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## Research Hopes Die on a Cracking Glacier

Antarctic ice swallowed instruments meant to measure melting, but some valuable data partly salvaged the yearslong effort. Page D8.

## Justices Ask Employees for Secrecy Agreements

By JODI KANTOR

In November of 2024, two weeks after voters returned Donald J. Trump to office, Chief Justice John G. Roberts Jr. summoned employees of the U.S. Supreme Court for an unusual announcement. Facing them in a grand conference room beneath ornate chandeliers, he requested they each sign a nondisclosure agreement promising to keep the court's inner workings secret.

The chief justice acted after a series of unusual leaks of internal court documents, most notably of the decision overturning the right to abortion, and news reports

### Already Cryptic, Court Seeks to Close Grip on Information

about ethical lapses by the justices. Trust in the institution was languishing at a historic low. Debate was intensifying over whether the black box institution should be more transparent.

Instead, the chief justice tightened the court's hold on information. Its employees have long been expected to stay silent about what they witness behind the scenes. But starting that autumn, in a

move that has not been previously reported, the chief justice converted what was once a norm into a formal contract, according to five people familiar with the shift.

Over the years, journalists and authors have sought to penetrate the court, and the justices have tried varying methods to guard its secrets. Some generations of clerks, but not others, said they were asked to sign a different kind of confidentiality pledge.

The New York Times has not reviewed the new agreements. But people familiar with them said they appeared to be more forceful and understood them to threaten legal action if an employee re-

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