years. By 2017, the company made a “business decision” to license production to another drugmaker with better capabilities, the company told Reuters in an email.

The shortfalls across the country underscored the vulnerability of the injectables supply chain. In a February 2018 letter to U.S. drug regulators, hospital administrators warned that surgeries might be postponed or canceled. “In some cases, this could prove life-threatening,” they said.

Then Pfizer took an unusual step. In May and July of 2018, the company sent out letters warning hospitals, doctors and pharmacists that cracked needle hubs and unspecified contaminants had been found in some glass syringes filled with morphine and hydromorphone after they had been shipped to hospitals.

In the letters, reviewed by Reuters, the company said that the contaminants could result in inflammation, tissue injury and respiratory problems. But the letters said the affected batches could be used, so long as hospitals filtered out any contaminants. Pfizer said it was coordinating with the FDA “to help alleviate the critical drug shortage.”

In a statement to Reuters, Pfizer said it determined the syringes “posed a negligible risk” if filtered as instructed. The FDA confirmed in an email that it provided the manufacturer “discretion so the product could continue to be used” and that it works with firms to ensure patient safety during shortages.

“Sterile injectables are quite complex and costly to consistently manufacture,” Pfizer told Reuters. The company said it is now operating “without significant disruption” and has increased production of injectable opioids. It did not say by how much.

The status of injectable drug supplies at any given time can be a mystery.

The FDA requires manufacturers to update the agency on disruptions and shortages of necessary drugs. But those notices may be filed up to five days after a problem is identified - keeping the agency from taking action before a shortfall. On an FDA web page listing backordered drugs, the FDA said in early June that the “estimated recovery” for some injectable opioids made by Pfizer was not expected until early 2021.

Because drug companies hold information close to the vest, Woodcock said her agency had little visibility into what supplies companies had on hand or in production as the pandemic approached. She said the agency was encouraging - but couldn’t force - companies that once made injectable opioids to resume production.

But some manufacturers are plainly not interested in returning.

Baxter International Inc, once a large injectable opioid maker, has no plans to start up again, citing the lead time involved, pharmaceuticals president Sumant Ramachandra told Reuters.

“To do that from scratch again, you’re talking about over a year plus,” he said, adding that his company is focusing on other critical care drugs.

NO ‘EASY BUTTON’

As in the past, hospitals have been left to improvise.

At her Kaiser Permanente hospital in Fresno, California, ICU nurse Amy Arlund said she has had to swap ventilated COVID patients’ drugs in the middle of the night as the staff navigated shortages. “When you’re told to switch from drug-A to drug-B, it’s not as easy as flipping a switch,” she said. “It requires careful monitoring.”

Switching from one drug for another can raise the risk of dosing errors and side effects. At the peak of the surge in coronavirus cases in New York, some hospitals couldn’t get enough fentanyl, prompting physicians to go to second- and third-line drugs, such as ketamine, a drug that studies have shown can cause agitation and a racing heart.

Even when hospitals are able to get enough injectable opioids, they often are not in the form they need.

Colorado-based SCL Health Hospitals & Clinics pulled nine people from other jobs to work the phones in search of injectable opioids, said Jennifer Davis, system pharmacy director. When unable to find fentanyl vials large enough to fill a bedside drip bag in one shot, they have bought any size available, including syringe-sized ampules.

	<p>Working in head-to-toe protective gear to prevent contamination, pharmacy techs have had to crack as many as 25 thumb-size glass bottles and draw out the clear liquid, syringe by syringe, to make a single 50 milliliter intravenous bag for a ventilator patient.</p> <p>The process adds about 12 minutes to the preparation of each bedside bag, Davis said. A single COVID-19 patient may need two or more bags a day.</p> <p>Such onerous workarounds are likely to continue as no permanent solutions to the shortages are in sight.</p> <p>“If there was an easy button, it would have been pressed ages ago,” said Michael Ganio, senior director of pharmacy practice and quality at the American Society of Health-System Pharmacists.</p>
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HEADLINE	06/08 Dispute: Prince Andrew, US prosecutor
SOURCE	https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/08/nyregion/jeffrey-epstein-prince-andrew.html?action=click&module=Latest&pgtype=Homepage
GIST	<p>For four months, federal prosecutors in New York have been locked in a nasty public spat with Prince Andrew of Britain about what they say is his refusal to aid their investigation into allegations of sex trafficking and other crimes by the financier Jeffrey Epstein and his associates.</p> <p>In March, Geoffrey S. Berman, the United States attorney in Manhattan, took the unusual step of announcing at a news conference that the British royal had “completely shut the door” on helping with the inquiry. The comments came two months after Mr. Berman complained that the prince was offering “zero cooperation” in the case.</p> <p>On Monday, the trans-Atlantic sniping escalated, with the prince’s lawyers saying in a statement from London that he had agreed three times to help the New York prosecutors, though on his terms, with a written statement, and not by sitting for an interview.</p> <p>In the statement, the prince’s lawyers accused Mr. Berman by name of misleading the public with “inaccurate” comments about the prince that “should not have been made.” They also suggested that Mr. Berman and other U.S. prosecutors hoped to bask in the limelight by loudly and repeatedly attacking Prince Andrew.</p> <p>“They are perhaps seeking publicity rather than accepting the assistance proffered,” the prince’s lawyers wrote.</p> <p>Within hours, Mr. Berman shot back, issuing a statement of his own in which he effectively called Prince Andrew, the Duke of York, a liar.</p> <p>“Today, Prince Andrew yet again sought to falsely portray himself to the public as eager and willing to cooperate with an ongoing federal criminal investigation into sex trafficking and related offenses,” Mr. Berman wrote.</p> <p>“If Prince Andrew is, in fact, serious about cooperating with the ongoing federal investigation,” Mr. Berman added, “our doors remain open, and we await word of when we should expect him.”</p> <p>The dueling missives emerged as the British media reported that Mr. Berman’s office had raised the stakes in its scuffle with the prince by issuing a formal request to the British Home Office seeking its help in obtaining an interview with him.</p> <p>U.S. prosecutors in New York and Washington would not confirm whether such a request, which is known officially as a mutual legal assistance application, had been made. (In an interview with Fox News on</p>

Monday, Attorney General William P. Barr said there were no plans to extradite the prince, but that federal prosecutors hoped to have him “provide some evidence.”)

If British officials were to grant such an application, Mr. Berman and his members of his staff could avoid the complexities of trying to subpoena testimony from Prince Andrew, a foreign citizen who lives outside of U.S. jurisdiction.

Under mutual legal assistance treaties, the British government could compel the prince to submit to an interview with its own officials if he were to persist in refusing to grant one to the federal prosecutors in New York.

The stalemate has been in effect since November, when Prince Andrew gave what was widely seen as [a disastrous television interview to the BBC](#) about his long relationship with Mr. Epstein, who [killed himself last summer](#) at a federal jail in Manhattan while awaiting trial on sex trafficking and conspiracy charges. Mr. Epstein had previously pleaded guilty to state sex crime charges in 2008 and had been sentenced to 13 months in prison at the time.

Prince Andrew, 60, said in the BBC interview that he could not “shed light” for U.S. law enforcement officers on Mr. Epstein’s activities because the two had spent only a few days at a time together. He also said he would have to consult with his lawyers before testifying under oath about his relationship with Mr. Epstein.

The prince’s answers in the interview shocked many viewers, who said that his denials of sexual misconduct were unpersuasive and that he seemed to have little sympathy for Mr. Epstein’s alleged victims.

After the interview was broadcast, the prince abruptly announced that he was stepping back from public life, apparently out of a concern that the BBC appearance could threaten the reputation and charitable work of the entire British royal family.

In a public statement at the time, he also said, “Of course, I am willing to help any appropriate law enforcement agency with their investigations, if required.”

Shortly after Mr. Epstein’s death, Mr. Berman [said in a statement](#) that the inquiry into an alleged sex-trafficking conspiracy that led to the new charges against the financier had not yet finished and that prosecutors were committed to standing up for the “brave young women” whom Mr. Berman said Mr. Epstein had abused. Mr. Barr has also vowed to bring criminal charges against anyone who helped Mr. Epstein in any sex-trafficking scheme.

American prosecutors may also want to speak with Prince Andrew because of his friendship with Ghislaine Maxwell, a British socialite and Mr. Epstein’s onetime girlfriend. She has been accused in lawsuits filed by women who say they were Mr. Epstein’s victims of acting as his top recruiter, procuring girls and young women for him to sexually abuse.

Ms. Maxwell, who has denied any wrongdoing, was one of four women who were named as possible co-conspirators and [granted immunity from prosecution in a widely criticized plea bargain](#) that Mr. Epstein struck with federal prosecutors in Florida in a case that preceded his 2008 conviction.

Mr. Berman’s latest assertion that Prince Andrew has acted in bad faith in presenting himself publicly as cooperative drew an angry reaction from the prince’s advisers. They accused Mr. Berman of breaching his own confidentiality rules a third time and of further eroding the prince’s trust in the Justice Department’s willingness to deal with him honestly.

“It’s frankly bewildering,” one of the prince’s advisers said.

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HEADLINE	06/08 Airport screenings change w/Covid-19
SOURCE	https://www.seattletimes.com/life/travel/how-have-airport-screenings-changed-since-the-covid-19-outbreak-if-at-all-travel-troubleshooter/?utm_source=marketingcloud&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Morning+Brief+6-8-20_6_8_2020&utm_term=Active%20subscriber
GIST	<p>If airport screenings had changed because of the pandemic, Gene SirLouis hadn't noticed, and he'd flown several times since the COVID-19 outbreak. There were "no health questions, no thermal scans — nothing," says SirLouis, a manufacturer's representative from Washington, D.C.</p> <p>That, at least, was the case until he landed in Austin, Texas, recently. There, passengers whose final destination was in Texas had to fill out a form for self-quarantining, he recalls. The rest were free to go.</p> <p>"[The Transportation Security Administration] also asked to see the inside of my mask," he says. "That was a first."</p> <p>If you don't pay attention, you might miss the screening changes. The TSA made several significant adjustments after the outbreak. Other changes were in progress before the pandemic. But the biggest transformation may lie ahead.</p> <p>"There are many changes that passengers will see," TSA spokesperson Lisa Farbstein says. The agency now allows passengers to carry up to 12 ounces of hand sanitizer in a carry-on bag. To reduce the risk of infection, they must hold on to their boarding passes instead of handing them to a TSA agent at the travel document podium. Wearing a mask is permitted during screening, but you may need to lower it to help verify your identity, or if it is a military-style gas mask that may conceal something.</p> <p>Screeners are wearing face masks and practicing social distancing. And if travelers have prohibited items — such as liquids, gels or aerosols in quantities greater than 3.4 ounces — they'll have to return to the divestiture table "outside of security" with their carry-on bags to remove the items themselves, according to the TSA.</p> <p>Even before the pandemic, the TSA had been quietly working to fix some of the biggest complaints about airport security. One significant development is the addition of blended lanes at several airports, including Chattanooga Metropolitan Airport in Tennessee and Lincoln Airport in Nebraska.</p> <p>Until now, having TSA PreCheck clearance hasn't made a difference at smaller airports without designated PreCheck lanes, because everyone has been screened the same way. In the blended lanes — which do PreCheck as well as regular screenings — members of the TSA's trusted-traveler program receive full program benefits, such as faster screening, being allowed to keep liquids and gels in carry-on bags, and being allowed to leave their shoes, belts and jackets on.</p> <p>"TSA PreCheck can get the benefits of the program even if the airport doesn't have a dedicated check-in point," says Gabe Turner, a director for Security.org, a home, information and digital safety website.</p> <p>There's another recent change that could affect you this summer: The TSA has started to screen food more closely, according to many travelers.</p> <p>"Solid food and snacks are still allowed, and agents aren't making the request 100% of the time," says Molly Fergus, the general manager of the travel site TripSavvy. "Just be prepared to open up your bag for inspection if you've packed a nice plane picnic, and make sure to check the list of what you can bring on board." The TSA publishes a list of allowed foods on its site.</p> <p>The TSA confirmed that, in mid-June, it will begin asking passengers to remove carry-on food items from their bags and place them in a bin for separate screening. The agency will recommend packaging food in a clear plastic bag.</p>

Why is this happening? “Food items often trigger an alarm during the screening process,” Farbstein says. “Separating the food from the carry-on bag lessens the likelihood that a TSA officer will need to open the carry-on bag and remove the food items for a closer inspection.”

In what may be the biggest change since the introduction of full-body scanners, the TSA will begin [enforcing the Real ID requirement](#) starting Oct. 1, 2021. Late last summer, TSA agents began warning travelers who presented regular driver’s licenses about the change. In March, the government moved the enforcement date from this October to next year because of the pandemic.

The Real ID Act, passed by Congress in 2005, requires that state-issued identification, such as a driver’s license, meet federal standards if used for commercial air travel, among other purposes. But you’ll be able to fly without the new type of license. The TSA only requires that you verify your identity. There are 15 alternatives to a Real ID-compliant license, the most common being a U.S. passport.

As for health screenings, they are still evolving. “As travel begins to pick up, airport screenings will be of the utmost importance to avoid further spread of COVID-19,” says Robert Quigley, the regional medical director for the Americas at [International SOS](#), a travel security firm. “Travelers can expect to be responsible for additional requirements to navigate through the airport. That includes mandatory personal protective equipment, temperature checks, social distancing and even more security checkpoints.”

Frontier Airlines began screening passengers for COVID-19 last week. Last Monday, the carrier announced it would start checking all passengers with touchless thermometers before boarding. Passengers with a reading of 100.4 degrees F or more will be denied boarding.

“They can rebook, receive a credit or get a refund,” airline spokeswoman Jennifer de la Cruz says. “It’s their choice.”

In the coming weeks and months, airports may limit access to their terminals to passengers only, says Bruce McIndoe, founder of WorldAware, a risk management company.

“There will be some level of disinfecting baggage along with normal security checks,” McIndoe predicts. “And there will be fit-to-fly checks — thermal checks, general health checks and possibly actual virus tests. These will be crude out of the gate, but just like the ramp-up of security checks post-9/11, they will become more sophisticated.”

McIndoe sees a not-too-distant future in which health screeners might even administer CT lung scans before allowing passengers to board.

In the meantime, passengers are relying on tried-and-true methods for getting through security faster. Jon Courtway wears a multipocket vest when he travels, which eliminates needless fumbling for keys, loose change and electronics.

“I empty my pants of everything, and it all goes into vest pockets — even the mini iPad — and it goes through the X-ray machine with my shoes and liquids,” says Courtway, a retired state employee from Sacramento. “I always wear a nonmetallic belt and don’t have to take it off, unless I get a real uptight TSA agent.”

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HEADLINE	06/08 WA ordered \$37M poor quality masks
SOURCE	https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/times-watchdog/in-37-million-push-to-buy-chinese-made-masks-for-covid-19-state-runs-into-delays-poor-quality-and-fit-problems/?utm_source=marketingcloud&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Morning+Brief+6-8-20_6_8_2020&utm_term=Active%20subscriber

In the early stage of the coronavirus pandemic, Washington state was desperate for protective gear for front-line workers. Government employees scoured the world for masks capable of filtering tiny airborne particles.

Unable to find a reliable stockpile of U.S. government-approved N95 respirator masks, state officials settled on an alternative, ordering about 13.5 million Chinese-made KN95 models for more than \$37 million.

As it turned out, the alternative left much to be desired.

By early May, state officials had canceled more than half of the KN95s it ordered after they failed to pass quality checks. Weeks later, the state canceled another order after persistent delays by manufacturer BYD Co.

Many hospitals and first responders now don't want KN95 masks, largely because they don't consistently fit well enough to seal around their faces.

Washington has since stopped placing new orders for the masks. With previously ordered KN95s still arriving, state officials say they might give the masks to workers with less critical needs.

Despite disappointing results, Washington is still committed to spending \$13.8 million on KN95s, which cost about five times as much as surgical masks.

The canceled orders and lack of demand are the latest troubles for Washington's effort to procure protective equipment. As the state's [supplies lagged](#), medical workers turned to homemade masks and reused N95s, hoping the stopgaps would protect them from COVID-19.

State officials stressed that the masks won't be wasted. The Department of Enterprise Services (DES), the state's buying arm, says the KN95s are still in demand from some health care facilities with confirmed COVID-19 cases as well as others lower down its priority list for protective gear, such as jails and homeless shelters.

Linda Kent, a DES spokeswoman, said that when other types of masks aren't available, the KN95s could be used as "general face coverings." Cloth masks, which don't filter as well as KN95s, can be had for far less.

Washington state, like others during the pandemic, has struggled to compete in a [topsy-turvy](#) international medical supply marketplace. Normal supply chains ran bare, especially for the N95 respirator, and the state's expectation that the Strategic National Stockpile would fill the gaps has proven to be misplaced.

This led the state government to suspend procurement rules and sign no-bid contracts for more than \$400 million of personal protective equipment (PPE). Now, three months into the pandemic, the supplies are still trickling in.

"Something is better than nothing"

BYD, an automotive conglomerate that now bills one of its factories in Shenzhen, China, as the world's largest plant for face masks, has contracted to provide virtually all of the KN95s Washington state has purchased. The state has also received donations of 1.2 million KN95s from groups such as the nonprofit Americares and Eddie Bauer, the clothing manufacturer.

In Washington, BYD's deliveries have been consistently late, part of the wider delays that have plagued the state's ability to secure equipment. The [company accounts for more than half](#) the value of all the state's orders for COVID-19 supplies.

As of June 2, Washington had received 3.2 million KN95s it had purchased from BYD, plus the 1.2 million donated masks. To date, the state has distributed 2.6 million KN95s, with the remainder either in a

warehouse or being processed for distribution. BYD has yet to deliver an additional million of these masks.

Manufacturers who produce N95 masks, the preferred respirator for hospitals and first responders, have to meet U.S. regulatory standards and undergo federal testing. The KN95, approved by Chinese regulators, are designed and tested to similar specifications, yet one key difference has emerged.

The N95s typically are secured with elastic bands that go over the head; the KN95s often have bands that go around the ears, which may not provide as tight a seal, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

BYD lists two KN95 models on its website: One has elastic bands that go over the head and neck, advertised as having a [“very close facial fit”](#); the [other has ear loops](#). Photos from a state warehouse show boxes of BYD masks with ear loops.

At around \$3 apiece, the state was able to acquire the masks for less than the N95, but more than surgical masks, which cost around 60 cents each.

As DES was searching for masks in March, a spokeswoman said, the CDC had listed foreign standards comparable to N95s, so the agency placed the orders.

Then in early April the U.S. Food and Drug Administration authorized a [list of foreign manufacturers](#), including BYD, to distribute KN95s in the U.S.

When the first order of BYD’s masks arrived in early April, the state tested them and they fit “about half the people we tried,” wrote one DES safety expert in an internal email obtained by The Seattle Times through a public disclosure request. She said it was “likely an indication of differences in individual face shape.” Another brand of KN95s fit just one of six people.

The BYD masks were deemed “acceptable to distribute and to continue to purchase, if we do not have better alternatives.”

A BYD spokesman didn’t respond to a request for comment.

KN95s typically came folded in half when packaged. Most of the failures among state testers were due to the seam in the middle of the chin, which created a gap for unfiltered air, according to the emails.

“The quality of the KN95 is just pretty dismal,” the safety expert noted in mid-April, speaking generally, after testing samples from various brands.

“Something is better than nothing,” a DES purchasing employee wrote in the email exchange.

By the time these fit issues surfaced internally, the state had already ordered more than 13 million KN95 masks. DES and the state Emergency Operations Center, after placing the orders, “put measures in place to perform initial quality checks,” a spokeswoman wrote in a statement. By May 1 they had canceled orders for more than 7 million masks that didn’t pass the tests.

Tara Lee, a spokeswoman for Gov. Jay Inslee, said the state ordered KN95s as the only federally authorized equivalent to N95s available “in an expedited fashion rather than delay shipments by weeks to engage in traditional, deliberative product assessment.”

Even with complaints about the fit, she said, the KN95s will still be useful in nonhospital settings “as well as to go into the state stockpile for potential future usages” in case of future outbreaks.

KN95 demand drops across the U.S.

State leaders hoped the KN95s could satisfy health care workers' desperate need for protection against the coronavirus. But hospitals found that KN95 masks didn't fit well, said Cassie Sauer, president of the Washington State Hospital Association.

"They have tended to be too large for hospital staff," Sauer said. "They don't fit many women."

Similar stories have emerged from around the country. KN95s were among the masks delivered by the New England Patriots, in a splashy event in April, but some Boston hospitals have declined to use the masks, [according to The Boston Globe](#).

In early May, the FDA [revoked approval](#) for some Chinese manufacturers of KN95s after testing found that certain models didn't consistently meet the minimum filtration standards, and DES canceled a small order of KN95s that fell into that group.

The policy change contributed to a national drop in demand, said Jaime Getto, a spokesman for Project N95, a national nonprofit group helping organizations secure PPE.

"We know of importers in the LA area with warehouses of KN95 masks," Getto said in an email.

After BYD signed mask deals with multiple states, it has run into some high-profile troubles, including with its own line of N95s that still must win U.S. regulatory approval.

In May, the company [refunded](#) California nearly \$250 million after missing deadlines to obtain federal approval. Later that month, the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) denied approval for the company's N95 masks, declining to specify the rationale but noting that "design, manufacturing and quality inspection of the device was concerning."

BYD has said the masks passed NIOSH's physical tests and that the denial was due to paperwork issues. The company has resubmitted its application, and Kent, the DES spokeswoman, said the agency expected a decision Monday. Meanwhile, Washington has 5 million N95 masks from BYD waiting in a warehouse for regulatory approval.

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HEADLINE	06/08 Wealthy 'rush' to leave San Francisco?
SOURCE	https://www.sfgate.com/living-in-sf/article/Wealthy-buyers-in-mad-rush-to-leave-SF-15324574.php
GIST	<p>Amid the depths of a global pandemic and financial downturn, the demand for real estate is unexpectedly rocketing in wealthy regions outside San Francisco, reports Bloomberg. Agents say that demand is soaring in affluent areas around the Bay Area such as Napa, Marin and further afield in Carmel, as people who have the means look to get away from the city. Meanwhile, the market in San Francisco and Alameda County is still well below where it was last year.</p> <p>Elsewhere, Lake Tahoe has also seen a surge in real estate interest. The prospect of living out of the city on an alpine lake while maintaining a career is appealing for a new generation of young buyers, as many tech companies have signaled that remote work may be the new norm for a long time.</p> <p>"I've never seen the demand higher for Marin County real estate than when COVID-19 hit," Sotheby's Josh Burns told Bloomberg this week, as real estate agents see a surprising uptick in wealthy buyers leaving San Francisco.</p> <p>Agent Katrina Kehl of Compass warned her sellers not to expect much interest in their recent Mill Valley listing, as the country moves through an economic crisis. To their surprise, the couple received 13 bids and the home went over the \$1.7 million asking price by "a lot," Kehl told Bloomberg. Sotheby's agent Ginger Martin added that "there's a mad rush to get out of the city."</p>

	<p>Meanwhile, the rental market in San Francisco has dropped significantly, with rates for one-bedroom apartments in the city dropping by 9.2% since June 2019, and hitting a three-year low.</p> <p>However, buying a new home in an isolated haven in a nearby bucolic county is not an option for lower-income San Francisco residents, and some believe the trend is only exacerbating the wealth divide.</p> <p>“This is an example of another way the most advantaged, the most affluent have isolated themselves from this latest crisis,” Patrick Sharkey, a sociology professor at Princeton University, told Bloomberg. “It’s a very small segment of the population that has another home that they can go take off to.”</p> <p>Whether this change in demand away from San Francisco and into the suburbs is a short-lived reaction to the pandemic, or a more permanent change, remains to be seen.</p>
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HEADLINE	06/08 Police slashed parked cars tires
SOURCE	https://www.startribune.com/officers-slashed-tires-on-vehicles-parked-during-mpls-protests-unrest/571105692/
GIST	<p>Two law enforcement agencies acknowledged Monday that officers patrolling Minneapolis during the height of recent protests knifed the tires of numerous vehicles parked and unoccupied in at least two locations in the midst of the unrest.</p> <p>Video and photo images posted on the news outlet Mother Jones show officers in military-style uniforms puncturing tires in the Kmart parking lot at Lake Street and Nicollet Avenue on May 30.</p> <p>Images from S. Washington Avenue at Interstate 35W also showed officers with knives deflating the tires of two unoccupied cars with repeated jabs on May 31. Department of Public Safety spokesman Bruce Gordon confirmed that tires were cut in "a few locations."</p> <p>"State Patrol troopers strategically deflated tires ... in order to stop behaviors such as vehicles driving dangerously and at high speeds in and around protesters and law enforcement," Gordon said.</p> <p>Gordon said the patrol also targeted vehicles "that contained items used to cause harm during violent protests" such as rocks, concrete and sticks.</p> <p>"While not a typical tactic, vehicles were being used as dangerous weapons and inhibited our ability to clear areas and keep areas safe where violent protests were occurring," he said. As in all operations of this size, there will be a review about how these decisions were made."</p> <p>Deputies from Anoka County followed state orders and joined the patrol and also cut the tires on vehicles on Washington Avenue, said Anoka County Sheriff's Lt. Andy Knotz.</p> <p>Knotz said the deputies got their directions from the state-led Multiagency Command Center [MACC], which was coordinating law enforcement during the protests connected to the death on May 25 of George Floyd.</p> <p>Towing the vehicles was not an option, Knotz said, because "you could not get any tow trucks in there" because of the mass of people in the area.</p> <p>Val Ebertz, who was at the protests, witnessed police slashing tires in the Kmart parking lot at Lake Street and Nicollet Avenue in the midst of protests on May 30.</p> <p>She added these were the same officers who "were tear-gassing and shooting us with rubber bullets to try to push us farther back into the Kmart parking lot."</p>

	<p>Kyla Cook was with Ebertz and said "all of us were in shock" when she and others in the Kmart lot saw one member from a line of officers in riot gear knife the tires of an unattended pickup truck.</p> <p>Among the vehicle owners whose tires were damaged was Star Tribune reporter Chris Serres, who was covering the protests the night of May 30 and returned to the Kmart lot about 1 a.m. to find that his car was among a few dozen with flattened tires.</p> <p>"As far as I could see, it looked like all their tires had been slashed," Serres said.</p> <p>Los Angeles documentary and television producer Andrew Kimmel said his tires were similarly slashed while parked in the Kmart lot. His video of the damage on Twitter has been viewed more than 1.25 million times as of Monday afternoon.</p> <p>"It was every single car that was in the parking lot," said Kimmel, who has covered more than 100 protests in the past several years and added, "I've never seen the tire slashing before, particularly in a parking lot."</p> <p>Spokesmen for the Minneapolis Police Department, Hennepin County Sheriff's Office and the National Guard said their personnel were not the ones shown damaging tires in the videos and photos that are making the rounds on social media.</p>
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HEADLINE	06/08 NKorea to cut communications w/South
SOURCE	https://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/nkorea-cut-off-communication-channels-south-71142126
GIST	<p>SEOUL, South Korea -- North Korea said it will cut off all communication channels with South Korea at noon Tuesday as it escalates its pressure on the South for failing to stop activists from floating anti-Pyongyang leaflets across their tense border.</p> <p>South Korea's liberal government, which espouses greater ties with North Korea, repeated that it will work toward restoring peace on the Korean Peninsula in its response to the warning.</p> <p>Relations between the Koreas have been strained during a prolonged deadlock in broader nuclear diplomacy between Pyongyang and Washington. Some experts say North Korea may be deliberately creating tensions to bolster internal unity or launch a bigger provocation in the face of persistent U.S.-led sanctions.</p> <p>The North's Korean Central News Agency said all cross-border communication lines will be cut off in "the first step of the determination to completely shut down all contact means with South Korea and get rid of unnecessary things."</p> <p>It said the decision was made by Kim Yo Jong, the powerful sister of leader Kim Jong Un, and Kim Yong Chol, a former hard-line military intelligence chief who Seoul believes was behind two 2010 attacks that killed 50 South Koreans.</p> <p>"The South Korean authorities connived at the hostile acts against (North Korea) by the riff-raff, while trying to dodge heavy responsibility with nasty excuses," KCNA said. "They should be forced to pay dearly for this."</p> <p>South Korean conservative activists, including North Korean defectors living in the South, for years have floated huge balloons into North Korea that carry leaflets criticizing Kim Jong Un over his nuclear ambitions and abysmal human rights record. The leafleting has long been a source of tensions between the Koreas since the North bristles at any attempt to undermine the Kim leadership.</p>

Last week, Kim Yo Jong called the defectors “human scum” and “mongrel dogs” as the North also threatened to permanently shut down a liaison office and a jointly run factory park, as well as nullify a 2018 inter-Korean military agreement that had aimed to reduce tensions.

North Korean citizens have also participated recently in a series of mass rallies opposing the Seoul government, activities the North typically organizes in times of tensions with the outside world.

South Korea's Unification Ministry, which handles relations with North Korea, said cross-border hotlines must be maintained as they are the basic means of communication between the two Koreas. It said the South Korean government will strive to promote peace while abiding by inter-Korean agreements.

Defense Ministry spokeswoman Choi Hyun-soo told reporters the South Korean military was monitoring the situation but didn't say how the South plans to communicate with the North if there's need to quickly defuse tensions.

The South Korean government has recently said it would push for legal bans on launching leaflets, but the North has said the South Korean response lacks sincerity.

South Korean conservatives have urged their government to get tougher on North Korea and uphold their constitutional rights to free speech. South Korea has typically let activists launch such balloons but has halted some attempts when North Korean warnings appeared to be serious. In 2014, North Korean troops opened fire at propaganda balloons flying toward their territory, triggering an exchange of fire that caused no known casualties.

The two Koreas have several phone and fax-like hotline channels across the border as they bar ordinary citizens from exchange telephone calls, letters and emails. Among them is a hotline between Kim Jong Un and South Korean President Moon Jae-in, which was established after their summit in 2018 but has never been publicly used by the leaders.

Officials from the two Koreas usually exchange brief messages twice a day via lower-level channels to check whether they work normally, even if there are no major issues between their governments. When South Korean officials contacted North Korea via at least four channels on Tuesday morning, North Korea didn't respond, according to the South Korean government.

It's not the first time North Korea threatened to cut the channels. In previous cases, North Korea didn't reply to South Korean phone calls or fax messages for an extended period before it later restored those communication channels when animosities eased.

North Korea has suspended virtually all cooperation with South Korea as its nuclear negotiations with the United States remains stalemated since the breakdown of a summit between Kim Jong Un and President Donald Trump in early 2019. A main sticking point in the U.S.-North Korea diplomacy is a U.S. refusal to lift much of the crippling sanctions on North Korea in return for limited denuclearization steps.

North Korea has slammed South Korea for failing to break away from Washington and for not restoring massive joint economic projects held up by U.S.-led sanctions.

Kim Jong Un has recently stressed the need to bolster his domestic strengths to withstand the sanctions. But many experts say North Korea's already weak economy must have deteriorated further when the coronavirus pandemic forced it to shut its border with China, the North's biggest trading partner and aid benefactor.

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HEADLINE 06/08 Satellite data: virus in Wuhan last fall?

SOURCE	https://abcnews.go.com/International/satellite-data-suggests-coronavirus-hit-china-earlier-researchers/story?id=71123270
GIST	<p>Dramatic spikes in auto traffic around major hospitals in Wuhan last fall suggest the novel coronavirus may have been present and spreading through central China long before the outbreak was first reported to the world, according to a new Harvard Medical School study.</p> <p>Using techniques similar to those employed by intelligence agencies, the research team behind the study analyzed commercial satellite imagery and "observed a dramatic increase in hospital traffic outside five major Wuhan hospitals beginning late summer and early fall 2019," according to Dr. John Brownstein, the Harvard Medical professor who led the research.</p> <p>Brownstein, an ABC News contributor, said the traffic increase also "coincided with" elevated queries on a Chinese internet search for "certain symptoms that would later be determined as closely associated with the novel coronavirus."</p> <p>Though Brownstein acknowledged the evidence is circumstantial, he said the study makes for an important new data point in the mystery of COVID-19's origins.</p> <p>"Something was happening in October," said Brownstein, the chief innovation officer at Boston Children's Hospital and director of the medical center's Computational Epidemiology Lab. "Clearly, there was some level of social disruption taking place well before what was previously identified as the start of the novel coronavirus pandemic."</p> <p>Since the outbreak in China last year, the coronavirus has swept across the globe infecting nearly 7 million and killing more than 400,000 worldwide, according to a count by Johns Hopkins University. It is believed that the virus jumped from animal species, where it had little effect, to humans, where it has become the most potent natural killer since the Spanish flu pandemic a century ago.</p> <p>Though Chinese officials would not formally notify the World Health Organization until Dec. 31 that a new respiratory pathogen was coursing through Wuhan, U.S. intelligence caught wind of a problem as early as late November and notified the Pentagon, according to four sources briefed on the confidential information.</p> <p>Because the origin of a novel virus is so hard to pin down but so critically important for scientists to understand, experts around the world are racing to uncover the secrets of the pathogen formally known as SARS-CoV2. The task for researchers is made far more complicated by the Chinese government's refusal to fully cooperate with Western and international health authorities, American and WHO officials have said.</p> <p>Brownstein and his team, which included researchers from Boston University and Boston Children's Hospital, have spent more than a month trying to pin down the signs for when the population of Hubei province in China first started to be stricken.</p> <p>The logic of Brownstein's research project was straightforward: respiratory diseases lead to very specific types of behavior in communities where they're spreading. So, pictures that show those patterns of behavior could help explain what was happening even if the people who were sickened did not realize the broader problem at the time.</p> <p>"What we're trying to do is look at the activity, how busy a hospital is," Brownstein said. "And the way we do that is by counting the cars that are at that hospital. Parking lots will get full as a hospital gets busy. So more cars in a hospital, the hospital's busier, likely because something's happening in the community, an infection is growing and people have to see a doctor. So you see the increases in the hospital business through the cars... We saw this across multiple institutions."</p> <p>The picture painted by the data is not in itself conclusive, Brownstein acknowledged, but he said the numbers are telling.</p>

"This is all about a growing body of information pointing to something taking place in Wuhan at the time," Brownstein said. "Many studies are still needed to fully uncover what took place and for people to really learn about how these disease outbreaks unfold and emerge in populations. So this is just another point of evidence."

Disease ecologist Peter Daszak, president of the nonprofit EcoHealth Alliance in Manhattan, said the Harvard study "is absolutely fascinating."

"You need to look at every possible bit of evidence, where it came from and when it emerged," said Daszak whose organization works to understand the origin of emerging diseases. "When we do analysis after outbreaks, we find that the diseases had been in circulation days, weeks, months, years before. I really believe that's what we're going to find with COVID-19."

David Perlin, chief science officer at the Center for Discovery and Innovation in New Jersey, said he was intrigued by Brownstein's research, though he wasn't totally convinced.

"I think some of the methods are questionable and their interpretation is slightly over-interpreted," Perlin said. "The problem is we only have a subset of data here. I always worry when people start drawing inferences from data subsets, cherry-picking data [like the internet searches]. It's suggestive."

Photographs taken from space suggests a crisis below

Starting with nearly 350 images captured by private satellites circling the globe, Brownstein's study first examined traffic and parking outside major hospitals in Wuhan for the past two years. Among them were photographs snapped from space approximately every week or every other week through the fall of 2019. From the approximately 350 frames, researchers found 108 usable images, showing locations without obstruction from smog, tall buildings, clouds or other features that could complicate satellite analysis.

"It has to be right at noon," Brownstein said, "because you basically want direct sunlight. You don't want shadows to prevent our ability to count the cars."

On Oct. 10, 2018, there were 171 cars in the parking lot of Wuhan's Tianyou Hospital, one of the city's largest. A year later, satellites recorded 285 cars -- a 67% increase, according to the data reviewed by the researchers and shared with ABC News.

Other hospitals showed up to a 90% increase when comparing traffic between fall of 2018 and 2019, according to the study. At Wuhan Tongji Medical University, the spike in car traffic was found to have occurred in mid-September 2019.

To ensure they were not reaching faulty conclusions, researchers said they took into account everything that could explain away traffic surges -- from large public gatherings to the possibility of new construction at the hospitals. Still, they said they found statistically significant increases in the numbers of cars present. "If you look at all of the images, observations we've ever had of all of these locations since 2018, almost all of the highest car counts are all in the September through December 2019 time frame," said Tom Diamond, president of RS Metrics, which worked with the Brownstein research team.

As an initial "validation" of their methodology of extrapolating information about movement through the review of satellite images, researchers said they compared parking lot activity at the Huanan Seafood Market in mid-September, when the market was busy, and after the market was shut down by authorities after reports emerged that the wet market may have been ground zero for the novel coronavirus outbreak. They said they found a marked change. "The images validate the concept that activity and movement is shown through the lens of these sort of parking lots," said Brownstein.

The study has been submitted to the journal Nature Digital Medicine and is under peer review. It is scheduled to be posted Monday morning on "Dash," Harvard's preprint server for medical papers.

In conducting the project, RS Metrics, an intelligence-analysis firm that analyzes satellite imagery for corporate clients, employed techniques designed to identify and monitor changes in the patterns of life and business.

It's similar to work done by analysts at the Central Intelligence Agency and the Defense Intelligence Agency, who pore over images each day to try to figure out what is happening on the ground – especially in places where governments restrict the flow of people and news.

Diamond told ABC News the Wuhan region was clearly experiencing a widespread health problem in the months before China's government acknowledged publicly that a contagion was coursing through the densely populated city. That announcement came on New Year's Eve when the Wuhan Municipal Health Commission, China reported a "cluster" of pneumonia cases in its city.

"At all the larger hospitals in Wuhan, we measured the highest traffic we've seen in over two years during the September through December 2019 time frame," Diamond said. "Our company is used to measuring tiny changes, like 2% to 3% growth in a Cabella's or Wal-Mart parking lot. That was not the case here. Here, there is a very clear trend."

Former acting Homeland Security Undersecretary John Cohen, who oversaw DHS intelligence operations during the Obama administration, said the new research suggests that COVID-19, which has already killed more than 110,000 Americans, was likely brought to the U.S. by travelers from Wuhan long before it was detected.

"This study raises serious questions about whether the coronavirus was first introduced into the United States earlier than previously reported and whether measures announced in late January restricting travel from China were too little too late," said Cohen, now an ABC News contributor.

Satellite images suggesting a change in life patterns in Wuhan were also a key factor in classified early U.S. intelligence reporting.

In April, [ABC News reported](#) that the National Center for Medical Intelligence (NCMI) received word in late November that a contagion was sweeping through Wuhan, changing the patterns of life and business and posing a threat to the population. Sources familiar with the reports said NCMI, a component of the military's Defense Intelligence Agency, based the analysis on wire and computer intercepts coupled with satellite images similar to those used by Brownstein's team.

After that story was broadcast, the NCMI's director issued a statement, denying that a formal "product/assessment" was generated in November. The statement did not address preliminary intelligence reports. When contacted Friday with the results of the new Harvard study, the Pentagon's chief spokesman, Jonathan Hoffman, said he had "nothing to add."

The Office of the Director of National Intelligence declined to comment.

In response to questions about the new Harvard Medical study, the State Department Sunday again criticized the government in Beijing for withholding from the world community critical public health information.

"The Chinese government's cover up of initial reporting on the virus is just one more example of the challenges presented by the Chinese Communist Party's hostility toward transparency," a State Department spokesperson told ABC News. "The Chinese government has a responsibility to share information on the virus and support countries as the world responds to COVID-19."

In March, the Hong Kong-based South China Morning Post newspaper, citing Chinese government data, [reported](#) that the first case of COVID-19 could be traced back to November 17, 2019. In recent days, Chinese health officials have told local media that the virus likely was spreading before they realized, though they have offered no details.

ABC News sought comment on the new study from the hospitals in Wuhan that were analyzed, the local public health agency and the Chinese embassy in Washington. The only response received by the network came from the Chinese embassy, where officials pointed to a white paper released Sunday the China State Council.

“The novel coronavirus is a previously unknown virus,” the report documents. “Determining its origin is a scientific issue that requires research by scientists and doctors. The conclusion must be based on facts and evidence.”

The council also defended the Chinese government’s response, writing, “China has also acted with a keen sense of responsibility to humanity, its people, posterity, and the international community.”

On the ground, internet searches for symptoms associated with COVID

Brownstein said he and his researchers found the hospital-traffic data to be even more compelling after digging into internet search patterns. Around the time the hospital traffic was surging, there was a spike in online traffic in the Wuhan region among users asking China’s Baidu search engine for information on “cough” and “diarrhea.”

“While queries of the respiratory symptom ‘cough’ show seasonal fluctuations coinciding with yearly influenza seasons, ‘diarrhea’ is a more COVID-19-specific symptom and only shows an association with the current epidemic,” according to the study. “The increase of both signals precede the documented start of the COVID-19 pandemic in December.”

“We’ve done previous studies where we could show that what people search for online is an indicator of disease in the population,” Brownstein said. “And we actually saw people searching for [symptoms that might be related](#) to COVID: diarrheal disease, cough. That was even starting as early as late summer.

“Now, we can’t confirm 100% what the virus was that was causing this illness and what was causing this business in hospitals,” Brownstein said. “But something was going on that looked very different than any other time that we had looked at.”

Brownstein and his research team used satellite imagery in 2015 to investigate how health care systems could predict outbreaks of influenza-like illnesses as they occur.

“We previously validated this method of indirectly measuring disease activity by monitoring hospital parking lot usage in Chile, Argentina and Mexico,” said researcher Elaine Nsoesie, a global health professor at Boston University who worked with Brownstein on both projects. “Using the data, we were able to forecast trends in influenza-like illnesses over several years.”

For that study, the scientists reviewed nearly 3,000 satellite images from 2010 to 2013, again, measuring car traffic at hospitals. They concluded that traffic spikes coincide with an outbreak of influenza-like illness, so public health officials could use parking-lot data to help them prepare for something that could strain medical facilities.

“We are in need of new and innovative methods for predicting disease,” said epidemiology professor Anne Rimoin, the director of the Center for Global and Immigrant Health at UCLA, who was not connected with the research effort. “In this specific case, data on events such as increases in hospital traffic could serve as early indicators of social disruption resulting from disease. High-resolution satellite imagery can be extremely useful for understanding disease spread and implementation of control measures.”

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HEADLINE	06/09 Maryland man seeks withdraw guilty plea
SOURCE	https://www.baltimoresun.com/news/crime/bs-md-cr-christopher-hasson-trial-updates-20200609-jgvftumbynbibc6eiqxmvoj7q-story.html
GIST	<p>A former Coast Guard lieutenant accused of plotting politically motivated killings inspired by a far-right mass murderer asked a federal appeals court on Monday to let him withdraw his guilty plea or else throw out his sentence of more than 13 years in prison.</p> <p>In a court filing, a defense attorney argued that Christopher Hasson's 160-month prison term was roughly four times longer than sentencing guidelines would have called for if U.S. District Judge George Hazel had not mistakenly applied a "terrorism enhancement" to the sentence.</p> <p>Prosecutors didn't charge Hasson, 50, with any terrorism-related offenses. He pleaded guilty last October to possessing unregistered and unserialized silencers, being a drug addict in possession of firearms and illegal possession of tramadol, an opioid painkiller.</p> <p>The judge "clearly erred by finding Hasson's offenses were intended to promote a federal crime of terrorism," assistant federal public defender Cullen Macbeth wrote.</p> <p>Prosecutors have until June 29 to respond in writing to Macbeth's filing. The appeal was filed with the 4th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals.</p> <p>Federal prosecutors called Hasson a domestic terrorist and self-described white nationalist. In an earlier court filing, prosecutors said Hasson appeared to be planning attacks inspired by the manifesto of Anders Behring Breivik, the Norwegian far-right terrorist who killed 77 people in a 2011 bomb-and-shooting rampage.</p> <p>Prosecutors also claimed Hasson drew up what appeared to be a computer spreadsheet hit list naming House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, Senate Democratic Leader Chuck Schumer and Democratic presidential hopefuls, including Elizabeth Warren. He also mentioned several network TV journalists, including MSNBC's Chris Hayes and Joe Scarborough and CNN's Chris Cuomo and Van Jones.</p> <p>When investigators searched Hasson's basement apartment in Silver Spring, Maryland, they found 15 guns, including seven rifles, and more than 1,000 rounds of ammunition.</p> <p>Stephen Hart, a defense witness who is an expert in violence risk assessment, rejected prosecutors' theory that Hasson intended to carry out an attack.</p> <p>Macbeth said prosecutors' claims are primarily based on a handful of internet searches and two unsent letters he wrote more than a year before his arrest. Hasson's lawyers have questioned why federal authorities haven't produced any reports to support their claims that Hasson was actually a violence risk.</p> <p>"Its failure to do so suggests that either the government conducted a threat assessment and found Hasson non-violent, or it was unwilling to conduct an assessment because it feared the results would show Hasson was not a threat. Both possibilities undermine (Hazel's) factual finding," Macbeth wrote Monday.</p> <p>Hasson had faced a maximum prison sentence of 31 years at sentencing.</p> <p>Hazel said he believes the officer was preparing to carry out a "mass casualty assault as a way to act out his white nationalist views."</p> <p>"The need to protect the public is of paramount importance," the judge said.</p> <p>Hasson said he has never harmed anybody in his life and wasn't planning to hurt anyone "in any way, shape or form." But he apologized to his family, his colleagues and to the public, saying he knew his actions alarmed many people.</p>

	<p>"I am embarrassed by these things and sorry for the pain they have caused," he said.</p> <p>Adm. Karl Schultz, the Coast Guard's commandant, has said Hasson was being "involuntarily separated" from the guard without "any rights, benefits and retirement pay, which he may have otherwise been entitled."</p>
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HEADLINE	06/08 Seattle small businesses looting damage
SOURCE	https://www.seattletimes.com/business/local-business/for-many-seattle-area-small-businesses-recent-looting-damage-only-adds-to-challenges-of-re-opening/
GIST	<p>When looters broke into the Simply Seattle shop near Pike Place Market two weekends ago, owner Jamie Munson tried to take the long view.</p> <p>None of his employees had been hurt. Insurance was likely to help with broken windows and smashed cash registers. And while the damage meant he couldn't open the shop last Friday, when King County allowed retailers and others to partly reopen, Munson doubts the delay will matter much, given the heavy restrictions and tough economic climate businesses will probably face for months.</p> <p>"Trust me, we're anxious to get open, and we need to get open, because we're hemorrhaging cash," said Munson, whose four Seattle shops have been completely idle since March. Still, he added, "that first week is not going to make or break your year. It's already broken."</p> <p>That sort of weary pragmatism seems common among the scores of Seattle-area businesses swept up in the incidents of destruction that followed recent protests over police violence.</p> <p>By latest count, vandals and looters struck more than 100 stores, restaurants, and other businesses in Seattle's downtown, Belltown, Capitol Hill, and Chinatown-International District neighborhoods, according to the Downtown Seattle Association. Dozens more were hit on the Eastside, including 43 in Bellevue Square and neighboring shopping areas, according to a spokesperson for owner Kemper Development. Stores were also damaged in Auburn, Renton, Tacoma and other Puget Sound-area communities.</p> <p>Like Munson, many owners of the hardest-hit businesses have been quick to voice support for the protests and to recognize the damage was carried out by a small fraction of those on the streets.</p> <p>But they also acknowledge that broken windows and smashed display cases mean waiting even longer to start digging out from months of little or no revenue. "COVID impacted me a lot — and now this," said Pamela Morales, whose downtown Seattle shop, Simple Life, was hard hit by looters.</p> <p>"Every night, I pray I won't wake up to more bad news," added David Leong, whose International District eatery, Fortuna Cafe 2.0, was also damaged in the looting.</p> <p>And even undamaged businesses can't be sure whether ongoing protests will scare off consumers. Rebuilding "public confidence when it comes to public safety [in shopping areas] that's a tough gig right now," said Doug Lein, economic development manager for the city of Auburn, where many downtown businesses were only just unboarding their windows Monday, a week after looters struck the area. "I think every single city is struggling with it."</p> <p>Quite aside from the looting and vandalism, area businesses faced unprecedented challenges in recovering from COVID-19.</p> <p>For starters, public-health regulations mean shops, restaurants and others will, quite literally, see only a fraction of pre-pandemic sales. Under King County's just-approved "phase 1.5" reopening plan, for example, restaurants can operate at just 25% of their indoor capacity and 50% of outdoor capacity.</p>

Retailers, meanwhile, are limited to 15% of their building occupancy, and customers can stay inside no longer than 30 minutes.

Anticipating those restrictions, some businesses were already reconfiguring operations in ways that all but guarantee lower sales volumes and extra costs — “touchless” curbside pickup, for example, and wider aisles (and less in-store shelving and inventory) to allow for social distancing.

But the restrictions weren’t the only obstacles to a resumption of pre-pandemic sales. With hundreds of thousands of Seattle-area residents still out of work, recession fears were likely to curb expenditures. And even some still-employed consumers were likely to remain anxious about activities in crowded settings, despite the all-clear from public-health officials.

Likewise, the tourists and office workers who drove a huge amount of sales in places such as downtown Seattle and Bellevue are down dramatically since the start of the pandemic, and are hardly likely to return soon.

Case in point: the cruise industry, which last year funneled thousands of visitors to the Seattle area, will likely be a shadow of its former self in 2020.

“That’s scary to think about that it’s just gone,” said Simply Seattle’s Munson. Although he expects consumers will still want to travel this summer, even if it’s only a road trip, he wonders: “Are people going to road trip into cities, where they have a greater chance of contacting the virus ... or are they going to travel to mountain towns and the forests and just get out?” Obviously, he hopes it’s both — but he’s still “bracing for at least a 50% drop in sales.”

Those uncertainties, coupled with the potential for a second wave of COVID-19 cases and a second shutdown, had already led many businesses to significantly lower their goals for 2020 and adopt strategies centered less on profit than on survival.

“This whole year is shot,” said Leong, who says he was already planning to stick with takeout only at Fortuna and his other eatery, SpiceUp Szechuan Cuisine in Belltown, for several more months rather than risk a full-scale reopening. Like other local business owners he knows, Leong fears that “if I have to hire another four or five people, and my sales only go up 10% but my overhead just went up 60% ... I’ll be gone in two weeks.”

On one level, the looting was only the latest in a long list of costs — from rising rents and labor costs to street crime and homelessness — that some business owners say are making it increasingly difficult to stay in downtown Seattle or other urban cores.

But after the one-two punch of COVID-19 and the protests, even some businesses that survived the shutdown might not be able to get through a summer that is likely to be lean.

Minimizing such outcomes will take a broad effort not only by affected business communities. Governments also need to help battered businesses cope with near-term effects of the vandalism as well as the longer-term uncertainties of reopening, said the City of Auburn’s Lein.

In the near term, Lein says, local governments can help businesses make the most of partial reopening — for example, making it easier for restaurants to maximize outdoor seating capacity by quickly issuing city permits for use of sidewalks and other public rights of way.

Longer term, governments can help businesses secure federal disaster funding, says Don Blakeney, vice president of advocacy and economic development at the Downtown Seattle Association.

But governments will also need to address the issues at the core of recent unrest, including police violence and tensions between business’s need for security and the public’s right to protest. “It’s going to be hard and complicated, and that’s OK,” Blakeney said. “I think we can have a hard conversation about

	<p>institutional racism, police brutality and other issues that we have to address as a society while ... also talking about recovering the economy.”</p> <p>In the meantime, business owners like Morales, Munson and Leong are left to prepare for the worst but hope for the best.</p> <p>Munson, for example, thinks the looting, which he blames on “people who co-opted the protest,” is unlikely to happen again, and he isn’t worried continued demonstrations will hurt business.</p> <p>He and other business owners have also been buoyed by the outpouring of support after the looting, when a mix of city workers, volunteers, and others showed up to begin putting things to rights.</p> <p>“I have to say, I saw so many people coming together, Black, white, all colors, young and old, to clean and scrub and help each other — it was a reassuring sight,” said Leong. “People are resilient, especially business owners,” he added. “We can heal.”</p>
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HEADLINE	06/08 Arrested: Va. man drove thru protesters
SOURCE	https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/public-safety/self-identified-ku-klux-klan-leader-arrested-after-car-drove-through-protesters-near-richmond-prosecutors-say/2020/06/08/e49bac16-a9a9-11ea-94d2-d7bc43b26bf9_story.html
GIST	<p>A self-identified leader in the Ku Klux Klan was arrested after driving through peaceful protesters in Richmond late Sunday afternoon, prosecutors said.</p> <p>The man, Harry H. Rogers, 36, of Hanover County, has been charged with assault and battery, attempted malicious wounding and destruction of property with intent, according to online court records and prosecutors.</p> <p>He is being held without bond. There were no fatalities reported as a result of the incident. One man who suffered injuries that did not appear life-threatening was checked at the scene and refused further treatment, police said.</p> <p>The incident remains under investigation.</p> <p>Henrico County Commonwealth’s Attorney Shannon Taylor said her office is investigating whether Rogers should also face hate crime charges.</p> <p>“While I am grateful that the victim’s injuries do not appear to be serious, an attack on peaceful protesters is heinous and despicable and we will prosecute to the fullest extent of the law,” she said in the statement.</p> <p>“We lived through this in Virginia in Charlottesville in 2017. I promise Henricoans that this egregious criminal act will not go unpunished. Hate has no place here under my watch.”</p> <p>Police said the incident occurred around 5:45 p.m. on Sunday, when protesters were marching on Lakeside Avenue near Vale Street over the death of George Floyd, a black man killed in Minneapolis police custody. Witnesses told police that Rogers revved his engine and drove through the protesters on the roadway, according to a statement released by the Henrico County Police Division.</p> <p>Rogers reportedly admitted to being a Ku Klux Klan leader and “propagandist for Confederate ideology,” Taylor said in the statement.</p> <p>“I am not aware at this moment of Mr. Rogers being on anyone’s radar, but obviously because the investigation is ongoing, there could be other information out there that would change that answer,” she added.</p>

	Rogers's attorney could not be reached immediately for comment.
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HEADLINE	06/08 Federal charges; Minn. precinct arson
SOURCE	https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2020/jun/8/brandon-wolfe-charged-minneapolis-police-precinct-/
GIST	<p>Federal prosecutors Monday filed the first criminal charges for the torching of a Minneapolis police precinct last week as protests raged through the city over the death of George Floyd.</p> <p>Branden Michael Wolfe, 23, is charged with aiding and abetting arson. He is scheduled to appear before a federal judge in Minneapolis on Tuesday afternoon.</p> <p>In response to the death of Mr. Floyd, a black man who died while in the custody of four white police officers, rioters set the Minneapolis Police Department's Third Precinct ablaze.</p> <p>Mr. Wolfe became a suspect in the arson after he showed up at a local home improvement store wearing body armor, a law enforcement duty belt and a baton, according to the criminal complaint.</p> <p>The store's employees recognized Mr. Wolfe because he has been employed there as a security guard, prosecutors said.</p> <p>Mr. Wolfe was fired from that job earlier after referring to social media posts about stealing items from the Third Precinct, court documents revealed.</p> <p>Police recovered additional items they say were stolen from the precinct, including a riot helmet, a 9mm pistol magazine, an overdose kit and a police radio.</p> <p>Mr. Wolfe admitted to police he was inside the Third Precinct the night of the fire and removed items from the building, according to the criminal complaint.</p>
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HEADLINE	06/08 Sting that caught wildlife killing ring
SOURCE	https://crosscut.com/2020/06/inside-sting-caught-northwest-wildlife-killing-ring
GIST	<p>On a frigid black night in December 2016, Officer Tyler Bahrenburg stood in the garage of a rundown home in Longview in Cowlitz County, looking for the heads of two poached deer. The faint stench of death hung in the air of the building, a hoarder's den of tools and refuse. Small drops of blood led out the back door. Bahrenburg, a Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife game warden with an easygoing attitude, followed the narrow path they made out of the shop. The home's occupant, 25-year-old Billy Haynes, trailed behind.</p> <p>The deeper into the yard they went, inching toward a rusting GMC Jimmy wet with rain, the faster Haynes' breathing became. "I want to go back inside," he stammered.</p> <p>Bahrenburg, one of four wardens at Haynes' house that night, reached the GMC, and that's when he saw it: a pile of black trash bags, each one bursting with antlers. He stooped and scanned under the vehicle with his flashlight — more bags with antlers. In the bed of the truck, still more. "What is all this?" he said.</p> <p>A foul odor erupted when Bahrenburg opened the bags. Some of the heads were fresh; others crawled with maggots. There were at least a dozen. He looked up at Haynes, a paunchy man with a scruff of red beard, and saw that his chest was heaving. One of the other officers, a hot-headed rookie named Denis Budai, shouted in frustration: "You better be fucking honest and tell us what else you have here."</p>

It cracked Haynes wide open. These were deer from Oregon, Haynes admitted. He told the officers that he and another man, Erik Martin, had been on a long hunting trip — what amounted to a two-week killing spree of illegal, late-night spotlighting sessions. And these weren't the only heads they had: There were 14 more at Martin's house.

The wardens split up, two to Martin's house, two staying with Haynes to collect evidence. It was midnight by the time the wardens met at a storage facility they kept on the outskirts of town. They formed a production line, tagging and filing the antlers and heads until 4 a.m., exhausted but ecstatic. The improbable turn — a search for two poached deer skulls that ended with 27 — marked one of the biggest cases any of them had ever worked.

But even after the evening's staggering discoveries, the officers had no idea how much darker the case would become. Billy Haynes and Erik Martin knew something the officers didn't: For years, the men had been illegally killing wildlife in the wooded Oregon-Washington borderlands, and they hadn't been doing it alone. The investigation that began that cold night would be unlike any the wardens had known before, ultimately pushing the boundaries of what they imagined people were capable of — and what they themselves could endure.

Poaching is difficult to prove. It occurs in remote areas with few, if any, witnesses; the evidence is easily destroyed; and the wildlife agencies involved are strapped for resources and staff. Convictions are infrequent and penalties minor — a suspended hunting license, a small fine, or, in more serious cases, maybe some community service or a brief stint in jail. In Washington, high-profile grizzly killings have led to tougher poaching laws, including a 1996 Washington state initiative that outlawed using bait and hounds to hunt big game. But legally, there was no distinction between poaching a single deer and engaging in large-scale, wanton killing until a brutal 2011 case — that of 20-year-old James Cody Stearns, nicknamed “the Headhunter,” who was suspected of killing more than 100 animals — spurred a new spree-killing law in the state. It's not a law that gets much play, but its relevance was about to become apparent to the Washington game wardens.

They had searched Haynes' house in response to a call from state troopers in Oregon who suspected the men of poaching in a remote swath of Oregon forest where hunters were reporting strange cases of deer carcasses with their heads lopped off. The Oregon troopers had, critically, already seized Haynes and Martin's phones, and as the wardens dealt with the 27 deer heads, the troopers were combing through cellphone data. Two weeks passed, and they called the game wardens again. The troopers had videos they needed the game wardens to see. The case, they said, had “broadened.”

Washington state game warden Patrick Anderson, a wiry, quick-witted 10-year veteran of the department, drove down to Hood River, Oregon, with Bahrenburg. They filed into a briefing room alongside the Oregon state attorney general, a prosecutor and the state troopers' sergeant. A hell of a lot of important people are here for a wildlife crime, Anderson thought. The troopers queued up a video recorded by a phone's unblinking eye: a blur of brown and green and the sharp pitch of dogs baying, voices yelling about a bear in a tree, then the crack of a gunshot followed by a split second of silence as a black bear fell noiselessly through the air before hitting the ground to ecstatic shouts. Another: dogs, at least six of them, howling at a black bear, this one sitting on its haunches, exhausted after a long chase, and a man yelling, “Head shot!,” followed by a shotgun blast. The bear crumples over. “Let 'em loose!” someone yells above the noise of the hounds. “Get 'em, boys.”

Video after video played, each eerily similar to the last, the men's hands and faces coated in blood spray from point-blank shots. The troopers had found evidence of far more crimes occurring throughout southwestern Washington, mostly in the Gifford Pinchot National Forest, 1.3 million acres of thick woods flanked by Mount St. Helens to the west and Mount Adams to the east. What varied was the level of gore, the type of prey and the people involved; this was a much larger group than just Haynes and Martin. Most notably, it included a father-and-son duo whose reputation for illegal hound hunting was well known to the Washington game wardens: In 2008, the son, Joe Dills, was convicted of several charges for his role in a gang of poachers called the Kill 'Em All Boyz. A state Fish and Wildlife officer had spent six months

undercover to bring them down. “In their mindset, the bear, cougar, bobcat were all there for them to kill — that was their only purpose,” the officer, Todd Vandivert, told me later. “And the game laws and all that were just in their way.”

In the Hood River office, the wardens viewed a tiny sampling of the tens of thousands of text messages and hundreds of videos the phones contained. The sheer volume of evidence, and the brutality of it, felt overwhelming. How many animals had these people killed — dozens, hundreds? They didn’t yet know. And why? The poachers didn’t appear to harvest much meat; they rarely kept pelts. Heads, when they took them, were apparently often chucked behind old trucks. Their trophies mostly seemed to be the pictures and videos they took and shared with each other.

The wardens had seen poaching cases before, but the sheer coldness of this, and the scale, struck them. They wondered how so much violence could have occurred in the areas they patrolled without their knowing about it. But the answer was obvious: A sweeping expanse of wilderness, the Gifford Pinchot is four times the size of Los Angeles, with only a handful of officers to patrol its maze of unmarked forestry roads. Heavily walled with hemlock, fir, cedar and bigleaf maple, boxed in with dense tangles of underbrush, the forest had a way of hiding what occurred within it.

Anderson and Bahrenburg returned to Washington stunned, with “the sense of standing at the base of a tall mountain,” said Anderson. Already, the clock was ticking. The first crime they had evidence for was the poaching of a black bear in the summer of 2015; it wouldn’t be long before the two-year statute of limitations would expire. Their captain grasped the gravity of the crimes and knew what the wardens needed in order to sleuth through the digital evidence and build an airtight case: giant computer monitors, a lot of time and no interruptions. Fortunately, they had just the right barren, isolated place for that kind of work.

On the outskirts of Kalama, the Cowlitz County town just across the Columbia River from Oregon, sits a metal-clad, five-bay shop, the same facility the wardens had visited during the first night of the case. It was tucked at the bottom of a canyon and shielded from cellphone reception. Rimmed by barbed wire, the property was forgettable in its industrial pallor; the wardens called it “the black hole.” “Nobody can get ahold of you unless they physically drive out to talk to you,” one told me. “You can just go and disappear there.”

It was mid-January. Snow was falling in the Gifford Pinchot by the foot; in the canyon, sheets of rain poured down. Sitting at their desks day after day, the wardens dove into the digital evidence. They took a hundred screenshots or more for some videos — images of the patterns made by branches and stumps and rocks that indicated the exact spot in the forest where the poachers had killed an animal. “We would sit there for 12-plus hours a day sometimes and just do nothing but read text messages, write stuff down,” said Budai, who had just four months on the job. There was “a spider web of people” involved in the crimes, and the investigators had to figure out how they were all connected.

When the wardens slowed down the videos enough, they could see the water spraying off a bear’s fur where a bullet struck it on a rainy day. They came to know the poachers by the sound of their voices, the vehicles they drove, the dogs they owned, the guns they favored. Budai and his colleagues streamlined the complex cases, creating an ever-expanding master spreadsheet detailing each kill. They filled in all the available information and gathered additional clues however they could. Were there Instagram posts and videos corresponding to the crime? What were the GPS coordinates — hidden in the metadata of many of the pictures — telling them where each crime occurred? And were there text messages and Facebook posts with even more details?

Budai was assigned to investigate Haynes, whose Facebook Messenger archive was a rich repository of shared kill videos. Seeking more, the officers scoured social media and found that Joe Dills was particularly prolific. He had no privacy controls, broadcasting his posts for all to see, including shots of poached animals. His distinctive brown-and-red pickup truck was also visible in a host of kill videos. Dills and the others seemed to be propelled by the same narcissistic tendencies that fuel so much human

behavior — the need for recognition from a group of peers. “He was trying to gloat to people,” said Bahrenburg: “ ‘Look at this bull I shot.’ ”

Indeed. And when you have a like-minded group of people for an audience, even illegal and unethical behavior can quickly become normalized, said Nikita Malik, the director of the Centre on Radicalisation and Terrorism in London. “Criminals want to legitimize very bad things in their own minds and with their group of friends and followers,” she said. “You know what you’re doing is to some extent wrong, but you want a community that will tell you that what you’re doing is special or right.”

For the poachers, however, that impulse would be their ruin, as it has been for others in recent years. In 2017, two men in Florida bragged on Snapchat about poaching deer and were soon arrested. In April 2019, a Georgia group similar to the Kill ’Em All Boyz was arrested. “They would dispose of an animal as soon as they had taken pictures and/or taken the antlers,” an investigator told the local ABC affiliate. Later that year, three hunters using free-running dogs were arrested for poaching a mountain lion in Yellowstone National Park after they posted celebratory pictures on social media.

That kind of nonchalance is common, said Malik, and not just among poachers; she saw similar behavior in the early days of the Islamic State. Sympathizers of the terrorist group would post their intentions and actions, giving the FBI what it needed to land arrests and convictions. “There are no considerations to long-term effects of this. It’s a kind of short-term validation,” she said. “It’s like, ‘I’m breaking the rules, and cheer me on for doing it.’ ”

In Washington, every game warden on the case was a hunter. But what these guys were doing? These were massacres. “I don’t think you’ll find any true houndsman out there that would support essentially anything they did,” James Van Geystel, a celebrated hound hunter Fish and Wildlife hired to help with ecology, public safety and depredation cases, told me. “The sport is not necessarily about killing an animal. I haven’t filled a mountain lion tag in a few years, and it’s not because I didn’t have one in my pocket,” he said. “What those guys did was just killing.”

One picture stuck with Budai: a mother and her cub up a tree, Joe Dills and the dogs surrounding it at the bottom. There was a text message that may have been about it, but there was no video of the hunt, and no clear evidence of how it ended. It is a generally accepted rule among hunters that you don’t shoot pregnant animals and mothers with their young. But these weren’t the kind of hunters who cared much for rules. Budai wondered: Did they kill the sow and her cub?

The wardens had mounds of digital evidence, but now they needed to find and visit the kill sites, scattered across the deep, mossy forests of northwest Oregon and into the Gifford Pinchot’s lake-dotted alpine reaches. They thought about the ways they could lose in court. Would a jury trust, or even fully understand, the digital evidence alone? Could an attorney instill acquittal-inducing doubt by asking, “Do you know that a bear died at this location?” Finding carcasses in the vastness of the entire Gifford Pinchot seemed like a long shot. But there was a chance bones still littered the forest floor, and locating them would bulletproof the case.

By March 2017, months into the investigation, there were many questions that the two original phones alone couldn’t answer, chiefly: Who else was involved, and to what extent? It was time to gather every wildlife cop the state could lend and execute a huge round of search warrants. The officers prepped tirelessly, made a list of everything they wanted to seize, and set a date for a coordinated hit on the suspects’ homes.

Mid-afternoon on March 12, dozens of law enforcement officers — a third of the state’s entire wildlife force — huddled in anticipation. The poachers were out of town, and the officers couldn’t search their properties until they returned. Lookouts waited on the highways entering Washington and around Longview. Plainclothes detectives kept tabs on the poachers’ homes while the rest of the force was secreted away in a nearby town, preparing to pounce on three of the houses simultaneously, with 10 officers assigned to each. Budai, fully aware of how new he was to the job, was anxious, but he had a good

feeling. He planned to interview Haynes, and he had a hunch he'd be able to extract the information he needed from him — if only Haynes would ever show up.

Finally, their radios crackled to life. "I've got your vehicle. It's coming across the bridge right now," said an officer posted at the highway connecting Oregon to Washington. It was almost time. They grabbed their gear and paced, waiting for the final word. Then it came: Billy Haynes arrived at his home, and then Joe Dills did, too. Overcaffeinated, under-slept and running on adrenaline, the officers finally jumped into their trucks, blared the sirens and screamed toward their targets.

The reputation Joe Dills and his father, Eddy, had for being "Top Dog" hound hunters, as Bahrenburg put it, meant that the investigators suspected they were the nucleus around which all the other poachers orbited. Because of this, and because of Joe Dills' role in the Kill 'Em All Boyz, most of the officers were eager to hit the Dillses' home, imagining a treasure trove of evidence and information. When the wardens reached the narrow ridge-top property that the Dillses shared, their search was fruitful — an illegal leg trap, elk heads stacked in a shed, a full, decomposing bobcat hanging from a tree. But their interviews were a bust; the Dillses kept their mouths shut.

Budai, however, had predicted that it would be Haynes who would do the most talking. Somehow, Haynes still seemed boyish, eager to find a community and be accepted. He had not excelled in high school, Budai knew. But hound hunting? He was good at it, and this crew of poachers praised him for his skill. Maybe, Budai thought, he had gotten in over his head and wanted to be free of his secrets.

Haynes was on his stoop when Budai arrived. After three months of living under a microscope, he had begun to unravel. Much like the last time they saw him, he was nerve-wracked, his breathing a labored, visible effort. When Budai asked for an interview, Haynes paused, spat, "That son of a bitch Joe is going to rat me out," and then invited him inside.

Presented with crimes that took place over a two-year period, Haynes recalled every kill in piercing detail — who shot the video, who pulled the trigger, how the blood splashed. "I was amazed," Budai told me later. Haynes cried. He said he'd messed up, and he started naming names. The officers seized plenty of evidence, including a gun that was a family heirloom. At that, Haynes' father, who'd been pacing nearby, choked back tears. "I didn't raise him to be this way," he told Budai. "He should have never gotten involved with these people."

All told, it was a bountiful haul — trucks, elk meat, bear skulls and GPS-enabled dog collars that synced with both handheld devices and systems hardwired into the trucks, the kind of setup that makes for easy following when dogs are on the chase.

The officers searched more suspects' properties soon after, collecting even more evidence, including one unexpected item that would prove critical: an old JVC video camera that belonged to Aaron Hanson, who was connected to the Dillses through a mutual friend. After being caught poaching in 2014, Hanson had learned some of the wardens' investigative techniques. A JVC doesn't contain metadata; it's easy to change the display to reflect a different date and time — easy to intentionally place events beyond the two-year statute of limitations. Hanson and a few others had been careful. They turned off their cellphones on poaching trips so that no cell towers could track them. They avoided being photographed. They didn't mount illegal heads on their walls. When the officers seized their phones and the JVC, they laughed. "Good luck," Hanson smirked. "There's nothing on there."

After several raids, the game wardens now had about a dozen phones to explore. Once again, they sat at their computers. Spring was well underway elsewhere in Washington, but in the Gifford Pinchot, snow still gripped the forest. The "black hole" remained cold and quiet and mouse-infested, and as the excitement from the search warrant windfall faded, pressure to charge the poachers mounted. The statute of limitations was racing to a close, and the bones they needed to lock in their case were still buried deep under snow.

The first round of videos had turned up acts of brutality, but this latest batch was worse. At times, young children were the ones pulling the triggers; in other clips, they laughed nervously alongside the men as the carnage unfolded. In one video, the hounds tore apart a wounded young bobcat still clawing for its life. “I remember looking at that and watching it and ... I just couldn’t believe that they would bring their children,” said Bahrenburg. “I just look at the sheer violence, and if you’re teaching your kid violence from a very early stage in life, how is it going to impact them later in life?”

A major break came when, on one hunt, whoever was holding the JVC panned down and zoomed in on the screen of a handheld GPS showing the exact location and the true date and time. When Brad Rhodin, the warden managing the case, saw that, he cracked up. They could now calculate the difference between the date and time displayed on the JVC and reality. “That was our ‘aha!’ moment,” he said. “We got ‘em.” With that, more and more puzzle pieces began falling into place.

They could finally link up all the different data points. Whenever a truck started, it triggered the GPS system, leaving a breadcrumb trail that revealed where the poachers and their dogs had gone. From there, the wardens would search the phones and, sure enough, find pictures or videos that matched the GPS coordinates. In some cases, Instagram and Facebook posts soon followed. “It just perfectly lined up,” said Anderson.

The revelations could not have come at a more critical juncture. They had been sleuthing for months. Countless times, Budai told his wife he’d be home in seven hours, only to actually return 20 hours later. “It takes a toll. I have two little girls,” Budai said. On long days, Anderson wondered: Is it ever going to be over? When Bahrenburg was alone at the black hole, he felt trapped. Early on, the carnage sickened him. But as the months wore on and the violence continued apace, it became unnervingly normal, almost mechanical. And that was alarming in its own way. “I lost a lot of emotions,” he said. “You just become desensitized to it.”

Now, if only the weather would cooperate. The snowdrifts were still head-high. They watched with dread as the days fell on the calendar, clock ticking against their two-year limit, cabin fever a constant state of being. When May arrived, they tried to reach a kill site, only to get stuck, forced to dig themselves out of the wet snow and call for a tow. There was nothing to do but pace and worry, and keep slogging at their computers.

June 5 was a hot, cloudless day. The forest had finally shed its snow cover. Anderson and Bahrenburg hopped into their truck and punched in a set of GPS coordinates from a phone video. It was a recording of the first bear kill they had evidence for, on Aug. 29, 2015, when Eddy Dills had touched his finger to a bear’s open eye to make sure it was dead. After two hours of driving, they were as close to the GPS coordinates as they could get by vehicle. They parked, then picked their way through the woods, down a slight grade toward a towering hatchwork of hemlock and Douglas fir. Before long, they were right on top of the pinging GPS point. They separated, scanning the trees, and then each started walking in concentric circles, covering more territory with every rotation. Looking at the green and brown maze before them, they strained to see the exact tree on a slight hill where the bear was shot, where it hit the ground, where it tumbled before coming to a lifeless rest.

Suddenly, Anderson registered a flash of white. Looking closer, he saw it — the top half of a bear skull and canine tooth, sticking out of the soil. Holy shit, he breathed. He bent down, looked at the contours of the forest floor, and everything came into focus: the tree, the shape of the earth. After spending so many hours staring at photos and video frames, he knew this spot well. “Oh, my God,” he shook his head. “This is it.” The bear had been killed almost two years before, and here it was, as it had been left. Tufts of its brown fur still gripped the earth.

Until then, the team had doubted they would ever find anything, worried that the GPS coordinates weren’t precise enough, or that so much time had passed that the remains would have rotted away or been covered with foliage, perhaps picked apart by scavengers beyond detection. But those worries were now put to rest.

They broke into teams, and for two more months they scoured the Gifford Pinchot. They found more bones, shotgun shells and bare patches of ground where decomposing carcasses had prevented new growth from rising. And even though no one ever admitted to the kill, and there was no photo confirming it, Budai made what was for him the most consequential discovery. “I remember when I walked to one of the kill sites, and we got on the tree,” he said, trailing off. “We found the cub, its bones.” Budai paused, took a breath. “It really pissed me off. It makes your blood boil. ... You get really fatigued emotionally, trying to go through this every single day. Stuff like that gives you fuel to keep going. This was one of those moments.”

Finally, they had everything they needed. Just three days before the statute of limitations was up, they filed scores of charges against eight poachers for crimes spanning multiple counties and two states. Eventually, more than a dozen would be charged.

The poachers never stood a chance. The charging documents — which, collectively, detailed the largest poaching case Washington had ever seen — were hundreds of pages long. They described the kills in excruciating detail, linking up digital and physical evidence to eliminate any doubt about what had occurred. Hundreds of animals had perished in less than two years.

Depending on their level of involvement, the poachers received up to several thousand dollars in fines, and a few were sentenced to more than a year in jail. Haynes and the Dillses got the harshest sentences. (Haynes died unexpectedly before he could report to jail.) From the wardens’ point of view, considering the hours and resources they’d put into the investigation, the penalties seemed light.

That’s not how it felt to Joe Dills, who had recently finished serving his time when I reached him via Facebook in January. In his view, he and the others were simply doing “wildlife management,” a task he felt the game wardens had failed to properly undertake. “Washington state has a predator problem that needs to be addressed and I addressed it. The deer and elk populations continue to drop while the predator populations rise,” he said.

“That these individuals make any reference to killing predators to try and help the deer and elk population is ridiculous,” Rhodin told me later. “If they were trying to save deer and elk, why did they go out and poach so many deer and elk in areas closed to general hunting?” Now Dills, a lifelong hound hunter, has lost his hunting privileges for good.

Last fall, I drove up Highway 12 with Bahrenburg, Anderson and Rhodin, following twisting Forest Service roads to reach one of the kill sites. We parked where deadfall blocked our path, then walked 20 more minutes before entering the woods. The soil was damp. An undulating slope led to a seasonal creek and then a stand of tightly packed timber, the trees like towering sentries in the low-hanging mist. Just 100 yards in, the scene looked the same in every direction: trees and stumps and moss and rocks, each patch nearly indistinguishable from the next.

The wardens had learned a lot from the case — where the poaching hot spots were, that they needed to extend their patrols deeper into the forest, how technology is both ubiquitous and overlooked, a powerful tool in taking down a group so destructive. At the same time, little had changed. They still had miles and miles of remote roads and backcountry to traverse with limited personnel, and they often returned empty-handed. They knew that there could be plenty more poaching going on in the Gifford Pinchot, just out of earshot, and they might not ever find out.

Near the GPS coordinates, we started moving in circles, as the investigators had done the year before, trying to spot a specific stump where a bear had been shot. Within a few minutes, Anderson found it, recognizing the way the trees rose up around it and the bare patch of earth before it, where the bear had collapsed and its bones had settled into the ground. By now, the bones were gone, scattered by scavengers and covered up by a year’s worth of fallen leaves.

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HEADLINE	06/08 States scramble; unemployment fraud spike
SOURCE	https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/2020/06/08/unemployment-fraud-congress/
GIST	<p>Senate Democrats are calling on the Trump administration to release more details about an alleged criminal operation designed to defraud state unemployment programs across the country, fearing these systems remain vulnerable to attack amid the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression.</p> <p>The lawmakers' concerns stem from a memo the U.S. government circulated in May indicating scammers may have harnessed stolen Social Security numbers and other personal information to obtain weekly jobless benefits. The attack appeared to target states including Washington, Massachusetts, Rhode Island and Florida at a time when roughly 40 million Americans were seeking benefits as a result of the coronavirus and in need of financial support.</p> <p>Little else is known about the incident, leading lawmakers including Sen. Patty Murray (Wash.), the top Democrat on the Senate's leading health committee, and Sen. Ron Wyden (Ore.), who leads the party on the Senate Finance Committee, to demand answers. They also called on the government to dedicate new resources toward helping states defend themselves against similar criminal operations, particularly as they race to get critical jobless aid to Americans who need it most.</p> <p>"We all share a common goal of ensuring the integrity of the unemployment insurance (UI) program," lawmakers wrote in a letter to Labor Secretary Eugene Scalia, later adding: "Safeguarding state UI systems against unscrupulous actors who seek to exploit the current public health crisis for economic gain requires a holistic response by the federal government in partnership with states."</p> <p>The Labor Department did not immediately respond to a request for comment.</p> <p>The growing fears about rampant fraud reflect only the latest headaches to plague the country's unemployment insurance program, a benefits system backed by federal regulators but largely run by the states. Many agencies buckled under the initial, unprecedented demand, all the while struggling to implement a federal coronavirus relief package that expanded benefits to new workers and increased weekly payments by \$600. The resulting bureaucratic hurdles and technical glitches left many out-of-work Americans awaiting much-needed aid for weeks.</p> <p>But these outdated computer systems — and states' race to get cash in the hands of workers who need it most — also appear to have opened the door for potential criminal activity. Such scams seem to have targeted at least seven states, according to a memo from the U.S. Secret Service from early May recently posted online by the state of Michigan.</p> <p>"It is extremely likely every state is vulnerable to this scheme and will be targeted if they have not been already," federal officials warned at the time.</p> <p>The hardest hit appears to be Washington, which reported a "dramatic rise" in incidents involving people applying for unemployment aid fraudulently. Washington officials recently indicated there have been as many as \$650 million in fraudulent claims, about half of which the state has recovered. A spokesman did not immediately respond to a request for comment.</p> <p>Federal officials previously said that some recipients of Washington's unemployment checks have been sent to individuals residing out of state. The fraud ring, which may be based in Nigeria, appears to have obtained those benefits by using personal information harnessed from local first responders, government personnel and school employees, according to the unreleased Secret Service document.</p> <p>"Responding to criminal schemes seeking to exploit the COVID-19 pandemic has become the primary investigative focus for the Secret Service," Beth Celestini, a special agent with the Secret Service, said in a statement. "Recent partnerships have resulted in the prevention of hundreds of millions in fraud losses, and the initiation of dozens of ongoing investigations."</p>

	<p>Michigan, meanwhile, halted payments on Friday for about 340,000 claims, or 20 percent of its total, out of concern about potential fraud. Oklahoma officials indicated in emails obtained by local reporters that there were 80,000 suspicious claims in late May. And Pennsylvania said it ceased paying checks on 58,000 claims for Pandemic Unemployment Assistance, a new federal program authorized under the Cares Act that provides jobless aid for those typically ineligible for weekly benefits.</p> <p>Spokespeople for unemployment agencies in Michigan, Oklahoma and Pennsylvania did not respond to requests for comment. It is not clear whether these suspected fraudulent claims, detailed in prior public statements and media reports, are part of the same scheme identified in states like Washington.</p> <p>The lack of details alarmed congressional Democrats, many of whom are seeking to augment federal unemployment benefits further before they are set to expire at the end of July. They asked the Labor Department in their letter to detail by later this month when they learned of the criminal operation, how they're seeking to combat it and the total number of fraudulent claims submitted.</p> <p>Signing the letter with Murray and Wyden were Democratic Sens. Mazie Hirono (Hawaii), Sheldon Whitehouse (R.I.), Edward J. Markey (Mass.), Jack Reed (R.I.), Maria Cantwell (Wash.) and Elizabeth Warren (Mass.).</p>
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HEADLINE	06/09 Charge: Molotov cocktail at protest
SOURCE	https://apnews.com/39ec65fff841f993178f58cf92c4feba
GIST	<p>JACKSONVILLE, Fla. (AP) — A Florida man is facing federal weapons charges after police reported finding a Molotov cocktail in his backpack during a protest against police brutality.</p> <p>Ivan Jacob Zecher, 27, was charged Friday with possessing a firearm as a convicted felon and unlawful possession of an unregistered firearm, according to a criminal complaint. If convicted, he faces up to 10 years in federal prison on each count.</p> <p>During a May 31 protest in downtown Jacksonville that was related to the Minneapolis police custody death of George Floyd, Zecher was part of a group of protesters blocking traffic and throwing objects at police officers and cars, the complaint said. Officers arrested Zecher after he refused orders to disperse, police said.</p> <p>An officer noticed liquid leaking from Zecher's backpack, and a search of the bag revealed a liquor bottle filled with gasoline, along with a lighter and a hatchet, the complaint said. Officers said Zecher told them that he was holding the bottle for an associate and knew it contained gasoline.</p> <p>The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives determined that the bottle constituted a "Molotov cocktail," which is an incendiary bomb and destructive device. It's considered a firearm under federal law. As a previously convicted felon, prosecutors said Zecher is prohibited from possessing a firearm. He was convicted in 2014 of aggravated assault with a deadly weapon.</p> <p>Zecher's attorney, Marcus Barnett, said he's representing several people who were arrested while exercising their First Amendment rights to free speech and assembly during recent Jacksonville protests. Barnett said he was still working to gather all the details in Zecher's case and wants to make sure he was detained and searched legally.</p>
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HEADLINE	06/09 San Francisco City Hall corruption case
SOURCE	https://apnews.com/9a2237d3926ff900d97ca896ba009c8c

GIST	<p>SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — Three more people — two of them former city officials — have been charged in a San Francisco corruption case centering around former public works director Mohammed Nuru, federal prosecutors announced Monday.</p> <p>Nuru’s longtime girlfriend, Sandra Zuniga, is charged with conspiring for years to help Nuru launder money from various illegal schemes while she headed a city fix-it team and was director of the Mayor’s Office of Neighborhood Services, according to a statement from the U.S. attorney’s office.</p> <p>Also charged are Balmore Hernandez, a former public works employee who heads a construction engineering firm, and Florence Kong, who owns a San Francisco construction company and a construction debris recycling firm, authorities said.</p> <p>It wasn’t immediately known whether the three had attorneys who could speak for them.</p> <p>Nuru and a local sports bar owner, Nick Bovis, were arrested in January and charged with wire fraud.</p> <p>Prosecutors alleged that they unsuccessfully schemed to bribe an airport commissioner for prime restaurant space at San Francisco International Airport.</p> <p>Prosecutors also allege that Nuru received labor and construction equipment from city contractors to help him build a vacation home and accepted lavish gifts from people with city business, including a \$2,000 bottle of wine and travel from a wealthy Chinese developer seeking to build a large mixed-use building.</p> <p>Last month, Bovis pleaded guilty and agreed to cooperate in the federal investigation.</p> <p>Nuru resigned his post in February and is free on \$2 million bail while awaiting trial.</p> <p>Zuniga is charged with conspiracy to launder money, which carries a maximum sentence of 20 years in prison.</p> <p>“This is Money Laundering 101,” Kareem Carter, a special agent in charge with the Internal Revenue Service, said in a statement. “Ms. Zuniga deposited cash and checks from Mr. Nuru into her checking account then turned around and wrote checks to him and paid the mortgage and contracting work on his vacation property.”</p> <p>Hernandez is charged with bribery. Prosecutors contend that he supplied more than \$50,000 worth of tile and stone for the vacation home and then asked for Nuru’s help to save his company’s bid for a project after submitting an unqualified proposal.</p> <p>Hernandez’s company won the contract and received some \$2 million from the city, prosecutors said.</p> <p>Kong is accused of trying to obtain contracts for her companies and provided Nuru with cash, a Rolex watch worth more than \$40,000 and other gifts. She is charged with making false statements to FBI investigators by denying that Nuru helped her obtain contracts.</p>
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HEADLINE	06/09 Brooklyn shooting: 7 shot; 10min. span
SOURCE	https://www.foxnews.com/us/seven-people-shot-in-10-minute-span-in-separate-brooklyn-incidents-report
GIST	<p>Seven people were wounded in three shootings just 10 minutes apart Monday night in different Brooklyn neighborhoods, police said.</p> <p>The gunplay started at about 10:40 p.m. on Bainbridge Street near Malcolm X Boulevard in Bedford-Stuyvesant, cops said.</p>

Two men, ages 27 and 34, were each struck in the leg, authorities said. They were taken to Kings County Hospital and were expected to survive.

Less than five minutes later, a 35-year-old man was shot on Flatbush Avenue near Ditmas Avenue in Flatbush, police said. He, too, was taken to Kings County Hospital and is expected to survive.

Finally, at about 10:50 p.m., four people — a woman and three men — were caught in a hail of gunfire on Bristol Street near Newport Street in Brownsville, authorities and witnesses said.

The woman, 23, is in critical condition and the men — ages 17, 35, and 50 — all suffered non-life threatening injuries, cops said.

A witness to the Brownsville shooting, 55-year-old Robert Green, said so many shots were fired that he lost count.

Green said he saw three people — one woman and two men — loaded into an ambulance by first responders. He noticed that the woman appeared to be the most seriously injured.

“I could see she was breathing, but she wasn’t moving,” he said.

Hours after the Brownsville shooting, police were still swarming the area and shell casings were strewn in the street.

Monday’s spree of shootings came after the city last week [experienced an uptick](#) in murders and shootings over the same time period last year, police sources have told The Post.

From last Monday to Sunday night, there were 13 murders in the city, compared to five killings during the same week last year, sources said.

The city reported 40 shootings last week — the most in a week since 2015. In the same time period in 2019, there were 24 shootings, sources said.

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HEADLINE	06/08 Chicago deadliest day 60yrs: 18 murders
SOURCE	https://www.foxnews.com/us/chicago-saw-its-deadliest-day-in-60-years-with-18-murders-in-24-hours-report
GIST	<p>Bloody Chicago recorded 18 murders on May 31, making it the city’s deadliest day in 60 years.</p> <p>The dubious milestone was reached on a day Chicago was roiled by another round of protests and looting following the Memorial Day death of George Floyd in police custody in Minneapolis.</p> <p>The 18 deaths tallied by the University of Chicago Crime Lab made May 31, 2020 the single-most violent day in six decades, the Chicago Sun-Times reported Monday. The Crime Lab numbers go back only to 1961.</p> <p>On May 29 and May 30, there were seven murders. In a city with an international reputation for crime, the 25 murders on those three days made for the most violent weekend in Chicago’s modern history, according to the paper.</p> <p>“We’ve never seen anything like it, at all,” the crime lab’s senior research director, Max Kapustin, told the newspaper. “I don’t even know how to put it into context. It’s beyond anything that we’ve ever seen before.”</p>

	<p>Chicago's next most violent day was Aug. 4, 1991, when 13 murders were recorded.</p> <p>"The level of activity experienced over the last week has been unprecedented and the Department is actively investigating multiple incidents across the city and working to determine the motives in these cases," Chicago Police spokesman Thomas Ahern told the Sun-Times.</p> <p>He said the department was "actively working to seek justice for all the residents impacted, especially those who have been killed or injured by these senseless acts of violence."</p>
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HEADLINE	06/08 Capture USAF sergeant in deputy killing
SOURCE	https://www.cbsnews.com/news/dramatic-details-emerge-in-capture-of-air-force-sergeant-accused-of-killing-santa-cruz-sheriffs-deputy/
GIST	<p>U.S. Air Force Staff Sergeant Steven Carrillo, who allegedly killed a Santa Cruz deputy and wounded two others with gunfire and improvised explosives in a weekend ambush in the Santa Cruz Mountains, was captured by a local resident who wrestled him to the ground and disarmed him of an AR-15, pipe bomb and pistol in a life-or-death confrontation, CBS San Francisco Bay Area reports.</p> <p>Angry and emotional Santa Cruz Sheriff Jim Hart called Carrillo "a dangerous man intent on bringing harm to police officers."</p> <p>"I want to talk a little about Steven Carrillo, I don't even want to say his name again," Hart told reporters at a Monday afternoon news conference. "It's the last time you are going to hear me say it. This guy was active Air Force. He was dangerous and he was an angry man intent on bringing harm to police officers. He murdered Sergeant (Damon) Gutzwiller. He injured another deputy."</p> <p>But Hart said it was the actions of a local resident who stopped Carrillo from claiming more victims Saturday night.</p> <p>"This guy (Carrillo) went into the backyard of a local resident and the local resident confronted him and wanted to know what he was doing on his property," Hart said. "The suspect told him that — actually he had an AR-15 slung, he was carrying an AR. He told the resident he wanted his car keys. The resident very calmly went into his house, obtained a key and came back out and handed it to him."</p> <p>"As the suspect turned around, the resident tackled him and the AR-15 fell away and the resident took this guy to the ground. At that time the suspect reached into his pocket and pulled out a pipe bomb and tried to ignite a pipe bomb while being held down."</p> <p>"This resident was able to knock the pipe bomb out of his hand and then the suspect reached into his waistband and pulled out a pistol. There was a wrestling match over the pistol. The resident was able to knock the pistol out of his hand, detain this guy. Multiple other community members from Ben Lomond jumped on this guy and held him until our deputies sheriffs were able to get there and take him into custody."</p> <p>"It was a remarkable, remarkable, heroic thing that that resident did. He does not want to be named. He doesn't want any recognition ... This guy could have done a lot more damage in our community had that resident not taken the action that he did."</p> <p>Hart said forensic teams, including the FBI, have found bomb-making equipment, pipe bombs, multiple firearms and a large amount of ammunition at the rural crime scene nestled in the heavily-wooded and rural Santa Cruz mountain community of Ben Lomond.</p> <p>Hart said in his efforts to elude capture after ambushing the deputies, Carrillo carjacked one vehicle and attempted to steal several others.</p>

"We think there are more victims out there that have not come forward," Hart said.

The sheriff described the ferocity of the battle between Carrillo and law enforcement officers on Saturday night.

"There was a lot of gunshots," Hart said. "There were pipe bombs going off. Radio and cell reception is poor in that region of the county. Our deputies were scouring the hillside both on foot and in vehicles looking for this guy on Saturday."

FBI San Francisco special agent in charge John Bennett talked about the possible connection between Carrillo's white van and one sought in connection with the fatal shooting of federal protective services officer David Underwood and the wounding of a second officer on May 29 during a night of unrest on nearby Oakland streets.

"Many of you have asked about this (the white van) in connection with the shooting of two federal protection officers in Oakland," Bennett said. "We are actively investigating the possibility of links between these cases. However, as this investigation is ongoing. I cannot provide or I will not provide details ... on it."

"We are looking into every lead available (in the Oakland shooting) and where it will go. We ask for the public's patience."

Air Force officials have confirmed that Carrillo was a Phoenix Raven Team Leader. In a 2018 press release, the Air Force [published a photo of him](#) undergoing the intense training program at Joint Base McGuire-Dix in Lakehurst, New Jersey in September 2018.

The Air Force website said the two-week, 12-hour-a-day course at McGuire "covers cross-cultural awareness, legal considerations, embassy operations, explosive ordnance awareness and more."

"While Raven apprentices are learning these techniques, they also are exposed to more than 70 use-of-force scenarios," [the Air Force release said](#).

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HEADLINE	06/08 Inside L.A. date-rape drugging epidemic
SOURCE	https://www.thedailybeast.com/inside-los-angeless-date-rape-drugging-epidemic?ref=home
GIST	<p>In early 2019, not long after a 22-year-old model named Rowan Rice moved to Los Angeles from Chino Hills, California, she took up the bi-weekly routine of going out alone. And every Wednesday and Friday, she always went to the same spot: a Hollywood nightclub called Warwick. She'd heard it was the safest venue in the city and the hardest to get into. Rice went out alone in part because she liked to go out and her friends did not, but also because in Los Angeles, where success in entertainment can spring from a single conversation with the right person, nightclubs serve as informal networking events. As a model, it was all but mandatory. "It was really fun, honestly, at first," Rice said, "until March."</p> <p>On March 22, Rice showed up at Warwick. After a few weeks, she had made some acquaintances there, though none were out that night. But one of the owners recognized her. He asked if she had a table—the VIP real estate usually reserved for promoters and big-ticket clients. She did not. So he assigned her one: on the stage with a high-profile promoter. Rice had a few drinks. But she did not know anyone at the table, so she switched to water at 1 a.m. From there, things got hazy. In L.A., nightclubs and bars notoriously close at 2 a.m., pushing night owls into unregulated afterparties at private homes or pop-ups. That night, Rice went to two. She doesn't know who hosted them or where they were. She remembers small details, like someone popping champagne, or two middle-aged men in suits standing on the balcony. The rest she reconstructed from texts, reviewed by The Daily Beast, which she sent to her roommate after waking up at 5:36 a.m. in an unfamiliar bed.</p>

“I’ve been drugged,” she wrote. “And they’re trying to not me tell that I’ve been drugged [sic]. I stopped drinking at 1am. But I cannot see straight. I don’t know what to do. The girl I’m with says they gave me something. I don’t know what to do. It’s been almost 5 hours since I’ve drank and I cannot see straight. This hasn’t happened to me before. I want to go home.”

The Hollywood nightclub scene, most of which sits within the same two-mile radius around the Walk of Fame, is an ecosystem all to its own. There are the promoters, contractors hired by clubs to attract high-profile guests, who are all well-known within the circuit. There are the table-buyers, usually affluent guys who pay for bottle service and rack up five-digit tabs. There are the models and actresses, who tend to get in for free. And there’s everyone else, the average Joes who wait in line to get in, if they get in at all, and are [regularly subjected to discrimination](#), that quickly [gets racist](#) or classist. “Got denied after a blonde woman with 90s Jennifer Aniston highlights let two girls in with Forever 21 sweatshirts, no ID’s and not on the guest list,” one woman [wrote](#) on the Warwick Yelp page. “She told me that ‘I let in whoever I want to let in and you do not have the look.’”

For those on the inside, a false move or statement can get someone sent off the list and into the line. The social contract is fragile—so much so that seven of the 14 people interviewed for this article requested anonymity over fear of retaliation, and nearly all asked to discuss certain subjects on background. But in mid-March, California Governor Gavin Newsom ordered the immediate closure of bars and nightclubs, shutting down the state’s \$3 billion industry indefinitely. In its absence, a movement has emerged on social media confronting the rampant use of date-rape drugs and calling for reform.

“I’ve always worked in nightlife my whole career—in Virginia Beach, Washington, D.C., Tampa Beach, and San Diego,” said Katherine Lawson, a club worker and stand-up comedian, who is in a group chat of roughly 40 local women discussing drugging incidents. “I’ve never been drugged in my entire life, until I moved to L.A. Now, I don’t know that many girls who haven’t been drugged in L.A.”

The catalyst was a wrongful death case filed [by the parents of Kimberly Fattorini](#), a former *Playboy* model and hostess, who died in July 2017 after going out with a Warwick promoter named Elias Wehbe and former NFL linebacker Shawne Merriman. The coroner found traces of the date rape drug Gamma Hydroxybutyrate, or GHB, in her system. In April, an Instagram account called Celeb™, founded by controversial blogger, Nik Richie, circulated screenshots of the complaint, filed nine months prior, featuring texts Fattorini sent the night she died.

Both men denied drugging Fattorini. But Wehbe issued an apology on his [website](#) for some texts he sent that night, in which he called Fattorini and her friends “whores” and “scum” and described putting a “weak” one to sleep, adding the “coke dealer can bang her.” Warwick, which did not return requests for comment, dismissed Wehbe. “We remain committed to the operation of a safe and responsible venue,” they wrote in a statement on Instagram, “as we have been since our founding.”

After the case went viral, a group of Los Angeles models and influencers, [spearheaded](#) by the [actress Elsie Hewitt](#), formed a campaign on social media to raise awareness about Fattorini’s death. But the campaign also touched on the prevalence of drugging in local venues, prompting users to comment with their own stories, often under photos, or with the hashtag #justiceforkim.

Celeb™ alone has published 10 anonymous testimonies from victims of drugging incidents and harassment from prominent Los Angeles promoters.

When The Daily Beast [covered](#) the case, two of the women in the group cited personal experiences with drugging, and three women, including Rice, later reached out with similar stories. “I was just struck by how similar [my texts were] to the texts Kim sent before she died,” Rice said. “How they don’t really make sense. You can tell it took all of the power in me to try and write all of that.” In total, The Daily Beast spoke to 14 people in L.A. nightlife, eight of whom said they had been drugged, some more than once, and all of whom knew of another person who had.

Lawson, who said she had been drugged twice, first encountered GHB in June of 2018 while out at a Hollywood club where she worked (Lawson declined to name the place, as she had once worked there, but said it was “near Highlight Room” in Hollywood). She had been sitting at a table with a promoter, who asked whether she preferred vodka or tequila. She answered tequila. Soon, his client handed her a shot.

“But it tasted like water—it tasted weird,” she said. “So, immediately after taking it, I asked him, ‘What did you give me? That didn’t taste like tequila.’ The guy told me it was ‘G,’ which, as I found out, is a date-rape drug. But I’d never been drugged before. I didn’t know what ‘G’ was.”

The next morning, Lawson went to the Hollywood police station and filed a report. She later got a rape kit performed, though too many hours had passed to test for GHB. “But they never caught him or anything like that,” she said. “No charges have been pressed.”

The second time took place this year at the same venue. Lawson said she recognized the feeling, but did not know who had given it to her. “My friend was there, because it was where I used to work, and they carried me upstairs. But I got really ill. I was projectile vomiting everywhere. It was disgusting. They took care of me because it was a place where I used to work. And because my girlfriend, who also works at that venue, has also been drugged there.”

Vanessa Matic, a poet and author of the upcoming collection [Romance & Revolution](#), told The Daily Beast she attended an issue party for a Los Angeles fashion magazine last September at the Highlight Room in Hollywood. Matic said she never does drugs and rarely drinks. But someone handed her a cocktail, so she took it and sipped. “I didn’t even finish the drink. It was less than half, I think, that I drank,” Matic said. “But I started feeling really weird.”

She was so visibly out of it, Matic said, that when she began chatting with a stranger, who has since become her fiancé, some friends intervened. “They were like, you can’t be hanging out with them. They saw that I was wobbly for the first time ever. I could not walk straight,” Matic said. “It wasn’t food poisoning or anything like that. It was a different type of sickness. I don’t know how to explain it. Definitely something was off. They could all tell.”

Her friends offered to get her some food and water, and then take her home. So they stopped at The Standard, a hotel in Hollywood. “They thought maybe I was just hungry and dehydrated or something,” she said. “So we went there, and I ate everything. But I ended up puking everything—everything, like everything I ate. I was sick all the way until the next day, until the late, late afternoon. I was vomiting the whole night and day, until everything got out of me and I was back to my normal self.”

Another man, who requested anonymity, started living in L.A. part-time in 2013. He had been a semi-professional surfer and skateboarder in San Diego, but retired after breaking 18 bones. While in L.A. for a dentist appointment, he got scouted by several modeling agencies, and eventually signed to Next Models. On one of his stays in Los Angeles that first year, he began going out with other models, where he said he was drugged twice.

The first time, he said, he had gotten a drink at a West Hollywood spot called Rainbow Bar & Grill, when a bartender told his waitress she was taking over their tab. “It was a little odd,” he said. “She kept talking to me, saying I looked like [Mötley Crüe bassist] Nikki Sixx. I didn’t know who that was.” She asked what he was doing after. “I was naive,” he said, “so I told her where I was going.” He was going to a Hollywood venue called Loaded, to hear a band called Glam Skanks. But when he got there, the bartender was already there, sitting with his friends.

“They all thought she was my friend. And I thought she must have been friends with them. We all thought this lady knew someone else at the table,” he said. “And she kept pushing me to drink these blue tequila drinks, and these cheese potato things. She kept pushing me to try this and that. I just thought it was really weird. I got up and left.”

Eventually, his friends agreed to meet at another bar, but he started to feel peculiar. “I was acting all weird. I end up getting thrown out by a bouncer,” he said. “One of the friends took me home and took care of me. Next thing you know, I had to have the paramedics called. I went to the emergency room, and they found Ambien and Rohypnol in my system.”

The second time, which he said took place at the Ace Hotel in downtown that same year, he wound up in the emergency room again. “That was just a bummer of a situation,” he said. “I spent seven hours just tripping, having to have an IV in me.”

It’s hard to determine how many drugging incidents occur in Los Angeles venues each year, in part because many common date-rape drugs, like GHB or Rohypnol, leave the system within a few hours, making them hard to detect in tests. Likewise, many women or men who suspect they have been drugged don’t get tested or report the incident to police. For those that do, LAPD does not release their police reports unless personally requested by the victim, and could not provide data on the frequency of drugging complaints.

An even smaller number of police complaints lead to criminal charges. But a spokesperson for the Los Angeles District Attorney’s office said the department does not keep data on date-rape drug use. Some are grouped into the larger category of “rape by intoxicant,” which includes alcohol, or “rape of an unconscious victim,” which does not specify the reasons for incapacitation.

A public records request for that data, filed with the District Attorney’s Office, found that, since 2015, they have reviewed between 152 and 209 cases of rape by intoxicant each year, and between 135 and 200 cases involving rape of an unconscious victim during the same period. Of the former, between just 14 and 25 incidents resulted in charges filed. In the latter, the number was slightly higher: between 23 and 31. This year alone, the department has already reviewed 50 cases of rape by intoxicant and 79 cases involving rape of an unconscious victim. Only nine cases of each have yielded charges.

But Los Angeles nightlife has a reputation for being dangerous. In 2016, three women described in a viral Facebook [post](#) how they caught a drugging incident in action, while dining at Fig in Santa Monica. After alerting the restaurant, which confirmed the incident on security footage, the man was arrested and later [charged](#) with administering a drug and assault with intent to commit a sex crime.

One month later, the comedian Kate Berlant [tweeted](#) that she knew at least seven women who had been roofied at the Silver Lake venue Tenants of the Trees. (Tenants’ owners later told [LAist](#) they took the allegations “very seriously” and such incidents “cannot be tolerated.”) When local media looked into the allegation, the *Los Feliz Ledger* found a former employee who had quit over drugging incidents. “It’s a trend,” she told the [Ledger](#). “It doesn’t just happen once in a while.”

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HEADLINE	06/08 Weekend of violence lashes Mexico
SOURCE	https://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/weekend-violence-lashes-mexico-sparks-dispute-71141843
GIST	<p>CIUDAD VICTORIA, Mexico -- After a weekend of drug-gang killings left almost three dozen people dead in the industrial state of Guanajuato, as well as confrontations along the border, Mexico’s president cited it Monday as an example of “neoliberal policies that have been a resounding failure.”</p> <p>A group of men attacked a drug rehabilitation center in Irapuato, Guanajuato on Saturday and killed 10 people there, but those were just part of 34 murders committed in the state over the weekend.</p> <p>The state is home to a growing industrial sector, including a half-dozen foreign auto manufacturers. But the state is the scene of a bloody turf battle between the Jalisco Cartel and the home-grown Santa Rosa de Lima gang.</p>

“During the whole neoliberal period Guanajuato has grown by 5 percent per year and has seen investment and new auto plants opening, but it is in first place for homicides,” President Andrés Manuel López Obrador said Monday.

López Obrador has rejected direct confrontation with drug cartels and bet on long-term social programs, like job-training and scholarships, to reduce the number of young people recruited by drug gangs. But he thinks government-run programs — not the kind of private-sector job creation that is happening in Guanajuato — is needed.

It's all part of López Obrador's proposals for a “new economy,” where progress and well-being is not just measured by economic growth.

“So are we are just going to measure Gross Domestic Product? Shouldn't peace be measured? People's welfare, their tranquility?” said López Obrador, who has proposed a new “Well-being Index” to measure progress, instead of relying on GDP.

The Mexican Employer's Federation quickly retorted that “People's well being is achieved with a sound economy and jobs, not with a new “Well-being Index.” The federation, which has been critical of López Obrador for not implementing economic stimulus programs during the coronavirus pandemic, said “if the economy collapses, the well-being of Mexicans also collapses.”

Projecting ideological differences onto the continued violence in Guanajuato — which is governed by the conservative National Action Party — is nothing new. Guanajuato leads Mexico in homicides, though state officials blame out-of-state killers from the Jalisco Cartel, based in a neighboring state. Guanajuato, with just 5% of Mexico's population, accounts for about 13% of the country's murders. López Obrador said the state accounted for 20% of the country's homicides last week.

The approach to handling the violence has also differed; while López Obrador's federal National Guard has been posted to Guanajuato, those officers largely perform guide duty and routine patrols. But Guanajuato's state police has more directly gone after the gangs, with the result that, on June 1, four police officers were gunned down by gangs in the city of Celaya.

López Obrador has said “you cannot fight violence with more violence,” and has practiced a more hands-off approach toward fighting the cartels.

But the limits of that policy were on display over the weekend in the northern border state of Tamaulipas, where the burned-out wreckage of five home-made tanks used by warring drug cartels littered a road just a few miles from the U.S. border. The cartels weld metal plates onto trucks to create the tank-like vehicles, known as “monsters.”

A bystander was killed during the cartel shootouts in which the armored vehicles were destroyed, and her two daughters were wounded. The woman made a living producing charcoal near the city of Camargo, Tamaulipas, and was hit by gunfire Sunday at a gas station where she had gone to buy food.

The gun battles had started Friday, when gunmen told local residents not to go out on the streets. The Northeast Cartel, once a part of the Zetas, is trying to win control over the area around Miguel Aleman from the Gulf cartel.

The remnants of the old Gulf and Zetas cartels have been fighting bloody turf battles over that stretch of the border for about a decade. Mexican marines once patrolled the area and tried to keep the cartels in check, but they have since pulled off land duty and the National Guard and army have struggled with the problem.

A local official speaking on condition of anonymity said that the army had failed to show up during the gunbattles despite repeated calls.

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