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“We’re at an inflection point,” Senator Kamala Harris said in accepting the Democratic nomination for vice president on Wednesday.

Trump Presses Weapons Sale To the U.A.E.

By MARK MAZZETTI and EDWARD WONG
WASHINGTON — The Trump administration has accelerated a push to sell the F-35 stealth fighter and advanced armed drones to the United Arab Emirates, at a time when the Gulf nation is working with the Trump administration on a historic plan to formalize diplomatic ties with Israel, according to American officials familiar with the discussions. Administration officials in recent weeks gave a classified briefing about the F-35 to the Emirati military — despite some concerns among National Security Council staff about the wisdom of giving details on one of the Pentagon’s most advanced weapons to a foreign government before a decision about a potential arms sale has been finalized.

American officials deny that the new push to sell the advanced weapons is a direct reward for the Emirati role in a diplomatic breakthrough, announced by President Trump last week, where the Emirates would become just the third Arab nation to recognize Israel. In exchange, Israel will suspend annexation of occupied West Bank territory. But officials do not dispute that the new momentum on the arms sale — after years of stalled requests by the Emirates to buy the fighter jet — is linked to the broader diplomatic initiative. Such a move could dramatically alter the military balance in the Middle East and is likely to face strong objections from some parts of the government in Israel, which

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Raging Fires Add to California’s August Torment

By THOMAS FULLER
VACAVILLE, Calif. — How many things can go wrong at once? On Wednesday millions of California residents were smothered by smoke-filled skies as dozens of wildfires raged out of control. They braced for triple-digit temperatures, the sixth day of a punishing heat wave that included a recent reading of 130 degrees in Death Valley. They braced for possible power outages because the state’s grid is overloaded, the latest sign of an energy crisis. And they continued to fight a virus that is killing 130 Californians a day. Even for a state accustomed to disaster, August has been a terrible month.

Heat, Virus, Outages: Anything That Can Go Wrong, Has

Across the state there were 23 major fires reported on Wednesday and more than 300 smaller ones. In the San Francisco Bay Area alone there were 15 wildfires, most of them burning out of control and feeding off the grasses and shrubs desiccated by the extreme heat. Thousands of residents were ordered evacuated in the wine country of Napa County and from the hills above Silicon

Valley in Santa Cruz and San Mateo Counties.

In Southern California, fires were reported in Ventura and Riverside Counties — and sweeping through one of the world’s biggest collections of Joshua trees, burning a 43,000-acre stretch of the Mojave National Preserve. Images of the fire showed the iconic trees shooting flames into the air like blowtorches.

The evening breezes that many Californians rely on to chase the heat from their homes had vanished. And for those with air-conditioning, the power outages were a constant threat to that remedy. But closer to the fires, residents had more urgent concerns.

Edie Kansas left her home outside Kansas last week. Continued on Page A22



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Wildfires near Vacaville, Calif., have burned over 32,000 acres and destroyed more than 50 homes.

Trump Says QAnon Followers ‘Love Our Country,’ Raising Alarm

By KATIE ROGERS and KEVIN ROOSE
WASHINGTON — President Trump on Wednesday offered encouragement to proponents of QAnon, a viral conspiracy theory that has gained a widespread following among people who believe the president is secretly battling a criminal band of sex traffickers, and suggested that its proponents were patriots upset with unrest in Democratic cities.

“I’ve heard these are people that love our country,” Mr. Trump said during a White House news conference ostensibly about the coronavirus. “So I don’t know really anything about it other than they do supposedly like me.” When told by a reporter about the central premise of the QAnon theory — a belief that Mr. Trump is saving the world from a satanic cult made up of pedophiles and cannibals connected to Democratic Party figures, so-called deep-state actors and Hollywood celeb-

Giving a Boost to Fringe Conspiracy Theorists

rities — Mr. Trump did not question the validity of the movement or the truth of those claims. Instead, he offered his help. “Is that supposed to be a bad thing or a good thing?” the president said lightly, responding to a reporter who asked if he could

support that theory. “If I can help save the world from problems, I am willing to do it. I’m willing to put myself out there.” Mr. Trump’s cavalier response was a remarkable public expression of support for conspiracy theorists who have operated in

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CRACKDOWN Facebook went after thousands of groups related to the QAnon movement. PAGE B1

IN ACCEPTING BID, HARRIS WARNS U.S. IS AT CROSSROADS

NEWS ANALYSIS
Unusual Pressure on Running Mate

By ADAM NAGOURNEY and KATIE GLUECK
Kamala Harris stands before the Democratic Party as the bridge between a moderate generation of leaders and younger liberals on the rise, balancing the obligations of promoting Joseph R. Biden Jr. while offering herself to someday lead the party into a post-Biden era. Pressures, hopes, aspirations — this was the burden on Ms. Harris at the Democratic convention on Wednesday, as she sought to introduce herself to a nation and a party that really barely knows her. But this is also the burden that will be on her for the next four years if she and Mr. Biden win in November. Rarely has a vice-presidential candidate served under a presidential nominee who well may not seek a second term. As a result, Ms. Harris carries an extraordinary weight of expectations from her party to rise to the demands of leadership.

“That’s a lot to put on the shoulders of a person,” said Tim Kaine, the Virginia senator who was the vice-presidential candidate for Hillary Clinton in 2016. In the tumultuous tent that is the ever-changing Democratic Party, he said, there was no one person Mr. Biden could have chosen who would appeal to everyone.

“There’s no way that you’re going to get, in this broad family, like everybody like, ‘Oh, you were my first pick,’” he said, even as he spoke enthusiastically about Ms. Harris.

If anything, the first two days of the convention were about the party trying to paper over any kinds of disagreements, aiming to present a united front of moderates and progressives, as well as some Republicans and democratic socialists. With elaborate videos and stage-managed speeches, Democrats showcased diversity — racial, gender, age — while nominating a 77-year-old white grandfather from Delaware as their standard-bearer. Party leaders gave small slots to liberals, though barely gave a platform to their policy goals like

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A Nominee to Link Democrats’ Past and Future

By ASTEAD W. HERNDON and LISA LERER
MILWAUKEE — Democrats formally nominated Kamala Harris for the vice presidency on Wednesday night, placing a woman of color on a major party ticket for the first time and showcasing the diversity of race and gender they believe will energize their coalition to defeat President Trump in the fall. The program at the party’s national convention also featured a striking repudiation of Mr. Trump by former President Barack Obama, a break with the presidential custom of not criticizing a successor by name. Mr. Obama praised Mr. Biden’s character, contrasting it with Mr. Trump’s, and directed a portion of his remarks to voters undecided about whom they will vote for, or whether they will vote at all. “Donald Trump hasn’t grown into the job, because he can’t,” Mr. Obama said, growing emotional at



DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL CONVENTION

Barack Obama in Philadelphia.

points as he talked about the challenges facing the country and democracy. “The consequences of that failure are severe. 170,000 Americans dead. Millions of jobs gone.” A day after nominating Joseph R. Biden Jr., a 77-year-old fixture of Washington establishment politics, at their national convention, Democrats tried to make the case that while Mr. Biden would be one kind of change agent — a repudiation of Trumpism — Ms. Harris would help steer the party in new directions and reflect a changing

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‘Do Not Let Them Take Away Your Democracy,’ Obama Says

By PETER BAKER
Shortly before the 2016 election, President Barack Obama told supporters that he would consider it “a personal insult” if America chose a bombastic reality television star who trafficked in racist conspiracy theories and stood against everything that he had spent eight years building. America did it anyway. “This stings,” Mr. Obama confessed afterward. Four years later, Mr. Obama returned to the national stage on Wednesday night seeking vindication with an implicit defense of his own record and an indignant condemnation of President Trump as a corrupt and failing leader who has used his office to enrich himself, pit Americans against one another and threaten American democracy. “Donald Trump hasn’t grown into the job because he can’t,” he said in an 19-minute Democratic convention speech from the Museum of the American Revolution in Philadelphia. “And the consequences of that failure are severe:

170,000 Americans dead. Millions of jobs gone while those at the top take in more than ever. Our worst impulses unleashed, our proud reputation around the world badly diminished, and our democratic institutions threatened like never before.” After watching Mr. Trump systematically demolish many of his achievements, Mr. Obama has almost as much at stake in this year’s campaign as his former vice president and his party’s 2020 presidential nominee, Joseph R. Biden Jr., does — a second chance to redeem his legacy and prove to history that Mr. Trump’s election was an anomaly, not a permanent repudiation. On the line is the opportunity not just to restore programs and international agreements that Mr. Trump abandoned and bolster those that remain threatened, but also to rewrite the narrative about America and its values according to Mr. Obama. The story line that

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To allay safety and hygiene fears, colorful stalls built in parks use “smart glass,” which turns opaque. PAGE A10

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Despite a lack of European support, the U.S. is asking the U.N. to punish Iran under the 2015 nuclear deal. PAGE A12

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The state is betting its student testing and technology program will be enough to ward off outbreaks, even as campuses abruptly close elsewhere. PAGE A6

Viral Particles on the Subway
Many New Yorkers are avoiding the subway. Masks and social distancing are crucial, but good airflow also helps reduce the risk of infection. PAGE A8

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Democrats are calling on Louis DeJoy to step down amid fears that changes he has already made could disenfranchise voters in November. PAGE A21

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A settlement will provide about \$600 million, mostly for children poisoned by lead-tainted tap water. PAGE A23

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Walmart and Target reported record sales, as shoppers sought convenience amid the pandemic. PAGE B1



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Evan Kinori has drawn a passionate following with his one-man clothing label’s meticulous workwear. PAGE D2

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On Block Island in this summer of sorrow, a hunt for handblown glass fishing floats has magical meaning. PAGE D1

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Exalted as a martyr to the cause, Inez Milholland later fell from view. An artist is determined to change that. PAGE C1

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At a handful of theaters in the country, white artistic directors are stepping down to diversify leadership. PAGE C1

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