

Fauci to Warn Senate of ‘Needless Suffering and Death’

The New York Times

May 13, 2020 Wednesday 22:31 EST

Copyright 2020 The New York Times Company All Rights Reserved

Section: US

Length: 5395 words

Highlight: The risks of reopening the country too soon will be a focus of government hearings on Tuesday. The White House's new mask requirement won't apply to President Trump.

Body

The risks of reopening the country too soon will be a focus of government hearings on Tuesday. The White House's new mask requirement won't apply to President Trump.

This briefing has ended. Follow our latest coverage of the coronavirus pandemic.

Fauci will issue a stark warning on the risks of reopening too soon.

Dr. Anthony S. Fauci, the nation's top infectious disease expert and a central figure in the government's response to the coronavirus, intends to warn the Senate on Tuesday that Americans would experience “needless suffering and death” if the country opens up too quickly.

Dr. Fauci, who has emerged as perhaps the nation's most respected voice during the coronavirus crisis, is one of four top government doctors scheduled to testify remotely at a high-profile hearing on Tuesday before the Senate Health Education, Labor and Pensions Committee.

It will be his first appearance before Congress since President Trump declared a national emergency in March, and a chance for him to address lawmakers and the public without President Trump by his side. He has been largely out of public view since last week, when Mr. Trump abandoned his daily briefings with his coronavirus task force.

In an email to the New York Times reporter Sheryl Gay Stolberg late Monday night, Dr. Fauci laid out what he intended to tell senators.

“The major message that I wish to convey to the Senate HLP committee tomorrow is the danger of trying to open the country prematurely,” he wrote. “If we skip over the checkpoints in the guidelines to: ‘Open America Again,’ then we risk the danger of multiple outbreaks throughout the country. This will not only result in needless suffering and death, but would actually set us back on our quest to return to normal.”

Dr. Fauci was referring to a three-phase White House plan, Opening Up America Again, that lays out guidelines for state officials considering reopening their economies. Among its recommendations: States should have a “downward trajectory of positive tests” or a “downward trajectory of documented cases” of coronavirus over two weeks, while conducting robust contact tracing and “sentinel surveillance” testing of asymptomatic people in vulnerable populations, such as nursing homes.

Fauci to Warn Senate of 'Needless Suffering and Death'

But many states are reopening without meeting those guidelines, seeking to ease the economic pain as millions of working people and small-business owners are facing ruin while sheltering at home.

"We're not reopening based on science," said Dr. Thomas R. Frieden, a former director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. "We're reopening based on politics, ideology and public pressure. And I think it's going to end badly."

The much-feared second wave of infection may not wait until fall, many scientists say. Instead, it may become a series of wavelets occurring unpredictably across the country.

Dr. Fauci himself is now in "modified quarantine," he has said, after what he described as a "low risk" exposure to someone infected with the virus.

The White House plans to ask officials — but not Trump — to wear face masks.

New guidance released to Trump administration employees will require them to wear masks when inside the West Wing, according to an internal memo released on Monday and obtained by The New York Times.

"As an additional layer of protection, we are requiring everyone who enters the West Wing to wear a mask or face covering," read the memo, which was distributed to staff members through the White House management office.

The new guidance is an abrupt establishment of a policy after two aides working near the president — a military valet and Katie Miller, the vice president's spokeswoman — tested positive for the coronavirus last week.

The new rules are not expected to apply to President Trump and Vice President Mike Pence, who for weeks have downplayed the need to wear masks, an attitude that had trickled down to staff members. The policy was first reported by The Washington Post.

But hours after the White House instituted the new rule, Mr. Trump denied that any system designed to keep aides safe had broken down. He said he had required that everyone wear masks, insisting that the disease was "very well-contained" at the White House.

"It can happen," Mr. Trump said. "It's the hidden enemy. Remember that."

The White House also made some smaller changes on Monday, including displaying signage encouraging social distancing at entryways and asking aides if they were displaying symptoms during routine temperature checks, according to officials.

The spread of the virus into the White House comes amid a potential collision between Washington residents and the area's largest employer, the federal government. The region is not yet open for business, and cases of the virus are climbing in Washington, Maryland and Virginia.

Dr. Anand Parekh, the chief medical adviser for the Bipartisan Policy Center, said the several hundred thousand federal employees in the region should not return to work until several criteria have been met, including the presence of personal protective equipment.

"Their gradual return," he said, "should be predicated upon the region having adequate testing capacity, a decline in confirmed cases for two to three weeks, a health care system that is under capacity with adequate P.P.E. and critical medical material, and a public health infrastructure that has enough contract tracers."

In Washington, where few of those benchmarks have been met, the percentage of positive tests is roughly double the upper limit that experts consider sufficient to consider reopening, with confirmed cases still on the upswing. As of Monday morning, there have been 6,389 total cases in the District of Columbia and 328 deaths, a higher rate of death than in most states. The city reported 19 deaths on Friday, the most in Washington in a single day.

Fauci to Warn Senate of 'Needless Suffering and Death'

When the city reopens, it will beckon thousands of staff members serving senior officials and flocks of lobbyists, service personnel and tourists. City officials have limited autonomy to challenge any federal decisions, given the government's control over a large percentage of the work force and vast swaths of buildings and land.

The baseball season could open in July, with empty stands (to start).

Major League Baseball has formalized its plan to return to the field, with teams agreeing Monday on a proposal to send to the players' union. It calls for an 82-game season — rather than the usual 162 — that would start without fans in early July and would include an expanded playoff field.

The plan must clear major obstacles. Even if the union accepts it, the sides would also have to agree on a salary structure for players. The league would also need to have enough tests for players and employees without depleting the public supply, and agree with the union on working conditions, including protocols in case of positive tests.

To minimize travel, teams would play only against divisional rivals as well as teams in the corresponding geographic division of the opposite league.

Teams would also carry expanded rosters, perhaps up to 50 players, with at least 30 available for each game; rosters usually number 26 active players.

Owners want the players to share in the industry's financial burdens. The league has proposed paying players based on how much money is earned during the shortened season, with teams splitting revenues 50-50 with athletes.

At least one player, the Washington Nationals closer Sean Doolittle, urged caution.

"Bear with me," he said on Twitter, "but it feels like we've zoomed past the most important aspect of any M.L.B. restart plan: health protections for players, families, staff, stadium workers and the workforce it would require to resume a season."

Elon Musk announces that Tesla will restart production despite a county order.

Elon Musk, the chief executive of Tesla, said on Monday that the electric-car company was resuming production at its assembly plant in Fremont, Calif., even though it had not yet been cleared to do so by local health authorities.

"Tesla is restarting production today against Alameda County rules," he announced on Twitter. "I will be on the line with everyone else. If anyone is arrested, I ask that it only be me."

The county's health officer has said he hopes to work out an agreement with Tesla to open the plant on May 18. The plant is Tesla's main source of revenue and has been closed since early April. County officials have not authorized the resumption of indoor manufacturing over fears that the coronavirus could spread among large groups working in proximity.

In an email that was sent on Monday and that was reviewed by The New York Times, Tesla's head of human resources in North America, Valerie Workman, told employees they would be contacted within 24 hours about when to report for work.

The state has authorized a resumption of manufacturing, Gov. Gavin Newsom said on Monday, but that "we recognize localism" and that "if a county doesn't want to go as far," local orders would prevail.

To reopen, Washington State restaurants must record information about customers.

Restaurants in Washington State that want to open their doors for dine-in service will have to keep a log of customers and their contact information, according to requirements made public on Monday night.

Fauci to Warn Senate of 'Needless Suffering and Death'

The new rules allow restaurants in eight small counties that have gained approval from the state to begin serving customers in their establishments. Other requirements include hand sanitizer at entrances, no bar seating, no more than 50 percent occupancy, cloth face coverings for all workers and single-use menus.

The tracking rule requires restaurants offering table service to record a daily log of customers that will be kept for 30 days. The log should include the person's contact information and the time the person visited.

State officials said the requirement would help with contact tracing if a case linked to a given restaurant emerges.

While Washington has started opening small counties that have not reported a new coronavirus case in at least three weeks, the rules also set the stage for other parts of the state that could have restaurant reopenings in the coming weeks.

In Colorado, public health officials on Monday suspended the license of a restaurant that opened on Mother's Day in defiance of a ban on dine-in services, the latest escalation in mounting tensions between state authorities and residents who oppose restrictions.

The restaurant, C&C Coffee and Kitchen, in Castle Rock, attracted widespread criticism, as well as support, after videos posted online on Sunday showed customers — most of whom were not wearing masks — filling tables and not bothering to maintain social distance.

"I'm so happy so many people came out to support the Constitution and stand up for what is right," April Arellano, the owner, told The Castle Rock News-Press on Sunday. "We did our time. We did our two weeks. We did more than two weeks ... and we were failing. We had to do something."

But public health officials on Monday ordered the restaurant to close until it complied with a state order prohibiting dine-in eating. Gov. Jared Polis called the restaurant an "immediate health hazard" during a news conference and urged residents to abide by public health protocols.

"We all have laws that we agree with and laws we disagree with," Mr. Polis said. "But it's our responsibility as Coloradans, and as Americans, to follow the law."

Los Angeles County sheriff says inmates tried to infect themselves by sharing cups.

Inmates in Los Angeles County jails have attempted to infect themselves with Covid-19 in an effort to be released during the pandemic, the county sheriff, Alex Villanueva, said on Monday.

Surveillance footage from one correctional facility appeared to showed inmates sipping water from a shared bottle and a plastic foam cup, in what Sheriff Villanueva said was an effort to spread the infection.

"As a direct result of the behavior seen in the video, 21 men tested positive for Covid-19 within a week," officials said in a news release.

Inmates also tried to create false symptoms by drinking hot water in an effort to raise their oral temperatures immediately before being checked by a nurse, the sheriff said. Another video captured a separate group of inmates "huffing" on a face mask that they passed around, officials said.

"Their end game was to try to force their release by having a widespread propagation of the virus within our custody environment," Sheriff Villanueva said in an interview.

Since late February, Los Angeles County has released more than 5,300 inmates from county jails, the sheriff said. Nearly 5,000 inmates have been quarantined, and 357 have tested positive for the virus; 117 have fully recovered.

Officials said they discovered the inmates' efforts to infect themselves while investigating increases in positive cases at jail facilities in April.

Fauci to Warn Senate of 'Needless Suffering and Death'

Trump uses misleading numbers to praise his administration's virus response.

President Trump made a series of misleading statements on Monday at a Rose Garden news conference praising his administration's response, declaring that "we have met the moment, and we have prevailed," on testing.

Using a misleading benchmark, Mr. Trump, flanked by large posters that proclaimed "America leads the world in testing," announced that more tests had been completed in the United States per capita than in South Korea.

"No matter how you look at it, America is leading the world in testing," Mr. Trump declared, leaving out the fact that South Korea had carried out rigorous testing early and flattened its curve. South Korea has reported 256 deaths, while the United States has reported over 80,000.

Mr. Trump also misrepresented the status of cases in the United States.

"The numbers around our country are dropping very substantially," he said, although data compiled by The New York Times shows that cases in the United States are declining slightly, not substantially, and are growing in some areas. More than 20,000 new cases have been announced almost every day in recent weeks, not the sharp descent scientists had hoped for.

The president was most enthusiastic about what he said was his administration's track record on testing.

"We are testing more people per capita than South Korea, the United Kingdom, France, Sweden, Finland and many other countries," Mr. Trump said.

This was accurate, but omitted at least 25 countries where testing on a per capita basis was higher than the United States, including Germany, Russia, Spain, Canada, Switzerland, according to statistics compiled by Our World in Data.

Louisiana joins the ranks of states that are reopening some businesses.

In Louisiana, which had one of the earliest outbreaks in the United States after Mardi Gras, Gov. John Bel Edwards said on Monday that he would lift the state's stay-at-home order on Friday and allow churches, hair and nail salons, gyms and casinos to open with some restrictions.

In South Carolina, where dine-in restaurant service resumed Monday, Gov. Henry McMaster said that on May 18, restrictions would be lifted on gyms, spas and pools, along with barbershops, hair and nail salons and tattoo parlors.

As states around the country weigh reopening, many are looking to the experience of Georgia, one of the first states to allow a broad array of businesses to reopen. Two weeks after Georgia eased its restrictions, the number of new cases there has remained relatively steady — though experts cautioned it was still too soon to assess the public health effects.

"It's kind of a wait and see," said Andreas Handel, an associate professor of epidemiology and biostatistics at the University of Georgia, who estimated that people who caught the virus in the first week after reopening may only now be showing symptoms and getting tested. It can take several more days after diagnosis for new cases to show up in data.

"Personally, I don't feel like I can say yet what the impact is," he said. "By the end of May, I feel like I would know better."

Under the first phase of Louisiana's reopening plan, which is expected to remain in place until June 6, nonessential businesses cannot exceed 25 percent of their occupancy. In addition, employees must wear face masks and customers must follow social distancing.

Fauci to Warn Senate of 'Needless Suffering and Death'

"Without your hard work and compliance to the stay-at-home order, we wouldn't have been able to accomplish what we have accomplished," Mr. Edwards said.

But he added: "This isn't 'mission accomplished.' We're not declaring victory."

In Illinois, which is still under a stay-at-home order, a staff member for Gov. J.B. Pritzker has tested positive, prompting the governor to order all employees in the office to temporarily work from home. Mr. Pritzker will work from home as well.

Gov. Charlie Baker of Massachusetts said on Monday that the state planned to follow a four-stage strategy for reopening businesses, but he cautioned that it would only go ahead if there was a "sustained downward trend" in virus-related cases and deaths.

Pressed by two female reporters, Trump abruptly ends his news conference.

President Trump abruptly ended his Rose Garden news conference shortly after a Chinese-American reporter pressed him on why he suggested she "ask China" in response to her question on virus death rates.

Weijia Jiang, a White House correspondent for CBS News, asked Mr. Trump why he had created a "global competition" by claiming that the United States had done far better than any other country on testing its citizens for the virus.

"Why does that matter," Ms. Jiang asked, "if every day Americans are still losing their lives and we're still seeing more cases every day?"

"Well," Mr. Trump responded, "they're losing their lives everywhere in the world, and maybe that's a question you should ask China."

Ms. Jiang, who had been leaning into a contact-free microphone to ask her question, lowered her face mask and paused for a couple seconds before asking, "Sir, why are you saying that to me, specifically?"

Kaitlan Collins of CNN tried to ask Mr. Trump a question after briefly ceding her turn at the microphone to let Ms. Jiang follow up, but Mr. Trump tried to move on. After Ms. Collins remained at the microphone and twice tried to ask her question, Mr. Trump abruptly ended his news conference and left the Rose Garden.

Mr. Trump has frequently accused female journalists — often reporters of color — of asking "nasty" questions and not showing enough deference to the rosy pictures he has tried to paint about his pandemic response efforts.

A divide between red and blue states is driving a congressional dispute over aid.

When Senator Mitt Romney of Utah strode into a luncheon with fellow Republicans last week, he was carrying an oversized poster that bore a blunt message: "Blue states aren't the only ones who are screwed."

Two days later, Senator Rick Scott, Republican of Florida, made the opposite pitch, arriving at another party gathering with his own placard that showed how rosy his state's financial picture was compared to those of three Democratic states: California, Illinois and New York. Why should Congress send help to struggling states and cities, he argued, when the bulk of the aid would go to Democratic strongholds with histories of fiscal mismanagement?

The two senators — both former governors — were taking sides in what is emerging as a contentious debate among Republicans shaping the next sweeping package of federal coronavirus relief. With many states and cities experiencing devastating fiscal crises during the pandemic, Democrats have joined bipartisan groups of governors and mayors in pressing for as much as \$700 billion for troubled states, cities and towns.

But Republicans are divided over how much aid to provide and what conditions to place on the money. Much of the dispute is being driven by the political bent of the states that stand to benefit or lose.

Fauci to Warn Senate of 'Needless Suffering and Death'

The disagreement is another reminder that as Mr. Trump and a divided Congress make decisions about federal relief, politics is never far from their calculations. Now Democrats are urging action on the next phase of assistance even as Mr. Trump and Republicans argue that the government should wait to see how the economy is faring before enacting another sweeping stimulus law.

States run by Democrats and Republicans alike are projecting steep drops in tax collections and weighing spending cuts.

Gov. Gavin Newsom of California said on Monday that five Western states had sent a letter to congressional leaders requesting an additional \$1 trillion in assistance to states across the nation. "This is the requirement of this moment," Mr. Newsom said.

A new study offers details of American children seriously sickened by the virus.

As concern grows over the potential for children to become seriously ill from the virus, a new study paints the most detailed picture yet of American children who were treated in intensive care units throughout the United States as the pandemic was taking hold in the country.

None of the children in the study, published Monday in the journal JAMA Pediatrics, were stricken by the mysterious new inflammatory syndrome linked to the virus that can cause life-threatening cardiac issues in children. They experienced the virus's primary line of attack: the severe respiratory problems that have afflicted tens of thousands of American adults.

The study looked at 48 cases from 14 hospitals of infants during late March and early April. Two of the children died. Eighteen were placed on ventilators, and two of them remained on breathing machines more than a month later, said Dr. Lara S. Shekerdemian, the chief of critical care at Texas Children's Hospital and an author of the study.

A vast majority of the patients — 40 children, including the two who died — had pre-existing medical conditions. Nearly half of those patients had complex developmental disorders.

"You can read this either like a half-empty glass or a half-full glass," said Dr. Daniele De Luca, the president-elect of the European Society for Pediatric and Neonatal Intensive Care, who was not involved in the study. "At the end of the day, we have to realize that this disease can actually be serious in children."

New York will begin a limited reopening upstate.

In the most concrete step toward restarting his battered state, Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo of New York announced on Monday that three upstate regions might partially reopen this weekend, with limited construction, manufacturing and curbside retail.

The move would come 10 weeks after the state's first confirmed case of the virus, which has killed more than 26,000 people in New York and sickened hundreds of thousands more. But that toll has been largely borne by New York City and its suburbs, with far fewer cases and fatalities thus far in the state's more rural regions.

Both city and state data have suggested that New York City has made progress in containing the outbreak and reducing transmission. But a ban on large gatherings and the widespread closures of nonessential businesses probably would not end before June, Mayor Bill de Blasio said on Monday before the governor's announcement.

On Monday, the governor cautioned that the reopening would be gradual, and that it was predicated on the infection rate in those regions remaining low. Officials would "be able to pull the plug or slow down the increase in activity" if the virus spread more quickly.

The state's nonessential businesses have been closed and large gatherings have been banned since March 22, under a stay-at-home order set to expire this week. The state would allow certain low-risk business and activities to

Fauci to Warn Senate of 'Needless Suffering and Death'

resume operating on Friday, including landscaping and gardening work, outdoor recreation such as tennis and drive-in movie theaters.

The number of new virus hospitalizations was at its lowest number since March 19, before the state's shutdown began, Mr. Cuomo said. An additional 161 people had died of the virus — the lowest daily death toll since March 27, the last time that reported deaths were under 200.

Pennsylvania's governor comes under attack from Trump.

President Trump on Monday lashed out at Pennsylvania's governor, a Democrat, accusing him of seeking to delay reopening the state in an effort to damage the president's re-election campaign.

"Don't play politics," Mr. Trump said on Twitter. "The great people of Pennsylvania want their freedom now, and they are fully aware of what that entails," Mr. Trump wrote, adding "be safe, move quickly!"

Responding to Mr. Trump, Pennsylvania Gov. Tom Wolf said, "I don't know how you stay safe and move quickly."

The president's attack comes as states across the country are grappling with keeping residents safe and lifting restrictions on businesses. In Pennsylvania at least a half dozen counties announced in recent days that they would defy Mr. Wolf's stay-at-home order and that local district attorneys would decline to prosecute any violations of the order.

Mr. Wolf has said the easing of orders is based on where counties are in terms of cases. To county-level politicians defying his order, he said they were "engaging in behavior that is both selfish and unsafe."

Speaking during a news conference on Monday, Mr. Wolf warned that businesses operating in defiance were opening themselves up to an array of penalties, from the loss of liquor licenses and health department certification to the cancellation of insurance. He also threatened to withhold funding for counties that violate the order.

"The commonwealth closed down the state in a measured, staged manner and we're reopening in the same measured, staged manner," he said. "The irresponsible thing to do, as I said earlier, is to just willy nilly go back and pretend we can wave a magic wand and go back into business and suspend the reality of this virus that surrounding us."

The governor, whose response to the virus has gotten broad approval in the state in recent polls, has separated all of the state's counties into different phases for easing restrictions based on certain conditions. By the end of the week, a little more than half of the state's counties are expected to be partially opened.

A watchdog is investigating whether a Trump administration official steered aid to Alaska tribes.

A federal watchdog is investigating whether a top Interior Department official violated ethics rules when she helped decide how a critical tranche of funds for Native American tribes in the \$2.2 trillion stimulus law should be distributed.

Several tribal governments are suing the federal government over its decision to allow Alaska Native Corporations, for-profit businesses that support Alaska natives, to receive a portion of the \$8 billion set aside for tribes.

Lawmakers and some tribal leaders have raised concerns about the involvement of Tara Sweeney, the assistant secretary of Indian Affairs, in that decision. Ms. Sweeney is a shareholder in the Arctic Slope Regional Corporation, the wealthiest of the Alaska Native corporations, having previously served as its executive vice president of external affairs.

The Interior Department's inspector general informed lawmakers on Friday that he would review Ms. Sweeney's role and that of other department officials in the matter "to determine whether there was adherence to ethics rules and regulations and compliance with the ethics pledge" related to the funding.

Fauci to Warn Senate of 'Needless Suffering and Death'

The inspector general, Mark Lee Greenblatt, also told Senator Tom Udall, Democrat of New Mexico, that in late April the department had started investigating allegations that the Interior Department had inappropriately leaked sensitive tribal data submitted as part of the application for the relief, according to a letter obtained by The New York Times.

The data breach intensified frustration among tribal governments, who are among the most vulnerable and hardest hit by the pandemic, about how the federal government was handling the distribution of the critical aid. The funding was frozen until last week amid the legal dispute about how it should be parceled out.

Mr. Udall, the top Democrat on the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs, had requested a review of both episodes and asked that the department give his panel "departmental ethics guidance and/or waivers granted to Ms. Sweeney related to her potential financial conflicts of interest, direct or imputed to her."

The Interior Department did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Consumers are pessimistic about home prices and keeping their jobs.

Many consumers expect to lose their jobs and see home prices stall — or even decline — over the coming year, according to a Federal Reserve survey. Given that peoples' homes are often their largest investment, that could spell even more trouble for the economy.

For the first time since the Federal Reserve Bank of New York started its survey of consumers in 2013, the median consumer did not expect home prices to increase over the next year. More than 44 percent of April respondents actually expected home prices to decline, and that pessimism was broad-based across demographic groups and regions.

As recently as February, consumers expected 3 percent home price appreciation. The swift deterioration in their outlook underlines how much the coronavirus lockdown, which has left millions out of work and has made loans harder to come by, could threaten the housing industry.

Mortgage credit availability has tumbled to its lowest level since late 2014, a Mortgage Bankers Association index showed last week, as lenders shy away from borrowers with low credit scores and those looking for large mortgages. That could blunt the economic benefit of the Fed's recent rate cuts, as consumers struggle to benefit directly from lower borrowing costs.

Consumers were glum along other dimensions, too. They increasingly expected to lose their jobs, putting the chances over the coming year at 20.9 percent in April, a new series high.

of staff, David Cleary, said in a statement that the Republican senator tested negative on May 7 and had not shown any symptoms.

Mr. Alexander decided not to return to Washington and will self-quarantine in Tennessee "out of an abundance of caution," Mr. Cleary said.

Biden attacks Trump's leadership in responding to the pandemic.

Former Vice President Joseph R. Biden Jr., the presumptive Democratic presidential nominee, criticized Mr. Trump's response to the virus in an op-ed and called his strategy of deflecting blame "childish" and divisive.

Citing the Americans who continue to fall ill and die from the disease, the devastated economy and false promises about how much the federal government would help the states, Mr. Biden made the case that Mr. Trump is not equipped to lead the country at such a critical time.

"It is an extraordinary moment — the kind that begs for urgent, steady, empathetic, unifying leadership," Mr. Biden wrote in the opinion piece, which was published by The Washington Post.

Fauci to Warn Senate of 'Needless Suffering and Death'

Mr. Biden's comments come as states are grappling with striking the appropriate balance between physical and economic health. Many states are struggling without sufficient federal support, he said, something the president has the power to provide.

"That responsibility falls on Trump's shoulders — but he isn't up to the task."

Mr. Biden also criticized Mr. Trump for not following through on a promise to get testing equipment to states — a key tool for governors who are considering easing restrictions.

"It was a baldfaced lie when he said it, and it still isn't remotely true," Mr. Biden wrote.

Follow updates from our international correspondents.

Many countries have falling rates of infection, hospitalizations and deaths. But with no vaccine, they are moving cautiously toward reopening, wary of a surge in new cases.

Reporting was contributed by Wilson Andrews, Mike Baker, Pam Belluck, Julie Bosman, Audra D.S. Burch, Emily Cochrane, Michael Cooper, John Eligon, Emily Flitter, Michael Gold, Dana Goldstein, Maggie Haberman, Tyler Kepner, Isadora Kosofsky, Dan Levin, Jesse McKinley, Donald G. McNeil Jr., Sarah Mervosh, Amelia Nierenberg, Nicole Perlroth, Matt Phillips, Linda Qiu, Campbell Robertson, Katie Rogers, Elliot Ross, Katey Rusch, David E. Sanger, Marc Santora, Eric Schmitt, Michael D. Shear, Natasha Singer, Jeanna Smialek, Casey Smith, Jennifer Steinhauer, Sheryl Gay Stolberg, Eileen Sullivan, Vanessa Swales, Jim Tankersley, Tracey Tully and Neil Vigdor.

Load-Date: May 13, 2020