



DAVE SANDERS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

A Soaring Tribute

On a crystal-clear day in New York, a flyover by the Blue Angels and Thunderbirds honored front-line responders to the pandemic.

For China’s Red Cross, It’s Hard To Put People Before the Party

By JAVIER C. HERNÁNDEZ and SUI-LEE WEE

Donations flooded in to fight the virus devastating the city of Wuhan, and the ruling Communist Party directed them to a group it could trust: the Chinese Red Cross.

Bearing the familiar red-and-white logo, it looks just like any Red Cross group that rushes to disasters, deploys medics and raises funds across the world with political neutrality and independence.

But there is a big difference: China’s Red Cross has been built, funded and directed by the Chinese Communist Party — effectively making it an arm of the state, and at times pitting the group’s goal of helping people against the party’s interests in maintaining control over society.

In Wuhan, the charity’s officials

were quickly paralyzed by bureaucracy, competing mandates and chaos. For days, tens of millions of dollars in funds went unused, while piles of protective gear sat in a sprawling warehouse as desperate health workers battled the virus without it.

When officials did distribute aid, they sent tens of thousands of masks to private clinics that were not treating coronavirus patients. In one early shipment, they prioritized local officials over health care workers. In another delivery, the equipment was substandard.

“I just wanted to cry,” said Chang Le, a doctor at Wuhan’s Hankou Hospital, in a video he posted online after the Red Cross delivered thousands of nonmedical grade masks.

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Possibilities of Survivor Plasma Spur Scramble to Find Donors

By AUDRA D. S. BURCH and AMY HARMON

HOLLYWOOD, Fla. — The doctor was dying.

Without a way to improve his breathing, Dr. Vladimir Laroche was not likely to survive Covid-19. An internist who spent almost four decades caring for the sick, Dr. Laroche contracted the disease last month while treating patients at a health center and drive-up testing site for the novel coronavirus.

In a week’s time, he quickly spiraled. He went from noticing a stubborn sore throat to experiencing flulike symptoms that forced him to leave work early to fighting the virus in the intensive care unit of a Florida hospital.

Dr. Laroche’s body was overwhelmed by the blunt force of a virus that public health experts are still struggling to understand. One

of his doctors, Dr. Leslie Diaz, an infectious disease specialist and a colleague, had an idea she believed would give Dr. Laroche a fighting chance: an infusion of blood plasma donated by someone who had recovered from the virus, to bolster his immune system.

“The idea was to give him more soldiers in his body to fight this war,” said Dr. Diaz, who is part of the team treating Dr. Laroche at Palm Beach Gardens Medical Center in South Florida.

But there was no donor and no prospects and no time.

So Dr. Laroche’s family in Port-au-Prince, Miami and New York began a desperate search on social media to find someone who beat Covid-19 and was willing to

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Open Schools? Maybe by Fall, Maybe Part Time

This article is by Shawn Hubler, Erica L. Green and Dana Goldstein.

SACRAMENTO — With students languishing, the economy stagnating and working parents straining to turn their kitchen tables into classrooms, the nation’s public schools have been working to bring children back to their desks, lockers and study halls.

But despite President Trump’s prediction that “I think you’ll see a lot of schools open up,” all but a few states have suspended in-person classes for the rest of the academic year, and some are preparing for the possibility of shut-downs or part-time schedules in the fall.

Gov. Gavin Newsom of California raised the idea on Tuesday that the next academic year could start as soon as July, to make up for the abbreviated spring term. But he cautioned that “if we pull back too quickly,” a fresh wave of the coronavirus could erupt.

Illinois officials have gone even further, warning that remote learning could continue indefinitely. “This may be the new normal even in the fall,” said Janice Jackson, the chief executive of Chicago Public Schools.

Gov. Philip D. Murphy of New Jersey, who like Mr. Newsom has school-age children at home, is one of the few state leaders who has left open the prospect of schools reopening this spring — if



JUSTIN SULLIVAN/GETTY IMAGES

Kent Middle School in Kentfield, Calif. The state’s public schools will stay closed for the remainder of the academic year.

several benchmarks are first met.

Whenever students do come back, classes are unlikely to look anything like the school days they remember. There may be staggered half-day classes or one-day-on, one-day-off schedules so desks can be spread out and buses can run half-empty.

Students can expect school equipment to be sterilized and meals to be served at their desks or in socially distanced lunchrooms. Masked teachers and temperature checks at school doorways may be common. Forget

note-passing, study groups and recess. And if new outbreaks surface, virtual classes may abruptly start up again.

A few small, remote districts might try to reopen this spring, including the Shoshone School District in Lincoln County, Idaho, which serves 500 students. “We’re in the category of, ‘We don’t know,’” said Rob Waite, the superintendent. With small class sizes — the largest is 22 students — children could easily sit six feet

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Science Speaks (But President Rarely Listens)

By LISA FRIEDMAN and BRAD PLUMER

WASHINGTON — At a March visit with doctors and researchers at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the public health agency at the heart of the fight against the coronavirus, President Trump spoke words of praise for the scientific acumen in the building — particularly his own.

“Every one of these doctors said, ‘How do you know so much about this?’ Maybe I have a natural ability,” Mr. Trump said.

It was a striking boast, even amid a grave health crisis in which Mr. Trump has repeatedly contradicted medical experts in favor of his own judgment. But a disregard for scientific advice has been a defining characteristic of Mr. Trump’s administration.

As the nation confronts one of its worst public health disasters in generations, a moment that demands a leader willing to marshal the full might of the American scientific establishment, the White House is occu-

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Treasury Pushes to Recoup Loans to Large Companies

The Los Angeles Lakers Got \$4.6 Million, and That’s Just One Problem

By ALAN RAPPEPORT

WASHINGTON — The Los Angeles Lakers are not what most people think of as a small business. Yet the basketball franchise is the latest example of a large company that managed to qualify for small-business loans from a hastily devised government program intended to help barber-shops, restaurants, dry cleaners and other mom-and-pop shops.

Now, the Treasury Department is frantically trying to figure out how to recoup hundreds of millions of dollars from big companies that applied for loans and received them under the program’s initial terms.

On Tuesday, Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin made another attempt to deal with problems largely of his own making, as he tried to quickly funnel billions of dollars to businesses with vague guidelines. Threatening to hold big companies criminally liable if they did not meet the program’s revised criteria for accepting loans, he said the administration would audit any company that received more than \$2 million.

“I never expected in a million years that the Los Angeles Lakers, which I’m a big fan of the team, but I’m not a big fan of the fact that they took a \$4.6 million loan,” Mr. Mnuchin said on CNBC. “I think that’s outrageous.”

Congress created the Paycheck Protection Program as part of last

month’s \$2 trillion economic relief package, intending it as a lifeline for small shops so they could keep paying workers even if they had no customers. The money, which ultimately grew to \$660 billion, came with strings attached, requiring businesses to keep their workers on the payroll for eight weeks if they wanted the loans forgiven, but the eligibility requirements were vague.

It was left up to the Treasury Department to figure out how to get the money out fast and how to structure the program. Mr. Mnuchin put banks in charge, relying on them — rather than the government — to make the actual loans. To facilitate the program, the Treasury Department issued guidance that required businesses to merely certify, or promise, that they faced “economic uncertainty” and that the loans were “necessary” to support current operations.

While some states are slowly reopening, economic uncertainty remains incredibly high, with the United States surpassing one million known coronavirus cases on Tuesday. More than 50,000 people have died, showing how an outbreak that began with a small

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LIABILITY Fearing lawsuits, businesses are lobbying the government for protection. PAGE A17

Even as Meat Workers Get Sick, Trump Aims to Keep Plants Open

By ANA SWANSON and DAVID YAFFE-BELLANY

WASHINGTON — President Trump on Tuesday declared meat processing plants “critical infrastructure,” in an effort to ensure that facilities around the country remained open as the government tried to prevent looming shortages of pork, chicken and other products as a result of the coronavirus.

The action comes as meat plants around the country have turned into coronavirus hot spots, sickening thousands of workers, and after the head of Tyson Foods, one of the country’s largest processors, warned that millions of pounds of meat would simply disappear from the supply chain.

In an executive order issued

late Tuesday, Mr. Trump said recent closures of meat processing facilities “threaten the continued functioning of the national meat and poultry supply chain, undermining critical infrastructure during the national emergency.”

The president said his administration would “take all appropriate action” to ensure that meat and poultry processors “continue operations” consistent with federal health and workplace safety guidance.

While Mr. Trump said the step would ensure an ample supply of “protein for Americans,” the announcement provoked swift backlash from unions and labor advocates.

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In 260,000 Words, A Lot of Self-Praise

The Times reviewed President Trump’s news briefings and found them starkly defined by flashes of boastfulness and revisionist history. Page A14.

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Name Recognition, Decades On
Gov. Mike DeWine of Ohio has gained popularity as he veered from the president in confronting a crisis. PAGE A20

A Few Good People

Slow to adapt to changing social norms, the Marine Corps continues to divide training platoons by gender. PAGE A22



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A New Bridge for Genoa
Nearly two years after 43 people died when the Morandi Bridge collapsed, its replacement has become a symbol of Italian ingenuity. PAGE A18

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China’s Spending Problem

Factories are rumbling again, but job losses and pay cuts have left people reluctant to open their wallets. PAGE B1

JetBlue Requires Masks

The airline is the first to have all passengers wear a face covering for the duration of their trip. PAGE B4

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Olympian Hurdle Still Looms

A Japanese medical authority has raised doubt about staging the Games next year unless an effective vaccine has been developed. PAGE B10

Star. New Father. Patient.

The Brazilian basketball player Leandro Barbosa had big plans for the year. Then he contracted Covid-19. PAGE B9

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Overseer of 20 Shuttle Missions

James Beggs, NASA’s leader from 1981 to 1986, was on leave during the Challenger disaster. He was 94. PAGE B11

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A Recipe for Sharing

The community cookbook, once the province of church groups and Scout troops, is being reborn. PAGE D1

Dining on Virtual Lasagna

The chef Samin Nosrat hasn’t been fond of digital gatherings, but is now recreating a communal table online. PAGE D1



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New Vinyl, Old Sounds

A London company is making record albums with restored equipment that hasn’t been used for decades. PAGE C1

Seeing Art Again in Seoul

Many galleries worldwide remain closed, but some are now open in South Korea, with a few changes. PAGE C1

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Jamelle Bouie

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