

PRESIDENT IN HOSPITAL AS HE BATTLES COVID

POLITICAL MEMO

Now There’s No Spinning Away Pandemic’s Toll

By ALEXANDER BURNS

The 2020 election was always going to end like this. Perhaps not precisely like this. Perhaps not with the president and the first lady contracting the coronavirus, along with the head of the Republican National Committee and members of the White House staff. Perhaps not with the campaign calendar thrown into disarray and the remaining debates in jeopardy.

But if the nature of this October climax was unpredictable, it seemed all but foreordained that the coronavirus pandemic would dominate the campaign to the end. And for all of the tumult of the race between President Trump and Joseph R. Biden Jr. — for all of the other currents battering the country and its leaders in an election year — the issue of the virus has never retreated as the overwhelming factor.

As a singular force in the country’s political life, the pandemic has resisted Mr. Trump’s efforts to change the subject and quashed the wishful thinking of countless voters who shared his hope it would fade quickly. It has endured through a season of racial justice protests and spasms of vandalism and violence, through the death of a Supreme Court justice and the revelations of Mr. Trump’s personal tax returns and a fiasco of a presidential debate just this week.

And after all of the efforts by Mr. Trump to dismiss the disease as a threat, and all of the angst among his opponents that he might manage to convince voters he was right, his diagnosis confirmed with a neon exclamation point the impossibility of that goal.

Anne-Marie Slaughter, the head of New America, a liberal-leaning think tank, said the “omnipresence” of the pandemic had

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Dueling Camps Face Unknown In Final Stretch

By JONATHAN MARTIN and MAGGIE HABERMAN

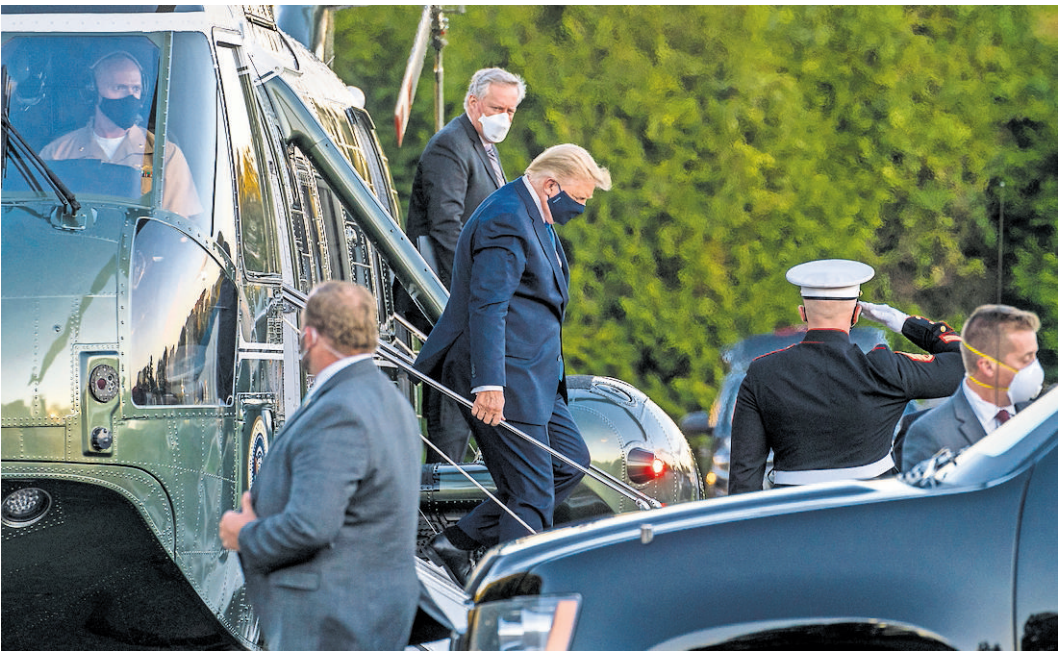
WASHINGTON — President Trump’s announcement on Friday that he had contracted the coronavirus upended the presidential race in an instant, leaving both sides to confront a wrenching set of strategic choices and unexpected questions that will help shape the final month before Election Day.

As the president boarded Marine One to fly to the Walter Reed National Military Medical Center for treatment, his aides announced that they were suspending his campaign events and those of his family members, who are his most ubiquitous surrogates. Privately, his top advisers expressed shock at the turn of events and hope that Mr. Trump’s symptoms would remain mild and he could at least begin appearing on television next week.

At the same time, Joseph R. Biden Jr., Mr. Trump’s Democratic rival, disclosed that he had tested negative for the virus and continued to campaign, beginning with a campaign trip on Friday to Michigan.

With Mr. Biden already leading in the polls, and Mr. Trump’s electoral prospects dependent on his ability to campaign, the president has little time to change the trajectory of the race. The fate of his re-

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Friday Oct. 2 At about 1 a.m., President Trump announced on Twitter that he and his wife, Melania, had tested positive. Late in the day, he was taken to Walter Reed Hospital for several days. His campaign canceled all in-person events.

Thursday Oct. 1 Mr. Trump held a fund-raiser at his golf course in Bedminster, N.J., and, after returning to the White House, confirmed on Twitter at 10:44 p.m. that Hope Hicks, a close personal adviser, had tested positive for the virus.



ERIN SCHAFF/THE NEW YORK TIMES

Wednesday Sept. 30 Ms. Hicks began feeling ill after traveling with Mr. Trump to a rally in Duluth, Minn., and a fund-raiser in Shorewood, Minn. She was isolated aboard Air Force One on the trip back to Washington.

Tuesday Sept. 29 Debating Joseph R. Biden Jr. in Cleveland, Mr. Trump mocked Mr. Biden for frequently wearing a mask. When Mr. Biden said experts advocated using them, Mr. Trump responded, “They’ve also said the opposite.”

Monday Sept. 28 Mr. Trump met on the South Lawn with workers from the Lordstown (Ohio) Motors plant, then held an event in the Rose Garden to announce a new virus testing strategy. “I say it all the time, we are rounding the corner.”

Sunday Sept. 27 After visiting his golf course in Sterling, Va., Mr. Trump held a news conference at the White House and a reception for Gold Star families attended by his wife, Melania, and Vice President Mike Pence and his wife, Karen.



DOUG MILLS/THE NEW YORK TIMES

Saturday Sept. 26 Mr. Trump introduced Judge Amy Coney Barrett as his Supreme Court pick. Senators Mike Lee and Thom Tillis were among attendees who tested positive days later. Mr. Trump also held a rally in Middletown, Pa.

Experimental Treatment Given — Stay to Last for a ‘Few Days’

By PETER BAKER and MAGGIE HABERMAN

WASHINGTON — President Trump was hospitalized on Friday evening after learning he had the coronavirus and experiencing what aides called coughing, congestion and fever, throwing the nation’s leadership into uncertainty and destabilizing an already volatile campaign only 32 days before the election.

Mr. Trump was flown to Walter Reed National Military Medical Center after being given an experimental antibody treatment as the White House rushed to cope with a commander in chief infected by a virus that has killed more than 208,000 people in the United States. Officials said he would remain in the hospital for several days and canceled upcoming campaign events.

The White House shrouded Mr. Trump’s condition in secrecy, saying little more than that he had “mild symptoms,” and officials characterized the hospital stay as a precautionary measure. But the normally voluble president remained almost entirely out of public view, skipped a telephone call with governors at the last minute and uncharacteristically stayed

off Twitter nearly all day while people close to the situation said his fever and other symptoms worsened as the hours wore on.

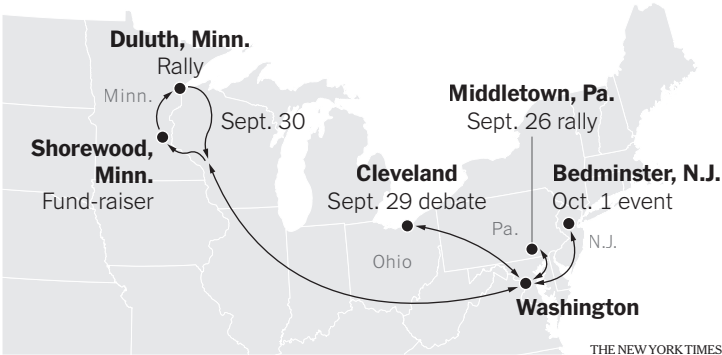
“I want to thank everybody for the tremendous support,” Mr. Trump, wearing a suit and tie but appearing unusually pale and lethargic, said in an 18-second video taped just before getting on the Marine One helicopter and then posted on Twitter in his first public comment of the day. “I’m going to Walter Reed hospital. I think I’m doing very well, but we’re going to make sure that things work out.”

The president donned a black face mask and emerged from the White House shortly after 6 p.m., giving a perfunctory thumbs up to reporters without stopping to speak as he walked unassisted to the helicopter. He was accompanied by Mark Meadows, the White House chief of staff, who was also wearing a mask.

The hospital trip was an abrupt change in plans after Vice President Mike Pence had told governors earlier in the day that the president would remain at the White House. One administration

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Where the President Traveled



THE NEW YORK TIMES

Over Several Days and Events, The Virus Swirled Around Trump

This article is by Michael D. Shear, Maggie Haberman and Kenneth P. Vogel.

WASHINGTON — Marine One, its engines roaring, was waiting on the South Lawn of the White House Thursday afternoon when President Trump walked out of the Oval Office, offering a brief wave but skipping his usual verbal combat with reporters.

As he lifted off and banked toward the Washington Monument, his aides were scrambling. Hope Hicks, his closest confidante in the West Wing, was supposed to have been on board, but she had just tested positive for the coronavirus after falling ill the evening before while traveling with the president to Minnesota. Two other senior aides who had been in close contact with Ms. Hicks were quickly pulled from the president’s trip to New Jersey, where he planned to schmooze with at least 200 campaign donors.

During Mr. Trump’s 14-minute flight to Joint Base Andrews, the home of Air Force One, the White House had a choice to make, officials said: Cancel the president’s trip, or shrug off the threat and move forward as planned — even though Mr. Trump had been in frequent contact with Ms. Hicks during the previous two days, when doctors say she would have been most contagious.

The decision to go ahead with the trip was emblematic of Mr. Trump’s approach to the raging pandemic since the beginning.

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Three Biggest Risks for Trump: He’s 74, Overweight and Male

By SHERYL GAY STOLBERG

WASHINGTON — President Trump, like many men in his 70s, has mild heart disease. He takes a statin drug to treat high cholesterol and aspirin to prevent heart attacks. And at 244 pounds in a health summary released in June, he has crossed the line into obesity.

All of that, experts say, puts him at greater risk for a serious bout of Covid-19. So far, White House officials say Mr. Trump’s symptoms are mild — a low-grade fever, fatigue, nasal congestion and a cough — but it is far too soon to tell how the disease will progress.

“He is 74, he’s hefty and he’s male, and those three things together put him in a higher-risk group for a severe infection,” said Dr. William Schaffner, an infectious disease specialist at Vanderbilt University, adding: “Although he is being watched meticulously and may well do fine for a few days, he is not out of the woods, because people can crash after that period of time. This is a very sneaky virus.”

Mr. Trump will no doubt benefit from the best medical care the United States has to offer. On Friday evening, he was taken to Walter Reed National Military Medical Center in Bethesda, Md., the nation’s premier military hospital,

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Ending ‘Islamist Separatism’
France’s president addressed the country’s difficulty integrating its population of Muslim immigrants. PAGE A17

Egypt’s #MeToo Leader
On Instagram, Nadeen Ashraf named a man accused of sexual assault. She lit a fire. The Saturday Profile. PAGE A15



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Not the Bottle You Imagined
“Biodegradable” or “compostable” on a product’s packaging might not mean it is as environmentally friendly as you had hoped. PAGE A18

Grand Jury Tapes Made Public
Recordings in the Breonna Taylor case include witness interviews and 911 calls, but little from prosecutors. PAGE A21

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With Indoor Dining, Risks Rise
As indoor dining returns to New York City, restaurant workers face new dangers. Critic’s Notebook. PAGE A4

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Payrolls grew last month, but permanent layoffs are rising, the labor force is contracting, and fewer women are employed. PAGE B1

More Uncertainty for Markets
News that President Trump tested positive for the coronavirus jolted the markets. “It’s just par for the course this year,” one expert said. PAGE B1

Auto Industry Rebounds
Tesla reported record deliveries in the third quarter as growing interest in electric vehicles and other cars boosted sales across the industry. PAGE B1

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Mask wearing among college football coaches has been irregular, and there has not been enforcement. PAGE B6

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Coronavirus and conflict, protest and mourning: a look at a turbulent year that changed the N.B.A. PAGE B6



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In many movies of the time, characters were loud, neurotic and mean. These days, the edges are sanded off. PAGE C1

Orchestras Add Black Artists
Ensembles shut by the pandemic are shaking up programming. Composers of color hope it’s for the long haul. PAGE C1

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Roger Cohen PAGE A22

