Pacific allies wary of US housing missiles in their countries

By David S. Cloud
Los Angeles Times

The governor of a Japanese territory where the Pentagon is thinking about basing missiles capable of threatening China has a message for the United States: Not on my island.

“I firmly oppose the idea,” said Gov. Denny Tamaki, the governor of Okinawa, in an email to The Times.

Officials in other Asian countries are also signaling they don’t want them.

But Pentagon planners aren’t backing down after the Trump administration withdrew last year from a 33-year-old arms-control treaty that barred U.S. land-based intermediate range missiles in Asia.

Senior officials now say that putting hundreds of American missiles with non-nuclear warheads in Asia would quickly and cheaply shift the balance of power in the western Pacific back in the United States’ favor amid growing Pentagon concern that China’s own expanding arsenal of missiles and other military capabilities threaten U.S. bases in the region and have emboldened Beijing to menace U.S. allies in Asia.

The missile plan is the centerpiece of a planned buildup of U.S. military power in Asia projected to consume tens of billions of dollars in the defense budget over the next decade, a major shift in Pentagon spending priorities away from the Middle East.

But it also highlights the complex relationship between the U.S. and its Asian allies, many of whom feel increasingly threatened by China but are reluctant to back new U.S. military measures that might provoke Beijing, which has built the
US employers laid off 7.7M workers in April

BY JOSH BOAK
Associated Press

BALTIMORE — U.S. employers laid off 7.7 million workers in April — a sign of just how deep the economic hole is after the closure of thousands of offices, restaurants, stores and schools during the pandemic.

The Labor Department also said in a Tuesday report that job openings plummeted and hiring declined 31% to 3.5 million.

The grim April — which followed an even bleaker March with 11.5 million layoffs — suggests that the economy could take time to recover nearly a decade’s worth of gains that vanished in about 60 days. Hiring did rebound in May as 2.5 million jobs were added on net, the government said in a separate report Friday. But those gains appeared to reflect temporarily laid-off employees returning to work and increases in people with part-time jobs, rather than an economy at full throttle.

The report shows how employers responded quickly to the pandemic by furloughing or laying off workers in March, though that slowed the following month as consumer spending appeared to bottom out and recover slightly. The Job Openings and Labor Turnover survey, or JOLTS, details overall hiring and job separation figures, while the monthly jobs data reflects net changes.

WEATHER OUTLOOK

The weather is provided by the American Forces Network Weather Center, 2nd Weather Squadron at Offutt Air Force Base, Neb.

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STARS AND STRIPES

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INTEREST RATES

Prime rate …….. 3.25
Discount rate …….. 0.25
Federal funds market rate …….. 0.06
3-month bill …….. 0.17
20-year bond …….. 1.58

EXCHANGE RATES

Military rates

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EXCHANGE RATES (continued)

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Military exchange rates are those available to customers at military banking facilities in the country of issuance for Japan, South Korea, Germany, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. For nonlocal currency exchange rates (i.e., purchasing British pounds in Germany), check with your local military banking facility. Commercial rates are interbank rates provided for reference when buying currency. All figures are foreign currencies to one dollar, except for the British pound, which is represented in dollars-to-pound, and the euro, which is dollars-to-euros.)

INTEREST RATES

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Members of the District of Columbia Army National Guard walk to their positions near the Lincoln Memorial in Washington on June 3, securing the area amid protests after the death of George Floyd. Some guard members have tested positive for coronavirus after responding to the protests.

**Making history**

USAF Gen. Charles Q. Brown Jr. is first African American service chief

BY CAITLIN M. KENNEY  
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Charles Q. Brown Jr. was confirmed Tuesday as the 22nd Air Force chief and the first African American to be the top officer of the Air Force.

In announcing the unanimous Senate vote of 98-0, Vice President Mike Pence called Brown’s nomination, and now confirmation, historic.

Brown, known as C.Q., is now the 22nd commander of U.S. Air Forces Pacific. He is replacing Gen. David Goldfein, who is expected to retire in the summer.

The confirmation comes as demonstrators across the United States have held protests against racial injustice and police brutality. Protests in all 50 states and in Washington, D.C., were sparked by the May 25 death of a handcuffed black man, George Floyd, by a Minneapolis police officer, who has since been fired and charged with second-degree murder.

In a video posted to Facebook on Friday, Brown poignantly decried his thoughts about the recent events following the death of Floyd. He described how he was often the only African American in his squadron, and as a senior officer the only African American in the room.

“I’m thinking about how my nomination provides some hope but also comes with a heavy burden — the centurions of racism in our country, nor can I fix decades of discrimination that may have impacted members of our Air Force,” he said in the video.

Sen. Jim Inhofe, R-Okl., the chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, praised Brown’s confirmation soon after the Senate vote.

“Gen. Brown’s experience as commander of Pacific Air Forces and the air component commander of the Indo-Pacific Command will be an asset as we turn our focus even more to this priority theater,” he said in a prepared statement. “Not only is Gen. Brown accomplished in his military career, but he is an inspiring leader — brave, authentic, and inspiring. I congratulate him on his historic promotion, and look forward to seeing his continued leadership in action.”

Brown is a battle-tested fighter pilot who commanded air forces operating in the Middle East — against the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria — and Afghanistan. He has served for 34 years in the military and piloted other aircraft including bombers and helicopters, according to his official biography. President Donald Trump praised Brown’s confirmation ahead of the vote in a tweet, saying it “is a historic day for America! Excited to work even more closely with Gen. Brown, who is a Patriot and Great Leader.”

BY TARA COPP  
 McClatchy Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON — Members of the D.C. National Guard who were responding to protests in the nation’s capital over the death of George Floyd have tested positive for COVID-19, a spokeswoman said Tuesday.

The service members were part of the 1,300 D.C. National Guard members called up to help law enforcement respond initially to rioting May 31, that was followed by days of peaceful protests. A Guard enforcement response to protests in Lincoln, Neb., have also tested positive for coronavirus after responding to the protests.

The D.C. National Guard was supported by approximately 3,900 additional Guardsmen from Florida, Idaho, Indiana, Maryland, Missouri, Mississippi, New Jersey, Ohio, South Carolina, Tennessee and Utah to protect national monuments and ensure peaceful demonstrations as tens of thousands of protesters took to D.C. streets last week.

In the largest protest Saturday, participants squeezed past each other, some with masks, some not, as they chanted and sang near the White House.

Members of two National Guard units from Missouri and Mississippi on Saturday were not wearing masks, and while they tried to maintain social distance, at times it was not possible as the crowds swelled or engaged with them.

Almost all of the National Guard units were expected to leave the city by Wednesday, Army Secretary Ryan McCarthy told reporters Sunday.

Any Guardsman who has tested positive for the coronavirus, however, will be held back until they no longer sick or contagious, Davis said.

“All Guardsmen who are suspected to be at high risk of infection or have tested positive for COVID-19 during demobilization will not be released from Title 32 orders until risk of infection or illness has passed,” Davis said.

“Members of the Air and Army National Guard with no, or low risk of exposure, who present symptoms of infection one to 14 days after release from orders will contact their unit,” she said.

**Navy chief wants to ban Confederate battle flags in open spaces**

BY CAITLIN M. KENNEY  
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — The Navy is working to prohibit the Confederate battle flag in public spaces a day after other Defense Department leaders said they were open to discussions about renaming 10 Army posts named for Confederate generals from the Civil War.

Adm. Mike Gilday, the chief of naval operations, directed his staff Tuesday to begin to write an order that would prohibit the Confederate battle flag from all public spaces and work areas on Navy installations, ships, aircraft and submarines, Cmndr. Nate Christensen, Gilday’s spokesman, said in a statement.

The Navy announcement follows growing sentiment by some active and past military leaders that displaying the Confederate battle flag or honoring Confederate figures by naming installations after them is not in agreement with military values.

“The order is meant to ensure unit cohesion, preserve good order and discipline, and uphold the Navy’s core values of honor, courage and commitment,” the Navy statement said.

In February, Marine Commandant Gen. David Berger banned the Confederate battle flag and items with the flag on them from Marine bases. In an April letter that he posted to Twitter, Berger defended his decision, saying he did it because the flag is a symbol that “has shown it has the power to inflame feelings of division. I cannot have that division inside our Corps.”

The Marine Corps on Friday also issued further guidance on the removal of public display signs of the Confederate battle flag at installations and work places, including on clothing, mugs, and bumper stickers.

The topic of renaming Army posts named for Confederate generals once again emerged on social media in the days following the death of George Floyd, an African American man in Minneapolis. A white police officer has been charged with second-degree murder after he placed his knee on the back of Floyd for several minutes while Floyd was handcuffed on the ground.

As recently as February, Army officials said they were focusing on addressing the Confederate names of Army posts. That changed Monday when Army officials said Army Secretary Ryan McCarthy wants to have a “bipartisan discussion” about renaming 10 Army posts named after Confederates. Defense Secretary Mark Esper also supported a discussion on the renaming the Army bases.

The posts are Camp Beauregard and Fort Polk in Louisiana, Fort Benning and Fort Gordon in Georgia, Fort Bragg in North Carolina, Fort A.P. Hill, Fort Lee and Fort Pickett in Virginia, Fort Rucker in Alabama, and Fort Hood in Texas. The installations were named primarily during the south’s Jim Crow era in the 1910s and 1940s.

Kenney.Caitlin@stripes.com  
Twitter: @caitlinmkenney

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**DC National Guard members test positive for virus after protests**

**By Tara Copp**  
 McClatchy Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON — Members of the D.C. National Guard who were responding to protests in the nation’s capital over the death of George Floyd have tested positive for COVID-19, a spokeswoman said Tuesday.

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STUTTGART, Germany — More than 20 Republican lawmakers urged President Donald Trump to reject a plan that calls for pulling nearly 10,000 troops from Germany, saying the move would weaken the NATO alliance and encourage Russian aggression.

Rep. Mac Thornberry, the minority leader of the House Armed Services Committee, along with 21 other House Republicans, said maintaining force levels in Europe is directly connected to American security.

"In Europe, the threats posed by Russia have not lessened, and we believe that signs of a weakened U.S. commitment to NATO will encourage further Russian aggression and opportunism," Thornberry's letter stated Tuesday.

Last week, media reports emerged that the White House signed on to a plan to sharply cut the number of forces in Germany. On Monday, the White House declined to confirm the reports, but also did not reject their validity.

"We have no announcements at this time," White House Press Secretary Kayleigh McEnany said.

The Pentagon also has not commented publicly on the plan, which if carried out would be the largest force reduction in Europe in nearly a decade and come at a time when the military has sought to build up on the Continent to focus on countering Russia.

The cutback, first reported by The Wall Street Journal on Friday, set a September deadline for the drawdown and took allies by surprise.

Trump has long made threats about pulling back in Europe and expressed dissatisfaction with allies in Europe, especially Germany, over lackluster military spending and the long-sought-after $1 trillion infrastructure deal that would have connected the two countries.

"Some believe that the U.S. should not have a robust military presence in Europe because the Europeans are burden-sharing, and that the U.S. should not be providing a security umbrella at the expense of the American taxpayer," the Heritage Foundation said in a statement.

The primary objective of U.S. forces in Europe is to provide a forward-based military capability that gives U.S. decision-makers timely and flexible military options for defending America and promoting American interests in the broader European region.

The Washington think tank called on Congress to block funding for the removal of U.S. troops from Europe.

The military has about 34,000 troops in Germany and numerous headquarters that carry a broad range of missions stretching from NATO’s eastern flank to the Middle East and Africa. It’s also home to a large military hospital near Ramstein Air Base, where troops injured in places like Afghanistan and Africa are brought for trauma care.

"We strongly believe that NATO allies, such as Germany, should do more to contribute to our joint defense efforts," Thornberry wrote. "At the same time, we also know that the forward stationing of American troops since the end of World War II has helped to prevent another world war and, most importantly, has helped make America safer."
US troops at Polish base bond with a new canine

BY IMMANUEL JOHNSON
Stars and Stripes

BEMOWO PISKIE TRAINING AREA, Poland — When American troops at this base in northeastern Poland do physical training in the morning, they’re helped by Nacho — not the Mexican dish, but a dog they’ve adopted.

“He’s always with us … in the mornings and always runs with us,” said Pvt. Andrew Harris with the 3rd Squadron, 2nd Cavalry Regiment, Kronos Troop, which is here as part of a U.S.-led battle group aimed at strengthening NATO’s eastern flank and countering Russian aggression in Europe.

Mere months ago, Nacho was just another stray dog who made his way to the base, where troops had already adopted another dog, whom they named Chico.

After the troops made sure Nacho had all his vaccines, he started tagging along with them, especially when they were near the dining facility or a food truck.

Having a dog to pal around with reminds the troops of their pets back home, Gosia Sobolewska, a linguist with the NATO Enhanced Forward Presence mission that the troops are supporting, said last year, when Chico was the only dog at the base.

Troops from Croatia, Romania, the United Kingdom and host nation Poland are also part of the battle group and like the dogs.

Although strays wander onto bases around the world, soldiers deployed to many countries are forbidden from caring for them, said Staff Sgt. Kulan Lakanaria with the 49th Public Affairs Detachment.

“General Order No. 1 in Iraq was specific about not having pets there,” he said. “Caring for or adopting dogs there is forbidden … because a stray animal may have diseases that could affect the troops.”

But not in Bemowo Piskie, where the roughly 900 U.S. troops who began a six-month rotation January have become so attached to Nacho, Chico and a third dog they’ve called Taco, who only shows up occasionally on base, that they named training scenarios after them, said Maj. Michael Dyer, the battle group’s operations officer.

Points on the ground during a live-fire exercise last week were named after Nacho and Chico, while Taco was the objective the troops were trying to take over.

“We wanted to add a little levity for a serious training scenario, and it was an easy choice to pick the dog names,” Dyer said.

Nacho, left, and Chico stand still for a photo at Bemowo Piskie Training Area in Orzysz, Poland, on June 4.

Retired Navy officials plead guilty in bribery prosecution

BY KRISTINA DAVIS
The San Diego Union-Tribune

Two retired Navy officials admitted Tuesday to corrupt conduct in the “Fat Leonard” bribery scandal, adding to the nearly two dozen guilty pleas that have been entered in the long-running San Diego-based prosecution.

Retired Capt. David Williams Haas and retired Chief Petty Officer Brooks Alonso Parks were indicted separately on the same day in 2018, accused of accepting bribes to influence competitors and pricing, to help a Francis associate that he had tipped off to a Francis associate that he had tipped off to his official position to leak insider information about competitors and pricing, to help Francis bid for upcoming port visit contracts.

Parks was often specific about his requests for compensation, including a case of “White Horse” cognac. At one point, Parks asked for a hotel room he retorted via email: “I’d like something a lot nicer.”

Another time, he was given a $3,000-a-night room at a Hilton in Singapore — after requesting a $4,000-a-night room at a Ritz-Carlton, according to the plea.

“It feels good living like a KING on an E-6’s salary!!” Parks wrote in one email to Glenn Defense, referring to his military pay grade.

He admitted to receiving bribes valued at about $25,000.

‘Atomic veterans’ series for Stripes wins top award for DC journalist

BY TINA CROLEY
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — Veteran journalist Claudia Grisales won a top award Tuesday for her Stars and Stripes series about aging “atomic veterans” waging a final fight for health benefits after being exposed to secret nuclear testing and cleanup.

Her three-part series, “Conspiracy of Silence,” was selected as the top entry by the Washington, D.C., chapter of the Society for Professional Journalists.

Grisales was also a finalist in the Non-Breaking News category of the DC Dateline Awards for her coverage of the death of Navy linguist Shannon Kent in Syria, whose family fought the regulation that forced her to deploy.

Grisales is now a congressional reporter assigned to NPR’s Washington Desk. Before joining NPR in June 2019, she was a Capitol Hill reporter covering military affairs for Stars and Stripes.

Grisales was recognized previously for her reporting at the Austin American-Statesman, a daily newspaper in Central Texas, where she worked for 16 years.

The Washington chapter is one of SPJ’s largest. Its mission is to celebrate and advocate for the free practice of journalism and high standards of ethical behavior.

“These awards recognize some of the best journalism being done in the Washington, D.C., region by some of the best reporters around,” SPJ DC President Randy Showstack said of this year’s awards.

The awards were announced online Tuesday — a first — because of the coronavirus outbreak.
WASHINGTON — A subcommittee of senators voiced support Tuesday for a 3% raise next year for U.S. military troops as the lawmakers began drafting the 2021 bill that sets Pentagon policy and spending.

The Senate's early version of the 2021 National Defense Authorization Act includes the boost in pay for all service members, Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand, D-N.Y., said during a hearing of the Senate Armed Services Committee's subpanel on personnel. It was the only subpanel hearing of the Senate committee to consider the 2021 NDAA that was open to the public.

Sen. Thom Tillis, R-N.C., the subcommittee's chairman, said the current version of the NDAA supports additional reports and numbers to the White House proposed budget. That $705.4 billion budget request for the Pentagon proposed adding about 5,600 new troops, bringing the total force to 2,153,500 troops, including active-duty, reservists and National Guard members.

Members of the subpanel unanimously voted to forward their version of the bill to the full Senate Armed Services Committee, however several Democratic senators said they opposed leaving out measures meant to address sexual harassment.

Gillibrand, Sen. Elizabeth Warren, D-Mass., and Sen. Tammy Duckworth, D-Ill., questioned why the subcommittee did not include a measure known as the Safe to Report policy, which would strip military leaders of the power to punish sexual assault victims for infractions such as underage drinking or breaking curfews.

Gillibrand said victims often feel unsafe in reporting attacks for fear of punishment. The Air Force Academy implemented a Safe to Report policy in 2018, which the senator said has been successful.

A version of Safe to Report was included in versions of the 2020 NDAA passed last year by the House and Senate, but it was stripped from the final bill. “That provision would’ve removed factors that have been found to chill survivors’ willingness to make unrestricted reports — factors that contribute to three in four sexual assaults in the ranks going unreported,” Gillibrand said. “We must ensure survivors can come forward without fear of collateral misconduct charges for minor offenses.”

The service voted in the news release that the “full results of both reviews, good or bad,” will be made fully public.

The reviews were ordered by Air Force Secretary Barbara Barrett, Chief of Staff Gen. David Goldfein and Chief of Space Operations Gen. Jay Raymond.

The reviews follow up on a memo Goldfein sent to senior Air Force leaders on June 1 in the wake of the death in Minneapolis of George Floyd, an African American who died when a police officer kneeled on his neck for nearly nine minutes on May 25. Video of Floyd pleading for his life sparked outrage, protests and confrontations with police across the country.

“We are not immune to the spectrum of racial prejudice, systemic discrimination and unconscious bias,” Goldfein said in the memo. “We see this in the apparent inequity in our application of military justice. We will not shy away from this; as leaders and Airmen, we will own our part, and confront it head on.”

The inspector general reviews, which will include input from airmen and members of the newly formed Space Force, will include interviews, group discussions and targeted and anonymous surveys, the news release said.

The inspector general has already formed an advisory group that includes 10 general officers, 10 chiefs and four senior executive service airmen — all of whom are African American, the news release said.

“In addition, a number of Airmen from all major commands will be selected to join the IG review team,” the news release said. “While other disparities also need to be reviewed, this phase will focus on African American racial disparities.”

Last week, Lt. Gen. Jeffrey Rockwell, the Air Force judge advocate general, said in a letter to the Judge Advocate General Corps that the service must address racial inequality in its legal system.

Rockwell provided statistics indicating that black enlisted airmen were punished more frequently than their white counterparts. For example, in 2019 black airmen faced roughly twice the rate of administrative punishment or court martial as compared the rate for white airmen.

Airmen assigned to the 100th Air Refueling Wing at RAF Mildenhall, U.K on May 27. A Senate subcommittee supported said it supported a 3% pay raise for service members in 2020.
biggest navy in the world in the last decade.

Australia and the Philippines publicly ruled out hosting American missiles when the Trump administration first floated the idea last year. South Korea is also considered an unlikely location, current and former officials say.

In Japan, the decision on whether to allow U.S. missiles on its territory will be made by the central government in Tokyo. Tamaki said officials at the Pentagon and in Tokyo have told him there are no definite plans to put missiles on Okinawa. But Tamaki isn’t reassured.

With a Japanese mother and an American father who served with the Marines on Okinawa before abandoning the family, Tamaki personifies the complex relationship between the U.S. and its allies in Asia. He was elected two years ago after pledging to oppose expansion of the already-substantial U.S. military presence on the island.

More than half of the 50,000 U.S. military personnel stationed in Japan are in Okinawa, spread out to a Marine base surrounded by residential areas in the largest city. Opposition to the 70-year-old U.S. military presence has sparked local protests for years, which would likely intensify if there were a move to base missiles there.

“If there is such a plan, I can easily imagine fierce protests from Okinawa residents,” Tamaki said.

For the last year, the Pentagon has been testing several new types of short and intermediate range missiles — those with ranges up to 3,400 miles — including in Asia. They are being designed to replace older systems that fell within America’s arsenal.

The first of the new weapons could be in operation within two years, though no decision has been announced about where they will be based. Similar missiles are now carried on U.S. warships and planes based in Asia, but there are no land-based systems.

U.S. officials say that many allies are privately supportive of the missile plan and may come around to permitting them on their territory but don’t want to promote it publicly from fear of harming their own public before decisions are on the table.

The U.S. has a defense treaty with Japan, as it does with South Korea, the Philippines and Australia. Taiwan is not a formal ally but has close, unofficial defense ties with Washington.

“We are very attentive to our allies’ concerns, and we recognize their political challenges,” said a senior defense official, who agreed to discuss Pentagon planning if he was not identified. “Every idea that’s been said in the media is not necessarily what’s said behind closed doors.”

To lessen the political opposition, the U.S. could rotate missile batteries in and out of locations around the region or place them in strategic locations without publicly disclosing it.

On Aug. 18, the Defense Department conducted a flight test of a conventionally configured ground-launched cruise missile at San Nicolas Island, Calif. The U.S. is seeking to house missiles in the Pacific, though some allies don’t want them.

“Ground-based missiles aren’t some kind of silver bullet. But they are a way in the near term ... to create dilemmas for the [People’s Liberation Army] planners,” said Eric Sayers, Center for New American Security.

The missiles were gradually taken out of service in the 1960s and 1970s, due to budget cuts and a shift in U.S. strategy away from defense of the region focused on nuclear weapons. In 1987, the Reagan administration signed an arms control treaty that prohibited the U.S. and the Soviet Union from deploying any land-based intermediate range missiles, including in Asia.

China was not a signatory, leaving it free to build up its missile arsenal.

The Trump administration withdrew from the treaty last year after accusing Russia of developing new land-based missiles that violated its terms. The exit opened the way for the Pentagon to consider reintroducing ground-launched missiles in Asia.

With mobile missiles around the region, the U.S. could pose an even bigger challenge for China, forcing it to hunt for hundreds of launchers capable of targeting its bases, ships and aircraft, strategists say.

“Ground-based missiles aren’t some kind of silver bullet,” said Eric Sayers, a former consultant to U.S. commanders in the Pacific and a fellow at the Center for New American Security, a Washington think tank. “But they are a way in the near term ... to create dilemmas for the [People’s Liberation Army] planners.”

Although the risk of large-scale conflict with China seems low, tensions have continued to ratchet up over Beijing’s crackdown in Hong Kong, its military maneuvers near Taiwan, its border dispute with India and its offshore maritime claims in the East China Sea and South China Sea.

Nearly a quarter of world trade travels through the South China Sea, making the contest between Beijing and Washington over control of its sea lanes and rich resources especially tense and certain to continue, no matter who wins the U.S. presidential election in November.

The U.S. Navy for decades dominated the “first island chain,” as strategists call the area of the western Pacific stretching from Japan to Taiwan to the Philippines that fell within America’s defense umbrella after World War II.

But American reliance on bases, warships and airfields in the region has become increasingly risky, officials and analysts say. China has developed its own missiles, sophisticated radars and anti-satellite weapons as well as a growing fleet of warships and submarines in recent decades that could threaten American bases and other targets early in a conflict, said Collin Koh, a research fellow in Asian maritime security at the Rajatnam School of International Studies in Singapore.

China’s air force can project significant firepower on U.S. and allied military installations in the western Pacific and “threaten to overwhelm” American forces “in times of armed conflict,” Koh said.

The Chinese weapons in many cases have ranges that exceed those on U.S. warships, though the U.S. retains a significant advantage in attack submarines and in advanced fighters and bombers armed with cruise missiles that can be fired from long distances.

“Their capability and their reach has created vulnerabilities for our legacy basing structure,” said the defense official, who agreed to discuss U.S. planning on the condition that he not be identified.

To lessen the political opposition, the U.S. could rotate missile batteries in and out of locations around the region or place them in strategic locations without publicly disclosing it.

Most of the U.S. missile arsenal has been in Europe, but a shift in U.S. strategy away from defense of the region focused on nuclear weapons has opened the way for the Pentagon to consider reintroducing ground-launched missiles in Asia.

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The missiles were gradually taken out of service in the 1960s and 1970s, due to budget cuts and a shift in U.S. strategy away from defense of the region focused on nuclear weapons. In 1987, the Reagan administration signed an arms control treaty that prohibited the U.S. and the Soviet Union from deploying any land-based intermediate range missiles, including in Asia.

China was not a signatory, leaving it free to build up its missile arsenal.

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Navy, CDC release study of Roosevelt sailors

BY CAITLIN M. KENNEY
Stars and Stripes
WASHINGTON — A coronavirus study of USS Theodore Roosevelt sailors released Tuesday indicated the potential for some immunity to the disease based on antibodies found in the blood of positive cases.

An investigation into the virus outbreak on the Roosevelt started in April by the Navy and the national Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to learn more about the coronavirus and determine how it spread among the crew of the aircraft carrier and infected 1,273 of the nearly 4,800 crew members, the service said.

The study included a serology test, which looks for antibodies in the blood left in the body after it has fought off a virus. The test is used to determine who has been infected, especially if they had few or no symptoms, according to the CDC. The study found 60% of the volunteers had antibodies for the coronavirus, and of those, 59% also had neutralizing antibodies at the time their blood was drawn.

“This finding may give us an early glimpse into active immunity or protection against [the coronavirus] in young adults having these intense virus exposures aboard the ship,” Payne said. “These are actually important in that they could be indicators of some degree of immunity. But we don’t necessarily know how long because this was a time-constrained investigation.”

The study asked for 1,000 volunteers to provide blood and swab samples and answer a survey, however only 382 Roosevelt sailors participated. The volunteers were not a representative sample of the crew population, Daniel Payne, an epidemiologist with the CDC, told reporters Tuesday. He is the lead author of the CDC study.

The study was the first look at the coronavirus among healthy young people who were in close quarters, Payne said. Most of the current knowledge about how the virus affects people is based on older adults with underlying health conditions.

Another finding from the study was sailors who were infected were 10 times more likely to report having a symptom of loss of taste or smell compared to those who were not infected, Payne said.

This could develop into a good screening tool for the virus, said Capt. Robert Hawkins, with the Navy and Marine Corps Public Health Center.

Most of the young sailors had mild symptoms.

The other most common symptoms after loss of taste and smell were muscle pains, fever and chills, according to Payne. These are different from studies with older adults who were likely to have symptoms like a cough or shortness of breath.

The tests also indicated among the sailors who had been exposed, 18.5% were asymptomatic or about almost 1 in 5.

The entire crew of the nuclear-powered aircraft carrier was tested for the coronavirus while the ship was in port in Guam for almost two months. Most of the crew was taken off the aircraft carrier and put into isolation on Guam to try to prevent the spread of the virus.

Several sailors were hospitalized in Guam and one died due to complications from the virus.

Once the outbreak on the Roosevelt, the Navy has implemented fleet-wide guidance on how ships must prevent the spread of the virus and other infectious diseases while operating at sea. This includes wearing face coverings and self-monitoring for symptoms.

The Navy has the highest number of confirmed coronavirus cases of the military services as of Monday.

The Navy has also finished another investigation into its response to the outbreak on the Roosevelt and it is being reviewed by Adm. Mike Gilday, the chief of naval operations. The initial investigation was expanded April 29 after former acting Navy Secretary James McPherson said the inquiry left him with “unanswered questions.”

‘Longstanding problems’ hindered VA’s response to virus pandemic

By Nikki Wentling
Stars and Stripes
WASHINGTON — An outdated inventory management system, a lack of information on nurse staffing, and the director of a federal watchdog agency said Tuesday.

The Government Accountability Office has reported on the VA’s antiquated inventory management system five times since 2015 and issued 40 recommendations for the department to fix it. Attempts to improve the system have been delayed multiple times and likely won’t be done for several more years, said Shelby Oakley, a director with the GAO.

Global supply chain problems at the start of the pandemic affected the VA, as it did most private-sector hospitals, Oakley said. However, “longstanding problems” at the department added more barriers for the VA to get what it needed.

VA experienced difficulty obtaining several types of supplies needed to protect its frontline workforce during the COVID-19 response, ranging from N95 masks to isolation gowns,” Oakley said. “This situation put stress on an already overburdened acquisition and logistics workforce.”

Oakley testified Tuesday during a hearing of the Senate Veterans’ Affairs Committee. Senators brought Oakley, along with VA health officials, to Capitol Hill to question them about improving the department’s supply chain.

In March and early April — while VA nurses and other medical workers protested that a lack of personal protective equipment created dangerous working environments at hospitals nationwide — VA officials insisted there was no shortage. They later admitted their supply chain was strained and they had taken steps to ration masks.

Richard Stone, the leader of the VA health care system, said Tuesday that “no facility at VA ever ran out of protective equipment.” The department is working to gather as many supplies as possible in case of a second wave of the virus, he said.

VA hospitals have a 30-day supply of personal protective equipment, Stone said. His goal is to secure a 60-day supply. If there is a second wave of the coronavirus, facilities will need a six-month supply of equipment on hand.

Since then, infections have decreased dramatically on the island. As of Wednesday, Guam had recorded 180 positive cases, according to the health department.
Pandemic spurs record-breaking sales for DeCA, exchanges slump

By Kent Harris
Stars and Stripes

Sales at Defense Commissary Agency locations reached record highs in recent months as coronavirus restrictions sent shoppers dashing to stock up on essentials, while military exchanges generally saw sales plummet following store closures and other limits.

March 13 was DeCA’s biggest sales day ever worldwide, and two other days that week ranked in the top 15 all time for the agency, which was established in 1990 in an effort to consolidate stores run separately by the services, in some cases for more than a century.

“It was crazy,” said Christine Davinich, commissary officer at Great Lakes Naval Station in Illinois. “It was an all-hands-on-deck experience.”

The second week of March was particularly busy.

“Every restaurant in the state was about to shut down, so there was probably some panic buying,” she said. “Every day was as busy as I’ve ever seen the store.”

Sales at the Great Lakes commissary rose 39.4% in March compared to a year earlier, as shoppers spent more than $1.7 million. The total for March 13 alone was $176,663.59.

The same picture generally played out at commissaries overseas.

At Ramstein Air Base in Germany, the previous daily high for sales had been about $225,000, store director Kevin Kegler said.

“We just smashed that to pieces,” he said, pointing to two single-day totals in March that topped $320,000.

Ramstein topped DeCA in transactions in April and May, Kegler said, even outpacing stores that traditionally have much larger sales in the States.

DeCA’s sales in March reached almost $500 million, a 30% increase from 2019, Virginia Penrod, acting assistant defense secretary for manpower and reserve affairs, said in a statement.

They tapered off in April but still rose 8% over last year to almost $400 million. May figures were not available yet, Penrod said.

DeCA was the 86th-largest retailer in the U.S. in 2019 in terms of sales, according to the National Retail Federation, with a total of $4.98 billion. The Army and Air Force Exchange Service was 62nd with $7.5 billion in sales.

The pandemic has been a lot tougher on AAFES. Many exchanges around the world were shuttered or sales were limited during various restrictions imposed by state or host country governments.

Sales fell 7% in March and 20% in April from a year earlier, spokeswoman Julie Mitchell said.

“May sales are expected to show improvement vs. April 2020, but will likely remain below pre-COVID-19 levels,” Mitchell wrote in an email.

Online sales, however, are up 92% so far this year, she said.

DeCA did have some troubles despite the high sales volume. Stockers had trouble keeping the shelves full, even with the assistance of active-duty volunteers at many locations. In some cases, stores had nothing to stock.

“The entire store got emptied,” at one point, Davinich said. “We put limits on basically everything.”

There are still lines to get into the store, Davinich said. But there are limits on only three types of products: sanitizers, cleaners and hand soap.

Great Lakes decided to extend shopping privileges to civilian first responders, Davinich said.

The store has implemented other changes, such as shopping hours exclusively for senior citizens. Every cart is sanitized between each use, and one-way aisles were established to help maintain social distancing.

In many locations, the number of store visits actually dropped, even as sales rose.

At Fort Ord in California, 20,504 customers shopped in April, a fall of more than 1,500 from the previous year, store director Alex King said. But sales still increased from $1.44 million to $1.76 million.

At other locations, the higher sales have meant restrictions on who can shop had to be imposed.

At Nellis Air Force Base in Nevada, only active-duty personnel, their families and mission-essential personnel have been allowed to shop since April 8, store director Richard Mears said in an email.

Store sales rose after groceries outside the fence started running out of products initially. The Nellis commissary eventually had to impose sales limits as well.

“This is something we will remember for many years to come,” Mears said.

Twitter: @kharris4stripes
PARIS — The virus crisis has triggered the worst global recession in nearly a century — and the pain is not over yet even if there is no second wave of infections, an international economic body warned Wednesday.

Hundreds of millions of people have lost their jobs, and the crisis is hitting the poor and young people the hardest, worsening inequalities, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development said in its most negative assessment of global economic data.

“It is probably the most uncertain and dramatic outcome since the creation of the OECD,” Secretary General Angel Gurría said. “We cannot make projections as we normally do.”

In the best-case scenario, if there is no second wave of infections, the agency forecast a global drop in economic output of 6% this year, and a rise of 2.8% next year.

If the coronavirus re-emerges later in the year, the global economy could shrink 7.6%, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development said.

If the coronavirus re-emerges later in the year, however, the global economy could shrink 7.6%, the OECD said.

“With or without a second out-break, the consequences will be severe and long-lasting,” the report says.

Global stock markets dropped after the release of the report, which is more dovish than other forecasts from the likes of the World Bank.

Gurría argued that “presenting the problem as the choice between lives and livelihoods, meaning a choice between health and the economy, is a false dichotomy.”

The OECD said not bringing the pandemic under control “will not be robust economic recovery.”

In case of a second wave of contagions, the OECD forecast that the average unemployment rate across the 37 developed countries that represent would double this year to 10% and see “little recovery” in 2021. In the more optimistic scenario, the figure would be 9.2%. In poorer countries, the numbers are often higher, and informal workers are especially vulnerable.

The agency urged governments to tackle inequalities by investing in health care systems, global cooperation on medical supplies, vaccine and treatments and re-training people whose sectors are the hardest-hit.

The virus has infected 7.2 million people worldwide and killed at least 411,000, according to official figures tallied by Johns Hopkins University. The true toll is believed to be much higher.

By DAVID A. LIEB

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. — To the issues creating a partisan divide in state legislatures across the U.S., add this one: masks.

Many Democratic lawmakers are wearing them amid the coronavirus outbreak while many Republicans refuse.

“Public health has become partisan,” bemoaned South Carolina Republican Rep. Kambrell Garvin, a Democrat who recently became ill from COVID-19.

As legislatures around the country resume work following coronavirus suspensions, Democrats and Republicans have been split over social distancing, remote voting and the extension of emergency powers for governors who had ordered businesses to close and residents to remain home.

Lawmakers have become ill from the coronavirus in nearly half the states, with Democrats accounting for about two-thirds of the 40 confirmed COVID-19 cases, according to an Associated Press tally. Three lawmakers died of the virus — a Michigan Democrat in late March and Republicans in Louisiana and South Dakota in early April.

Partisan divisions appear to have grown since then, particularly in the South and Midwest, as some Republicans pushed to reopen the economy faster than some Democrats. While there have been exceptions, mask-wearing divisions among Democrats and Republicans have been evident in lengthy legislative sessions in Arizona, Iowa, Kansas, Louisiana, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, North Carolina, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, South Carolina and Tennessee.

In Illinois, GOP Rep. Darren Bailey was removed from a concentration center functioning as the House floor last month for refusing to wear a mask. His ejection came moments after the Democratic-led chamber approved a mask mandate with support from some Republicans in a move Bailey considered “a show.”

“The mask is not about health. It’s about more bureaucracy and more government control, of which the liberal Democrat thrives on,” Bailey told the AP.

When Pennsylvania Republican Rep. Andrew Lewis announced through a news release that he had self-isolated and recovered from COVID-19, Democratic colleagues expressed outrage that he had not self-isolated and recovered from COVID-19. Democratic colleagues expressed outrage that his diagnosis had been kept secret from them for a week.

Democrats demanded changes requiring lawmakers to wear masks in the Republican-controlled legislature, but GOP legislative leaders have not acted on the request.

In Ohio, a Democratic proposal to require masks at House sessions and committee meetings was defeated last month in the Republican-led chamber. A Republican lawmaker then filed legislation to bar mask requirements statewide unless approved by two-thirds of lawmakers. That measure is pending.

Some trace the partisan divergence on coronavirus precautions to the very top of American politics. Republican President Donald Trump hasn’t publicly worn masks, not even while announcing federal recommendations that Americans wear face coverings to help fight the spread of the virus.

“I think that when our president, from a national standpoint, signals that masks aren’t politically expedient, then I think that trickles down to the local and state level,” said Lora Reinbold, a South Carolina Democrat who has worn masks both before and after her coronavirus illness.

Several recent studies using polling and smartphone GPS data have shown that Democrats are more apt than Republicans to embrace social distancing in public, wear masks and stay at home because of the coronavirus.

Virus precautions have started to become an ideological means of group identification, similar to partisan divisions over abortion or other hot-button issues, said psychology professor Hank Rothgerber of Bellarmine University in Louisville, Ky.

“Democrats now have identified themselves as the party that’s taking this more seriously and is more concerned about public health,” Rothgerber said, “and Republicans are identifying themselves as a party that’s focused on opening the economy back up and not overreacting to this crisis.”

When the Missouri House met in early April to pass a coronavirus budget bill, Republican leadership imposed strict social distancing. Lawmakers listened to proceedings over the internet in offices until summoned to the chamber in small groups to vote.

Nearly everyone wore masks.

Yet those precautions were abandoned as the House finished its session in May. Lawmakers sat packed together at desks and few Republicans wore masks, though numerous Democrats still did.

Republican Rep. Joe Runions, who had been out for six weeks with COVID-19, was aghast at what he described as “inconsiderate and selfish” behavior.

“To me, leadership starts with, you put that mask on. I don’t care who you are — the president, the governor, the pope, whoever,” Runions said.

Republican House Speaker Elijah Haahr noted that lawmakers’ temperatures were checked as they entered the Capitol.

Health screenings also were required of legislative staff and media at the Alaska Capitol, although lawmakers could skip it.

Protocols said masks were required. But Republican state Sen. Lora Reinbold didn’t wear one.

“It didn’t make sense to me,” Reinbold said. “I saw no research on cloth, silk, cotton face coverings … that they prevent COVID.”

The coronavirus can be spread through respiratory droplets when people cough, sneeze or talk. The CDC says cloth masks can help prevent people, who may not realize they are infected, from spreading the virus to others.

“The whole idea behind it is ‘I wear my mask to protect you,’ and it’s not so much to protect me,” said Kansas Democratic Rep. Barbara Ballard, who wore a mask festooned with the University of Kansas mascot during a legislative session last week.

Kansas House Majority Leader Dan Hawkins, who like many Republicans remained mask-less, said face coverings diminish personal communication because you can’t see lips. Republicans, he said, are “a very independent lot” who “really don’t like to be told what to do.”

Colorado state Sen. Jim Smallwood, a Republican who had recovered from a mild case of the coronavirus, wore a mask that slipped off his nose as he argued unsuccessfully last month against a Democratic rule change allowing lawmakers to vote remotely without attending sessions.

“I feel like it sets a good example and it puts other people at ease,” Smallwood told the AP.

Republican members of the Kansas House of Representatives listen to humorous announcements as they prepare to take a lunch break, at the Statehouse in Topeka on June 4. During a two-day special session of the Legislature most GOP lawmakers did not wear protective masks; most Democrats did.
**Video shows people looting NYC Macy's**

NEW YORK — Security video shows over a dozen people sacking Macy's flagship store in Manhattan last week during unrest over George Floyd's killing.

The video released by police Tuesday shows two people smashing a glass door with a hammer and another pushing it open. The brazen theft took place during a protest June 1 at the Herald Square store.

Others are seen prying open a revolving door before entering and grabbing purses and other goods. One man appears to stuff merchandise into a garbage bag.

In all, police released security photos of 15 people. They said that they made off with about $10,000 worth of merchandise.

**Confederate monument covered with trash bags**

PORTSMOUTH, Va. — Protesters in Portsmouth, Va., covered a Confederate monument in the city with trash bags and sheets Wednesday, several hours after city council members had a meeting to figure out ways to relocate it.

A white sheet that read “BLM” covered the fence in front of the monument hours after the Portsmouth city council met to discuss who owns the figure, WVEC-TV reported. The question about who owns the monument has been the main roadblock in the city’s yearslong quest to remove it.

During the council’s meeting Tuesday, Mayor John Rowe asked the city attorney if Portsmouth has the right to move the 127-year-old memorial. In 2018, a judge denied the city’s claim to own the monument because no one else had tried to claim it.

The local chapter of the NAACP and protesters have called for the monument to be taken down, but some council members oppose removing the statue without a citywide vote, WAVY reported.

**Pope sends a message to US Catholics**

VATICAN CITY — Pope Francis called George Floyd by name, and supported an American bishop who knelt in prayer during a Black Lives Matter protest.

Cardinals black and white have spoken out about Floyd’s death, and the Vatican’s communications juggernaut has shifted into overdrive to draw attention to the cause he now represents.

Under normal circumstances, Floyd’s killing at the hands of a white police officer and the global protests denouncing racism and police brutality might have drawn a muted diplomatic response from the Holy See. But in a U.S. election year, the intensity and consistency of the Vatican’s reaction suggests that, from the pope on down, it is seeking to encourage anti-racism protesters while making a clear statement about where American Catholics should stand ahead of President Donald Trump’s bid for a second term in November.

**Floyd’s brother to lawmakers: ‘Stop the pain’**

WASHINGTON — Philonise Floyd, a brother of George Floyd, said that he’s testifying to Congress because he wants his brother’s death to be “more than another name” on a growing list of those killed during interactions with police.

Floyd’s appearance before a House hearing Wednesday comes a day after funeral services for George Floyd, who has become a worldwide symbol in demonstrations calling for changes to police practices and an end to racial prejudices.

“If his death ends up changing the world for the better, and I think it will, I think it has, then he died as he lived,” Philonise Floyd said, according to an advance copy of his remarks.

He said that he wants to make sure his brother is “more than another face on a t-shirt. More than another name on a list that won’t stop growing.”

“I’m tired. I’m tired of the pain. I’m feeling now and I’m tired of the pain I feel every time another black person is killed for no reason,” Floyd said. “I’m here today to ask you to make it stop. Stop the pain. Stop us from being tired.”

Floyd said, “The people marching in the streets are telling you enough is enough. Be the leaders that can save this world, needs. Do the right thing.”

House Judiciary Committee Chairman Jerrold Nadler, a Democrat from New York, called Floyd’s testimony in the session as Democrats review the Justice in Policing Act, a far-reaching package of proposals amid a national debate on policing and racial inequity in the United States.

Lawmakers will also hear testimony from civil rights groups and law enforcement leaders at the congressional hearing on proposed changes to police practices and accountability.

**Investigators say Guard fatally shot man during protests**

LOUISVILLE, Ky. — A Louisville barbecue cook was fatally shot by a National Guard member after the cook fired his gun as law enforcement approached on a night of protests, a state official said Tuesday.

David McAtee was killed May 21 while he was cooking at his eatery miles away from the downtown demonstrations. Louisville Metro Police and National Guard soldiers were in the area responding to a report of a crowd gathering when the shooting occurred.

J. Michael Brown, secretary of state, ordered an investigation Tuesday that Kentucky State Police investigators examined surveillance footage from McAtee’s body and matched it to rifles carried by National Guard members.

“So it’s clear, the fatal shot came from the National Guard,” Brown said. “We have no doubt about that.”

Officers were seen on a video distributed by Louisville Metro Police shooting pepper balls into the area where McAtee was cooking outdoors. But Brown said that he believes McAtee fired the first live round.

“I believe Mr. McAtee fired the first shot, paused and then fired another shot,” Brown said. McAtee was hit once in the chest and died at the scene.

National Guard members “were returning fire, which is part of the engagement and what law enforcement would do in that case,” Brown said.

Brown said that investigators recovered two shell casings from McAtee’s handgun, and found gunshot residue on his body.

Brown said that two guard members were in the vicinity where shell casings were found, but the shotgun recovered from McAtee’s body was too twisted to match it to a specific rifle.

Investigators also recovered shell casings from shots fired by Louisville police, and the findings excluded those officers from firing the fatal shot, Brown said.

The evidence released Tuesday shows that officials are “committed to getting that truth out — good, bad or ugly,” Kentucky Gov. Andy Beshear said.

The National Guard was in the city to help enforce a curfew amid protests spurred by the deaths of George Floyd in Minnesota and Breonna Taylor in Louisville native Breonna Taylor. Taylor was shot by Louisville detectives serving a warrant in her home in March.

The video released by Louisville Metro Police appears to show McAtee firing a gun from the door of his restaurant as officers shot projectiles. Video from a different camera pointed outside the building shows a beverage container on a table outside the door exploding and falling to the ground just before smoke emerges from inside the building where McAtee was standing.

A lawyer for McAtee’s family, Steve Rumesine, said Monday that investigators should release all video linked to the shooting. Rumesine also said that Louisville officials and police should accept responsibility and apologize for violating use of force policies the night of the shooting. He said that McAtee’s niece was hit multiple times with pepper balls as she stood at the door of his business.

Louisville police are conducting their own investigation of the shooting. As part of its own ongoing investigation, state police will review available video, frame by frame, Brown said.

Louisville Mayor Greg Fischer fired the city’s police chief after the shooting because Louisville officers did not have body cameras running during the incident. The chief, Steve Conrad, announced his retirement last month but was going to stay on until the end of June.

Associated Press

Thursday, June 11, 2020
Administration is against extending unemployment plan

By Matthew Daly
Associated Press
WASHINGTON — The Trump administration opposes a Democratic proposal to extend a $600 per week federal unemployment payment that was included in the coronavirus pandemic, Labor Secretary Eugene Scalia said Tuesday.

The $600 payment, which is in addition to normal unemployment benefits, “was the right thing to do,” Scalia said, but is no longer needed as the economy begins to recover.

The money, included in a government relief package enacted in late March, has helped millions of workers stay in their homes and pay bills even as the unemployment rate surged to its highest levels since World War II.

The payments are set to expire July 31, and Democrats have pushed a plan that would extend the enhanced benefits through January. The Democratic-led House approved the proposal last month, but it is considered unlikely to advance in the Republican-controlled Senate.

Scalia pointed to an unexpected rise in jobs reported released last Friday. By the end of July, “we expect the economy to be deep into the process of reopening, with unemployment rates ended and millions of Americans freed to return to work,” he told the Senate Finance Committee.

Unemployment benefits will still be needed in August and beyond, “but the circumstances that originally called for the $600 plus-up will have changed,” Scalia said. “Policy will need to change as well.”

Democrats challenged that view, saying the unemployment rate is likely to remain at historically high levels through the summer at least.

Friday’s jobs report showed that unemployment dropped unexpectedly in May to 13.3% as reopened businesses began recalling millions of workers faster than economists had predicted, but the jobless rate is still on par with what the nation witnessed during the Great Depression.

Watching President Donald Trump “celebrate victory” Friday as the jobs report was released “is yet another sign that he doesn’t understand what it’s like for people born without a real-estate portfolio,” said Oregon Sen. Ron Wyden, the panel’s top Democrat.

“Speaking conservatively, more than 20 million Americans are still out of work today,” Wyden said, “and I bet you’re not celebrating if you’re among the many people who don’t know how they’re going to pay the rent or put food on the table this month.”

Sen. Chuck Grassley, R-Iowa, the Finance Committee chairman, said the $600 weekly payments were “poorly targeted,” with the result that most recipients are being paid more on unemployment insurance than they earned when they were working.

“This discourages people from returning to work or taking a new job, delaying the recovery,” Grassley said.

Grassley and other Republicans cited a report by the Congressional Budget Office indicating that extending the $600 payments through January would mean that about 5 of every 6 recipients would receive benefits higher than the amount they would have earned from working.

Grassley said he hears from Iowans who wonder why they are earning less than others who are getting unemployment benefits. Employers also have complained that the generous benefits are resulting in fewer applicants for job openings, he said.

Wyden called that evidence anecdotal and said the idea that Americans don’t want to go back to work “is dead wrong and insulting.”

The $600 payments some are receiving in addition to normal unemployment payments are scheduled to expire on July 31. Democrats have pushed a plan that would extend the enhanced benefits through January.

SOURCE: Associated Press

Stealth fighters intercept Russian warplanes just off Alaska’s coast

By Corey Dickstein
Stars and Stripes
WASHINGTON — Two formations of Russian military aircraft featuring four bombers and two fighter jets flew unusually close to American airspace Wednesday morning but were intercepted by F-22 fighters off Alaska’s coast, U.S. military officials said.

The first formation intercepted by the U.S. Raptor stealth fighters flew within 20 nautical miles of Alaska’s shore, bringing the Russian aircraft within 8 nautical miles of sovereign U.S. airspace, U.S. Northern Command, said in a statement. The incident Wednesday marked the closest the NORTHCOM officials have acknowledged Russian planes have flown to U.S. territory in recent years.

The second formation intercepted a short time later included two additional Bear bombers and another A-50, the statement said. Neither formation entered American airspace Wednesday morning but were intercepted by F-22 fighters off Alaska’s coast, U.S. military officials said.

The $600 payments some are receiving in addition to normal unemployment payments are scheduled to expire on July 31. Democrats have pushed a plan that would extend the enhanced benefits through January.

Private Secretary Eugene Scalia said: “Policy will need to change as well.”

Democrats challenged that view, saying the unemployment rate is likely to remain at historically high levels through the summer at least.

Friday’s jobs report showed that unemployment dropped unexpectedly in May to 13.3% as reopened businesses began recalling millions of workers faster than economists had predicted, but the jobless rate is still on par with what the nation witnessed during the Great Depression.

Watching President Donald Trump “celebrate victory” Friday as the jobs report was released “is yet another sign that he doesn’t understand what it’s like for people born without a real-estate portfolio,” said Oregon Sen. Ron Wyden, the panel’s top Democrat.

“Speaking conservatively, more than 20 million Americans are still out of work today,” Wyden said, “and I bet you’re not celebrating if you’re among the many people who don’t know how they’re going to pay the rent or put food on the table this month.”

Sen. Chuck Grassley, R-Iowa, the Finance Committee chairman, said the $600 weekly payments were “poorly targeted,” with the result that most recipients are being paid more on unemployment insurance than they earned when they were working.

“This discourages people from returning to work or taking a new job, delaying the recovery,” Grassley said.

Grassley and other Republicans cited a report by the Congressional Budget Office indicating that extending the $600 payments through January would mean that about 5 of every 6 recipients would receive benefits higher than the amount they would have earned from working.

Grassley said he hears from Iowans who wonder why they are earning less than others who are getting unemployment benefits. Employers also have complained that the generous benefits are resulting in fewer applicants for job openings, he said.

Wyden called that evidence anecdotal and said the idea that Americans don’t want to go back to work “is dead wrong and insulting.”

The $600 payments some are receiving in addition to normal unemployment payments are scheduled to expire on July 31. Democrats have pushed a plan that would extend the enhanced benefits through January.

SOURCE: Associated Press
Runoffs set in at least 5 Georgia congressional primaries

Associated Press

ATLANTA — Georgia will see runoffs in at least five congressional primaries, including battles for open seats in suburban Atlanta, northeast Georgia and northwest Georgia. Incumbent Democrat David Scott was also forced into a runoff for his party’s nomination in his suburban Atlanta district.

Four other U.S. House incumbents won their primaries, including U.S. Rep. John Lewis, who was nominated for an 18th term in Congress representing Atlanta.

Voters also got their say in long-delayed presidential primaries, even though President Donald Trump and Joe Biden have wrapped up their parties’ respective nominations. Biden won Georgia’s primary, appearing alongside 11 other Democrats on ballots finalized months ago. Trump was the only choice on the Republican ballot.

The Democratic Senate primary was too early to call.

With more than three-quarters of the expected vote counted as of early Wednesday, Jon Ossoff has approximately 49% of the counted vote. He leads Teresa Tomlinson, who has roughly 15% of the counted vote, and Sarah Riggs Amico, with about 13%. The winner will challenge Republican U.S. Sen. David Perdue in November.

The race, which saw some voters waiting hours to cast their ballots Tuesday, has so far proven to be anything but predictable. Technical glitches, a lack of poll workers and high turnout contributed to long lines, prompting judges in numerous counties, including Atlanta’s Fulton County, to extend voting hours.

Election Day had been previously postponed and campaigns were forced almost entirely online because of the coronavirus. The final days also saw widespread protests over the death of George Floyd in Minneapolis.

Democrats hope to be competitive in both the Perdue race, as well as a November special election to fill the last two years of the term of retired U.S. Sen. Johnny Isakson, a race in which Kelly Loeffler currently holds the seat by appointment.

Graham looks to matchup with Harrison

Associated Press

COLUMBIA, S.C. — With his defeat of three little-known GOP challengers behind him, U.S. Sen. Lindsey Graham is officially embarking on the next phase of his quest for a fourth term: a general election matchup with Democrat Jaime Harrison already on pace to become the most expensive in South Carolina history.

And, just hours after Graham’s victory in Tuesday’s GOP primary, Harrison laid down a challenge to the veteran lawmaker, asking him to participate in a series of four debates across South Carolina, including one at a historically black college or university.

Harrison faced no primary opposition Tuesday. Graham, 64, bested fellow Republicans Duke Buckner, Michael Lapierre and Joe Reynolds. Two Libertarians and one Constitution Party candidate also filed to seek the seat.

Graham’s popularity among Republicans in his home state has recently fluctuated along with his relationship to President Donald Trump, who is supporting his reelection bid and campaigning with him in the state in February.

Following his victory, Graham, chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, said he was “just getting warmed up” for the November election, which he said would “provide voters with a stark choice between the Democrats’ socialist agenda or security and prosperity through free enterprise and security.”

On Tuesday, Harrison, 44, said in a news release that South Carolina voters are “fed up with Lindsey taking this seat for granted, and they are demanding a senator who will put their needs ahead of his own.”

Long lines, few polling places in Nev. primaries

Associated Press

LAS VEGAS — Hundreds of people waited for hours Tuesday at three in-person voting sites in the Las Vegas area, and the only one in Reno, after polling places were reduced due to the coronavirus.

People who did not mail in their choices were casting ballots in a primary to settle U.S. House races, legislative primaries and other state and local races.

Washoe County elections chief Deanna Spikula acknowledged waits of almost three hours and The Associated Press spoke with multiple people at a Clark County site who said they waited more than four hours.

Hundreds of people were in line at 7 p.m., and Spikula projected more than 1,400 in-person ballots would be cast at the site on Tuesday. In most elections, with multiple polling places open, no more than 600 ballots come in per precinct, she said.
**AMERICAN ROUNDPUP**

**Police: Man let girl, 12, drive Jeep 85 mph**

**FL JUPITER — A Florida man faces felony charges after police said he let a 12-year-old girl drive his SUV and told her to speed because he wanted to be a “cool father” — even though he is not her dad.**

Shaun Michaelson, 41, told the arresting officer he is friends with the girl’s mother and the girl and her friend were staying with him for a few days, according to court records.

Jupiter Officer Craig Yochum said in his arrest report that he spotted the Jeep make an illegal U-turn and then speed away. He followed and the Jeep reached speeds of 85 mph in a 45 mph zone before he was able to pull it over.

Michaelson is charged with child neglect, allowing a minor to become a delinquent for buying the girls vape causing a minor to become a delinquent for buying the girls vape.

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**Spring snowstorm leaves many without power**

**WY LARAMIE — A late spring snowstorm closed an interstate highway and sent tree limbs crashing onto power lines in southeastern Wyoming.**

Almost 10,000 Rocky Mountain Power customers in the Laramie area were without power Tuesday morning, KTWO Radio reported.

Interstate 80 between Cheyenne and Laramie, which was closed Monday night, reopened the next morning.

Over 6 inches of snow fell in the high country of the Laramie Range and Medicine Bow Mountains.

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**2 survive after whale capsizes boat**

**NJ SEASIDE PARK — Two people survived after they were tossed into the ocean when a breaching whale capsized their boat along the New Jersey shore.**

The occupants of the 25-foot boat were fishing close to the shore when the whale surfaced and knocked the vessel out of the water. They managed to swim to shore and the boat eventually washed up on the beach.

There were no reports of injuries.

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**Razing the roof**

**Kentucky Birthplace boosts visitor access**

**KY HODGENVILLE — The Abraham Lincoln Birthplace in Kentucky increased visitor access and services with guidance from government health officials about the coronavirus pandemic.**

The park at Hodgenville re-opened access to its visitors center, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily. Access will remain closed to the visitors center bookstore, the Memorial Building and in-person, ranger-led interpretive programs.

The National Park Service is phasing in increased access on a park-by-park basis, it said in a news release.

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**Luke Jones, 8, watches with his grandfather, Roy Cottrell, as a crew with the Klenck Co. uses a crane to raze the Memorial Building and in-sent tree limbs crashing onto power lines in southeastern Wyoming.**

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**The Census**

**Maine’s baby eel fishermen had a productive year in the state’s rivers and streams, but the price for the eels was much lower than usual.**

Fishermen caught at least 9.650 pounds of the eels, which are called elvers, during a season in which they were limited to 9,680. The elvers are valuable because they’re used as seed stock by Asian aquaculture companies that raise them to maturity for use as food. They were worth $525 per pound at the docks this year. That’s much more than most fish species, but a steep decline from last year’s average of $2,091.

**Theft of police car leads to pursuit, 2 crashes**

**A person pulled over for a traffic stop stole a police car, setting off a pursuit into the next county in southeastern New Mexico and resulted in two crashes that left two people injured, authorities said.**

The person who stole the police car fled from the scene of a head-on crash with a pickup but was arrested nearby, the Roswell Daily Record reported.

**Town may have to raze buildings, restore dunes**

**A popular New Jersey shore resort may have to tear down some oceanfront buildings and restore dunes and wetlands that the state said the city illegally demolished.**

It also determined that North Wildwood installed an oceanfront bulkhead without required permits. The violation notices give North Wildwood 90 days to respond, and threaten that any work that does not receive approval from the agency must be torn down and the dunes restored to their natural condition.

From wire reports
**FACES**

### Grammys revamp rules

**Recording Academy makes changes to categories, addresses conflicts of interest on committees**

**BY MESFIN FEKADU**  
Associated Press

The Recording Academy is making changes to several Grammy Awards categories, including the often-debated best new artist title, and having nomination review committee members sign disclosure forms to prevent conflicts of interest.

The new rules announced Wednesday will affect the 63rd annual Grammys, which will air live on Jan. 31, 2021.

The best new artist award has been criticized for decades, and the academy has tried to evolve with the music industry by continually updating the category’s rules. In recent years, the award has been scrutinized because the academy placed a song and album limit, disqualifying certain performers. But the new rules say, “there is no longer a specified maximum number of releases prohibiting artists from entering the category.”

The change will benefit younger artists, specifically rappers, who tend to release many singles and therefore did not qualify in recent years because they surpassed the 30-song limit.

The academy also said musicians invited to participate in a nomination review committee — in place to safeguard a specific genre’s integrity — will have to agree to the terms of a conflict of interest disclosure form. Committee participants will have to reveal if they would benefit from an artist’s nomination for that category, whether the ties are financial, familial or creative.

If a conflict is discovered, that person will not be allowed to sit on that committee that year.

Some of the changes could be a response to former Recording Academy CEO Debra Dugan, who was fired months into her job and days before the 2020 Grammys, held in January. Dugan had said the awards show was rigged and muddled with conflicts of interest. Questions have loomed for years around the nominations process for the Grammys, but the doubts reached a new level following Dugan’s comments.

The academy has said that nominees are selected from contenders voted into the top 20 in each category. But critics have called the voting less than transparent, because the choice of finalists happens behind closed doors. That has stirred claims that members of key nominating committees promote projects they worked on or projects they favor based on personal relationships.

The organization also said it is making its 66-page rules and guidelines book public for the first time, at Grammys.com, starting Wednesday.

Songs and albums released between Sept. 1, 2019, and Aug. 31, 2020, will be eligible for nominations at the 2021 Grammys. There are 84 categories.

Other changes approved by the board:
- The best rap/sung performance Grammy will now be called best melodic rap performance. The category was originally titled best rap/sung collaboration and was established at the 2002 Grammys for collaborations between rappers and R&B or pop singers. For the 2017 Grammys, the academy renamed it and allowed solo artists who sing and rap on a song — from Drake to Chris Brown — to compete. The newly titled category, available to solo performances or collaborations, now “requires a strong and clear presence of melody combined with rap cadence, and is inclusive of dialects, lyrics or performance elements from non-rap genres including R&B, rock, country, electronic or more.
- The best urban contemporary album award, which debuted at the 2013 Grammys and represented R&B albums that fused elements of other genres, from rock to dance, has been renamed to best progressive R&B album. Qualified albums should “include the more progressive elements of R&B and may include samples and elements of hip-hop, rap, dance, and electronic music.”
- The Latin pop album Grammy has expanded and been renamed best Latin pop/urban album, while the best Latin rock, urban or alternative album will now be called best Latin rock or alternative album.

**HBO Max pulls ‘Gone with the Wind,’ will add context**

Associated Press

HBO Max has temporarily removed “Gone with the Wind” from its streaming library in order to add historical context to the 1939 film long criticized for romanticizing slavery and the Civil War-era South.

Protests in the wake of George Floyd’s death have forced entertainment companies to grapple with the appropriateness of very depictions, but will be presented as it was originally created, because to do otherwise would be the same as claiming these prejudices never existed.

Based on a 1936 book by Margaret Mitchell, “Gone with the Wind” is a historical epic about a romance between Scarlett O’Hara (Vivien Leigh), the daughter of a Georgia plantation owner, and Rhett Butler (Clark Gable), a gambler who joins the Confederacy. It remains the highest-grossing film of all time when adjusted for inflation. It won eight Academy Awards, including best picture and best supporting actress for Hattie McDaniel, the first black actress to be nominated or win an Oscar.

‘Cops,’ on air for 33 seasons, dropped by Paramount

After 33 seasons on the air, the reality show “Cops” has been dropped by the Paramount Network as protests against police proliferation around the world.

“Cops” is not on the Paramount Network and we don’t have any current or future plans for it to return,” a spokesperson for the cable channel said in a statement Tuesday.

It’s not clear whether the company that makes the show, Langley Productions, would try to find a new home for it. A voicemail at a company phone number was not accepted messages.

“Cops” aired on Fox for 25 years until 2013, when Viacom-owned Spike TV picked it up. Spike was re-branded as the Paramount Network in 2018.

Other news

Four cast members are not returning for another season of Bravo’s “Vanderpump Rules” — two over their racist social media posts, and the others after they racially profiled a coworker. Bravo released a statement Tuesday confirming that Stassi Schroeder, Kristen Doute, Max Boyens and Brett Caprioni would not return to the reality series, which will air its final episode of season eight next week.
States must prevent an Election Day fiasco

By DAVID IGNAZIUS
Washington Post Writers Group

WASHINGTON

Tuesday was primary day in West Virginia, and the Republican-led government there did something sensible that other states should embrace: They made it easier to cast absentee votes.

All 50 states permit absentee ballots, but they don’t always make it simple. West Virginia is one of about 16 states that require a medical or other excuse. But because of COVID-19, West Virginia declared a general medical excuse, and mailed absentee ballots to all 261,000 voters who asked for them. By Tuesday, about 85% of those ballots had been cast.

“The voters should have confidence in the system,” Andrew “Mac” Warner, the West Virginia secretary of state, told me in an interview Tuesday. He’s a pro-Trump Republican. But he’s also a 23-year Army veteran, and he knows how hard it can be to vote. Absentee voting was a benefit he could see in voting will probably be needed as never before because of the pandemic, Trump is claiming such absentee ballots will produce a rigged election.

Trump last month attacked Michigan and Nevada for their absentee ballots in the “Voter Fraud” scenarios. When he later tweeted on May 26, “There is NO WAY (ZERO!) that Mail-In ballots will be any good — they will be lose. He claimed, “large scale voter fraud happening,” and his campaign website pleaded: “help me stop Crooked Hilliary from rigging this election.” Even when he won the Electoral College victory, he claimed he had been fraudulently denied a popular vote win, again without evidence. As president, he even appointed a commission to study the supposed fraud problem, which disbanded in 2018 after accomplishing nothing.

“We could very well be headed toward a predictable, disaster of a ‘Biden,’ was....Rep. Adam Schiff, D-Calif., chairman of the House Intelligence Committee. “If the president’s disqualification of absentee ballots leads to one party thinking it’s not legitimate, then the foundation is laid for a sizable refusal to accept the election’s legitimacy.”

A national crisis, addressed to all our other national problems, seems increasingly likely in November. We’re on a collision course: The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention on March 10 recommend- ed “voting methods that minimize direct contact with other people,” such as mail-in ballots. But Trump has derided such measures as unfair.

How can we protect our democracy from this looming crack-up? Our fate rests with state officials who, in our federalist system, will make and enforce the rules for elections in their state. In West Virginia, they seem to be taking this job seriously, and to an encouraging extent, in a nonpartisan way.

“2020 elections are weighing all conceivable contingencies to ensure elections are secure and accessible for all voters, including increasing absentee or mail-in voting,” said Rebecca Munro, the program director at the nonpartisan National Association of Secretaries of State and National Association of State Election Directors. These are the folks who will be responsible for getting and counting the votes on Nov. 3.

Reassuring guidance comes from the nonpartisan National Conference of State Legislatures. They note that two-thirds of states provide absentee ballots without requiring any excuse, and other states are easing out-of-state requirements. The NCSL website cites studies that mail-only ballot has yielded greater voter satisfaction, lower costs, higher turnout and quality. As for fraud worries, the NCSL counsels: “In several ways, absentee/mailed ballots are as secure or more secure than traditional methods of voting.”

Ever the bottom line: Most Americans will have a right to absentee ballots in November, no matter what Trump says. Conducting the election by mail and in the safety of homes so we’ll have a bitterly divisive post-election period, no matter what. Let’s be ready for that, vigilant but also patient.

Forewarned is forearmed. This will be one of the important elections in our lifetime. State and local officials take the project seriously and made an instant name for himself in those quarters of the Republican Party where it is never bad politics to do harm to the media. Here’s his schadenfreude-drenched tweet: “How is everyone at the @nytimes doing this morning? Did you have a late night trying to come up with an excuse to pretend you didn’t care to the vote nob.”

Bennet’s mistake was in not reading the Cotton op-ed before running it, to which President Donald Trump should invoke the 200-year-old Insurrection Act to “re- store order to our streets.” Bad idea, Tom. See how easy that was? For one am glad to know that’s inside Cotton’s cerebral cortex. I disagree with his thinking for the reasons raised by others, including former secretary of defense and retired Gen. Jim Mattis. As a member of the Kent State generation, it’s against my remaining conscience to exchange of ideas, even if some of them are embarrassing. An impeachment, a pandemic and the 200-year-old Insurrection Act to “re-store order to our streets.” Bad idea, Tom. See how easy that was? For one am glad to know that’s inside Cotton’s cerebral cortex. I disagree with his thinking for the reasons raised by others, including former secretary of defense and retired Gen. Jim Mattis. As a member of the Kent State generation, it’s against my remaining conscience to exchange of ideas, even if some of them are embarrassing. An impeachment, a pandemic and the
Powell ignored true threat to Constitution

By Hugh Hewitt
Special to The Washington Post

A s a distinguished soldier-statesman, Colin Powell — a former secretary of state, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and national security adviser — is entitled to a great deal of deference to his expertise and gratitude for his service. Powell, like retired Gens. Jim Mattis, John Allen and John F. Kelly, and indeed all who have faced death to protect the U.S. Constitution, are owed continual, unbroken respect. They have mine. But Powell is not entitled to his own definition of the Constitution. The document is public, as are the Supreme Court’s rulings on its meaning and what a state or the federal government may do. It is a serious charge. If Powell had been even slightly pressed, either eva-

The Constitution contains no secret provisions, unless pow- erful military men — and a number of no
gnostic directions about what a commander in chief ought not to say. Exactly what was Powell referring to?

In truth, the Beltway elites have embraced a number of anti-constitutional positions. Many among them want to abolish the Electoral College, one of the two load-
bearing walls on which the Constitution is built. The other — equal representation in the Senate — is regularly assailed by the left, which dominates the Democratic Party.

Many of the candidates for the Demo-
cratic presidential nomination favored the radical proposition that the makeup of the Supreme Court be expanded to nine to some number that would guarantee court appeal for radical laws. The danger of explicitly unconstitutional about such a maneuver, but its unacceptable, extra-

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**6-11 CRYPTOQUIP**

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Yesterday's Cryptoquip: AT THE ANNUAL HAIRSTYLISTS' SHOW, A PERSON WHO TWISTS HAIR PERFECTLY COULD WIN BEST OF BRAID.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: F equals P
Sources: Players offer 89 games, prorated money

By Ronald Blum
Associated Press

NEW YORK — Baseball players moved toward teams but remained far apart economically in their latest proposal for starting the pandemic-delayed season, as agreement they receive full prorated salaries while offering to cut the regular season to 89 games.

The proposal by the players association, given to Major League Baseball electronically Tuesday evening without a negotiating session, was detailed by a pair of people familiar with the negotiations. They spoke on condition of anonymity.

MLB did not appear to view the proposal as productive but made no comment. MLB has said that absent an agreement, it could go ahead with a shorter schedule of perhaps 50 games.

Players made their move one day after management cut its proposed schedule from 72 games to 51, plus a two-team series and a two-game first round. They union accepted MLB's plan to expand the postseason from 10 teams to as many as 16. However, if management announces a schedule without an agreement, it would not be able to alter the established postseason format.

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The players’ plan would have the World Series end in mid- to late November, and players said they would accept MLB’s proposal to have the ability to shift post-season games to neutral sites.

Teams say they fear a second wave of the coronavirus and do not want to extend the World Series past October. Deputy Commissioner Dan Halem told the union a 76-game schedule could not be staged unless players agreed to a deal by Wednesday. Players continue to insist on full prorated salaries as specified in the March 26 agreement between the perpetually feuding sides.

MLB says that because the season likely would be played in empty ballparks without fans, the absence of gate-related revenue would lead to a loss of $64,000 for each additional game played, a figure the union questions.

MLB’s proposal would guarantee players 50% of prorated salaries and another 20% if the postseason is completed, and teams would fund a $50 million pool for players’ postseason shares.

Players had been set to earn about $4 billion in salaries this year before opening day was pushed back from March 26 due to the new coronavirus, and the union’s initial economic proposal on May 31 called for a 114-game schedule running through October and salaries totaling $2.8 billion. The schedule in the new plan lowered that to about $2.2 billion.

MLB’s offer Monday was for just under $1.3 billion in salaries, but only about $1 billion would be guaranteed to players contingent on the postseason’s completion.

Mike Trout and Gerrit Cole, the highest-paid players, with salaries of $36 million, would get $197,777,778 each under the union’s plan. MLB’s offer guaranteed each $872,967 with the chance to increase to $1,211,633 or $872,967.

A player at the $563,500 minimum would earn $309,577 under the union plan and up to $244,492 from MLB’s offer. Those at $1 million — about half those on current active rosters — would get $549,883 under the union proposal and up to $389,496 in the MLB formula.

The proposal by the players’ association, given to Major League Baseball electronically Tuesday evening without a negotiating session, was detailed by a pair of people familiar with the negotiations. They spoke on condition of anonymity.

Many baseball greats were drafted late — after 5th round

This year’s baseball draft was shortened to five rounds, meaning the number of players picked was significantly smaller than usual. That could leave several potential contributors among the group of undrafted players.

Although expectations are higher for prospects taken in the first couple of rounds, players drafted much later can do become major league standouts.

Here’s an All-Star team of sorts, comprised only of players taken after the fifth round.

(Through the years, players who flourished as major leaguers — not necessarily the positions they played at the time they were drafted).

**Catcher:** Mike Piazza, Dodgers (62nd round, 1988, 59.6 WAR)

**First base:** Albert Pujols, Cardinals (13th round, 1999, 100.8 WAR)

**Second base:** Weekly players were still making selections by the 62nd round of the 1988 draft, when the Dodgers took Piazza. His father was a friend of manager Tommy Lasorda. Piazza went on to become one of the game’s top hitters, and he is the lowest-drafted player elected to the Hall of Fame.

**Others of note:** Jorge Posada (24th round, 1990), Russell Martin (17th round, 2002)

**Shortstop:** Bill Russell, Dodgers (ninth round, 1966, 31.3 WAR)

Russell actually played in the outfield at the start of his career, but he ultimately appeared in more than 1,700 games at shortstop. He was part of a famously stable infield in Los Angeles along with Ron Cey, Davey Lopes and Steve Garvey.

**Others of note:** Marcus Semien (sixth round, 2011), David Eckstein (19th round, 1997)

**Outfield:** Andre Dawson, Expos (11th round, 1975, 64.8 WAR), Jim Edmonds, Angels (seventh round, 1988, 60.4 WAR), Kenny Lofton, Astros (17th round, 1998, 68.4 WAR)

Dawson went into the Hall of Fame in 2010, and Edmonds won eight Gold Gloves for the Angels and Cardinals. Lofton played baseball at Arizona and was on the team that made the Final Four in 1988. That same year, the Astros drafted him, although he had his best seasons with Cleveland.

**Others of note:** Matt Holliday (seventh round, 1998), Brett Butler (23rd round, 1979), Dave Parker (14th round, 1970), Jose Canseco (15th round, 1982), Lorenzo Cain (17th round, 2004)

**Left-handed pitcher:** Brandon Crawford (25th round, 2007), Scott Kazmir (15th round, 2004), Troy Tulowitzki (17th round, 2009)

**Others of note:** Dave Stieb (17th round, 1980), Chien-Ming Wang (22nd round, 2002), Mark Prior (17th round, 2001)

Wade Boggs was selected in the seventh round of the Major League Baseball Draft in 1976 and made it to the majors in 1982. The following year he won his first of his five batting titles.
Briefly

**MLS to resume season July 8**

Associated Press

Major League Soccer announced Wednesday that its season will resume starting July 8 with a tournament in Florida. The league’s 26 teams will be divided into six groups for the opening round of the tournament played without fans at ESPN’s Wide World of Sports complex at Walt Disney World.

Teams had played just two games to start the season when the league suspended play on March 12 because of the coronavirus outbreak.

While the tournament will be in Florida, players will be sequestered in a resort with a rigorous testing protocol. Each team will have three group matches, played over 16 consecutive days with multiple games a day. The group matches will count toward the regular season.

Sixteen teams will advance to the knockout round, with the winner earning a spot in the 2021 CONCACAF Champions League. The prize pool for the MLS is Back Tournament is $1.1 million, the league said. The title match will be played on Aug. 11. Following the tournament, teams will resume the season in their home markets. It was unclear whether those games would be played with fans in the stadiums.

**Injury means Federer will miss 2020 season**

LONDON — Roger Federer will miss whatever remains of the coronavirus-impacted 2020 tennis season because of a setback in his recovery from surgery on his right knee. The 20-time Grand Slam winner also put on an impressive performance.

He still put on an impressive show in his non-title bout against the Puerto Rican veteran, capturing the sport’s return to the world’s fight capital in a fan-free room at the MGM Grand casino complex’s conference center.

In other combat sports news:

- Former world light-heavyweight boxing champion Oleksandr Gvozdyk has retired, his manager said Wednesday.
- Stevenson won as boxing returns to Vegas

LAS VEGAS — Shakur Stevenson ended the most unusual week of his boxing life with his usual dominance in another victory.

Stevenson stopped Felix Caraballo with a body-punch knockdown in the sixth round Tuesday night in the first major boxing event held in North America since the start of the coronavirus pandemic.

Stevenson (14-0, 8 KOs), the WBO featherweight champion, trained and lived in isolation in the days leading up to the fight. He still put on an impressive show in his non-title bout against the Puerto Rican veteran, capturing the sport’s return to the world’s fight capital in a fan-free room at the MGM Grand casino complex’s conference center.

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Building: Teams being forced to learn on the fly

FROM BACK PAGE

“There’s an element of this that’s kind of like building an airplane as you fly in that we’re learning so much more really every week,” Notre Dame football team Dr. Matt Leiszler said. “But it’s a moving target at times.”

For months, health officials including the NCAA’s chief medical officer have said widespread and efficient COVID-19 testing is pivotal to bringing back sports. Now that exists, and at many schools every player will be tested before he is permitted to enter a team facility.

Texas A&M athletic director Ross Bjork said the school has conducted just under 500 tests on coaches, staff and athletes since May 18. The Pac-12 is the only major college football conference in which all the members have agreed to test all returning athletes for COVID-19.

Athletes testing positive for the disease have already been reported at Arkansas State, Marshall, Alabama, Oklahoma State and elsewhere.

Expect that list to grow, and there is no standardized protocol for testing under the most recent NCAA guidelines, which is why plans are different from school to school. Missouri initially announced it would not test all athletes for COVID-19, then said it would. Michigan State will give its athletes two PCR tests (often done with a nasal swab), with a seven-day quarantine in between, before they use team facilities. Tulane will be giving every football player a PCR and antibody test.

You know, there's nothing that says my testing is going to protect my guys any better than their screening is going to. We don't know, said Dr. Greg Stueart, team physician for Tulane's athletic department. "And probably for most of the schools across the country, you know athletic departments are the canary in the coal mine."

Defending national champion LSU is testing each athlete for coronavirus antibodies upon arrival to campus; some will also get a PCR test to check for an active infection. A positive antibody test at LSU will trigger a PCR test and a positive PCR test means that player will have to isolate for a period of time.

Shelly Mullenix, LSU senior associate athletic director and director of wellness, said some players who test positive for antibodies but negative for COVID-19 will also be isolated depending on symptoms or risk of previous exposure. All players were prescribed a seven-day "quarantine," Mullenix said, after receiving their antibody test.

Having players return to campus infected is worrisome but inevitable. The protocols being put in place are designed to catch and address that. The real challenge is keeping the players from getting infected after they return.

Notre Dame is planning to structure workout groups by academic schedules. Other schools are using a mix of factors such as keeping friends, roommates or position groups together.

As the small groups avoid infection they can be merged to form bigger groups.

Of course, there is only so much schools can do to manage 18- to 22-year-old football players.

"What you worry about is this is two hours a day, right?" Rhodes said. "And so what are student athletes, what are young men as it pertains to football, doing the other 22 hours?"

The message coaches, administrators and medical staff are trying to get across to their players is their behavior is as important as testing, screening and disinfecting. Limit the exposure to people outside the team bubble. That night out at the bar or the weekend trip to the beach could lead to an infection that sets back the whole team — or something worse.

"What we're trying to impress upon them," Stueart said, "is that if this season is important to you, then you have to do things different this year than you have done ever before and maybe even again."

"That's going to be all the installation that you didn't get in in the spring is really going to take place during that period of time," Kelly said Tuesday. "They won't be an opportunity to see skills on display."

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Notre Dame coach Brian Kelly said the extra time on the field with a ball will be valuable for teaching schemes, but not necessarily for assessing player development.

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GARY ROths and THeRAIS WALKER contributed.
**AUTO RACING**

**NASCAR to allow fans back in Florida, Alabama**

By Dan Gelston  
Associated Press

NASCAR is ready to reopen fans.

One of the few sports to run in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic, NASCAR is now the largest to allow fans to return as more states relax their business shutdowns.

NASCAR decided a limited number of fans can attend races this month at Home- 

sted-Miami Speedway and Talladega Superspeedway. NASCAR says all fans will be scanned before entering, required to wear face coverings, mandated to social distance at six feet, and will not have access to the infield, among other revised op-

erational protocols.

NASCAR will allow up to 1,000 Florida service members, representing the Home-

stead Air Reserve Base and U.S. Southern Command in Doral, to attend the Cup Ser-

ies race Sunday at Homestead-Miami and view the race from the grandstands.

Talladega Superspeedway in Alabama will allow up to 5,000 guests in the front-

stretch grandstands/towers for the June 21 Cup race. There will be limited moto-

to/home/camping spots available outside the track.

“This is a cautious, conservative approach,” said Daryl Wolfe, NASCAR executive vice president and chief sales and operations officer. “We feel confident in our plan. Also it doesn’t mean that we won’t also have add-

tional learnings and adapt our plan going forward. That’s the whole purpose of being very slow, methodical in phasing this in.”

NASCAR has returned to racing, but had not allowed fans inside the tracks in North Carolina, South Carolina and Georgia.

“We’re going to have a lot of hand sanitiz-

ing, hand washing,” said John Bobo, NAS-

CAR vice president of racing operations.

“One of the things that I’m kind of proud of is we’re going to have a clean facility that’s at track constantly cleaning every-

thing very visibly for every guest that’s there to know we’re doing everything we can to keep them safe. We feel confident in the plan.”

Bobo declined to reveal if NASCAR has had anyone test positive for COVID-19 since racing resumed May 17 at Darлин-

gton Raceway. Supercross said earlier this month no one tested positive for the virus when it resumed with 705 riders, team members and race officials on site.

The Cup Series race Wednesday night at Martinsville Speedway and a double-

header weekend June 27 and 28 at Pocono Raceway will be held without fans.

NASCAR said it was prepared to handle the increased crowds. Wolfe said there could be limited hospitality at Talladega.

“We’re going to have PPE there for fans if they didn’t bring their own,” Bobo said.

“We’re going to instruct fans to do it. Then staff is also going to make sure that we do have compliance in that area when needed absolutely.”

Talladega tickets will be sold on a first-

come, first-served basis to fans who pur-

chased tickets or reserved camping for the originally scheduled April 26 race. There will be limited menus and limited food preparation onsite. NASCAR had set guidelines to safely hold the events using CDC guidelines on social distancing and personal protective equipment.

Confederate flag might be on way out for NASCAR

BY DAN GELSTON  
Associated Press

The familiar scene of Confed-

erate flags waved by fans at NAS-

CAR tracks could soon be a relic of racing’s good old boy roots.

Bubba Wallace — the lone black driver in the NASCAR Cup Series — has pushed the “peaceful protests” in Char-

lotte, N.C., NASCAR has said it will allow fans in limited numbers this week at Homestead-Miami Speedway and at Talladega Superspeedway.

“Bring your 50 stars flag,” NASCAR historian Dan Pierce said.

But as Confederate monuments are toppled and calls for social justice continue to ring out, those fans may have run out of time.

Wallace was to make anoth-

er statement Wednesday when NASCAR returns to Martinsville Speedway in Virginia. He is driv-

ing a #BlackLivesMatter paint scheme for the Richard Petty Motorsports No. 43 Chevrolet.

“I think it’s one of those things that some of us are just ignorant about and don’t really think about some
type of way about something that we have seen, an object they have seen flying,” Wallace told CNN. “No one should feel un-

comfortable when they come to a NASCAR race. So it starts with Confederate flags. Get them out of there. They have no place for them.”

Wallace arrived in the sport hyped as a trailblazer of sorts in the arena of racial injustice.

Wallace — who wore a black T-shirt with the words “I Can’t Breathe” at Sunday’s race — seized the moment and issued his most compelling comments yet on the topic of race and racing:

“My next step would be to get rid of all Confederate flags.”


**Confederate flag flies in the infield before a 2015 NASCAR Xfinity auto race at Darlington Raceway in Darlington, S.C.**

**Bubba Wallace the only African American driver in the NASCAR Cup, is calling for a ban on the Confederate flag in the sport.**

**Mike McCarron/AP**
Building bubbles

As COVID-19 rages, teams take cautious steps toward season

By Ralph D. Russo
Associated Press

College football is scheduled to kick off in less than three months and there are plenty of reasons to be hopeful that games will be played Labor Day weekend.

Universities across the country are taking the first cautious, detailed steps toward playing football in a pandemic, attempting to build COVID-19-free bubbles around their teams as players begin voluntary workouts.

“I think the start of the race has a lot to do with how you finish it,” Baylor athletic director Mack Rhoades said.

Thousands of athletes will be tested for COVID-19, though not all. Masks will need to be worn — most of the time. Some schools will have players pumping iron this week. Others are waiting a few more weeks.

SEE BUILDING ON PAGE 22

Inside:
- NCAA working on plan for additional preparation time this summer, Page 22

‘What you worry about is this is two hours a day, right? And so what are student athletes ... doing the other 22 hours?’

Mack Rhoades
Baylor AD

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