

HARRIS JOINS BIDEN TICKET, ACHIEVING A FIRST

Political Warrior  
Shaped by Life  
In 2 Worlds

By MATT FLEGENHEIMER and LISA LERER

Kamala Harris’s first act as a political candidate was knocking out a former boxer: the progressive San Francisco district attorney who had been her boss.

Her freshman Senate term has been defined by committee performances so lacerating that Trump administration officials have complained of her lawyerly velocity. “I’m not able to be rushed this fast,” a flustered Jeff Sessions once said to her. “It makes me nervous.”

And in Ms. Harris’s most memorable turn as a presidential contender, speaking with practiced precision to the man who on Tuesday chose her as his running mate, she began with a less than charitable disclaimer — “I do not believe you are a racist” — before flattening him with the “but . . .”

“It was a *debate*,” she has said repeatedly since then, offering no apology for campaign combat.

That is San Francisco politics, friends say. That is Kamala Devi Harris.

In announcing Ms. Harris, 55, as his vice-presidential nominee, Joseph R. Biden Jr. told supporters she was the person best equipped to “take this fight” to President Trump, making space in a campaign premised on restoring American decency for a willing brawler who learned early in her career that fortune would not favor the meek among Black women in her lines of work.

“She had to be savvy to find a way,” said Senator Cory Booker of New Jersey, who has known Ms. Harris for more than two decades. “There was no path laid out for her. She had to find her way through the kind of set of obstacles that most people in the positions that she’s held have not had to ever deal with.”

It is this dexterity, people close to her say, that has most powered Ms. Harris’s rise — and can be most frustrating to those who wish her electoral fearlessness were accompanied by policy audacity to match.

Caustic when she needs to be but cautious on substantive issues more often than many liberals would like, Ms. Harris has spent her public life negotiating disparate orbits, fluent in both activism and pragmatism.

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Senator Kamala Harris, an establishment-friendly Democrat, has long been considered a rising star.

NEWS ANALYSIS  
Pick Seen as Safe  
but Energizing

By JONATHAN MARTIN and ASTEAD W. HERNDON

WASHINGTON — In naming Kamala Harris as his running mate, Joseph R. Biden Jr. made a groundbreaking decision, picking a woman of color to be vice president and, possibly, a successor in the White House someday. Yet in some ways, Mr. Biden made a conventional choice: elevating a senator who brings generational and coastal balance to the Democratic ticket and shares his center-left politics at a time of progressive change in the party.

Unlike Barack Obama and George W. Bush, who selected veteran Washington hands as their vice presidents, Mr. Biden, 77, is opting for a time-honored model in which running mates are not just governing partners but political understudies of sorts. Pegged as a rising star for a decade, but with less than four years of experience in the Senate — she was 8 years old when Mr. Biden was first elected to the chamber — Ms. Harris, 55, reflects a traditional archetype in an election year that has been anything but normal.

She is also a thoroughly establishment-friendly figure, as is Mr. Biden: Both have hewed closely to their party’s mainstream for years, shifting left with the times but always with an eye on the broader electorate and higher office. He long said he wanted someone “simpatico” with him and, in Ms. Harris, he found that person, at least when it comes to ideology.

Progressive Democrats now find themselves led by two moderates with relatively cautious political instincts, even as activist energy courses through the party and left-wing challengers unseat some incumbents. The mostly young protesters filling the streets of nearly every American city to decry police brutality and President Trump are represented by two figures who have offered sympathetic words and proposals but whose careers have been shaped by their relationship with law enforcement.

“She’s not of the far left of the party, she’s a former prosecutor,” Janet Napolitano, the former Arizona governor and Homeland Security secretary, said of Ms. Harris.

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Woman of Color  
in No. 2 Slot of  
Major Party

By ALEXANDER BURNS and KATIE GLUECK

Joseph R. Biden Jr. selected Senator Kamala Harris of California as his vice-presidential running mate on Tuesday, embracing a former rival who sharply criticized him in the Democratic primaries but emerged after ending her campaign as a vocal supporter of Mr. Biden’s and a prominent advocate of racial-justice legislation after the killing of George Floyd in late May.

Ms. Harris, 55, is the first Black woman and the first person of Indian descent to be nominated for national office by a major party, and only the fourth woman in U.S. history to be chosen for a presidential ticket. She brings to the race a far more vigorous campaign style than Mr. Biden’s, including a gift for capturing moments of raw political electricity on the debate stage and elsewhere, and a personal identity and family story that many find inspiring.

Mr. Biden announced the selection over text message and in a follow-up email to supporters: “Joe Biden here. Big news: I’ve chosen Kamala Harris as my running mate. Together, with you, we’re going to beat Trump.” The two are expected to appear together in Wilmington, Del., on Wednesday.

After her own presidential bid disintegrated last year, many Democrats regarded Ms. Harris as all but certain to try for another run for the White House in the future. By choosing her as his political partner, Mr. Biden, if he wins, may well be anointing her as the de facto leader of the party in four or eight years.

A pragmatic moderate who spent most of her career as a prosecutor, Ms. Harris was seen throughout the vice-presidential search as among the safest choices available to Mr. Biden. She has been a reliable ally of the Democratic establishment, with flexible policy priorities that largely mirror Mr. Biden’s, and her supporters argued that she could reinforce Mr. Biden’s appeal to Black voters and women without stirring particularly vehement opposition on the right or left.

While she endorsed a number of Democratic candidates, she has not yet announced any endorsements.

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Bible-Burning Video Goes Viral,  
A Win for Russia Disinformation

By MATTHEW ROSENBERG and JULIAN E. BARNES

WASHINGTON — For some of President Trump’s loudest cheerleaders, it was a story too good to check out: Black Lives Matters protesters in Portland, Ore., had burned a stack of Bibles, and then topped off the fire with American flags. There was even a video to prove it.

The story was a near-perfect fit for a central Trump campaign talking point — that with liberals and Democrats comes godless disorder — and it went viral among Republicans within hours of appearing this month. The New York Post wrote about it, as did The Federalist, saying that the protesters had shown “their true colors.” Senator Ted Cruz, the Texas Republican, said of the protesters, “This is who they are.” Donald Trump Jr., the president’s son, tweeted that antifa had moved to “the book burning phase.”

The truth was far more mundane. A few protesters among the many thousands appear to have burned a single Bible — and possibly a second — for kindling to start a bigger fire. None of the other protesters seemed to notice or care.

Yet in the rush to paint all the protesters as Bible-burning zealots, few of the politicians or commentators who weighed in on the incident took the time to look into the story’s veracity, or to figure out that it had originated with a Kremlin-backed video news agency. And now, days later, the Portland Bible burnings appear to be one of the first viral Russian disinformation hits of the 2020 presidential campaign.

With Election Day drawing closer, the Russian efforts to influence the vote appear to be well underway. American intelligence officials said last week that Russia was using a range of techniques to denigrate Democrats and their presumptive presidential nominee.

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In a Black Chicago Community,  
Doubt Defies Hope for Change

By ASTEAD W. HERNDON

CHICAGO — The old guard of this city’s Roseland neighborhood, a community on the South Side famous for molding a young Barack Obama and infamous for its current blight, has never forgotten the fruit trees.

Back in the 1970s, before the full exodus of white residents, the erosion of local businesses, the crack epidemic of the 1980s and the disinvestment that followed, it was the trees that signaled the societal elevation of Black families — separating those who moved here from the urban high rises they fled. An apple tree greeted Antoine Dobine’s family in 1973, he said. The tree meant a yard. A yard meant a home. And a home meant a slice of the American dream, long deferred for Black Americans.

“Pear trees, peaches, apples, it was beautiful,” Mr. Dobine recalled. “Before the white people left.”

Today, as activism against racial inequities raises questions of whether anything will actually change for many Black Americans, Mr. Dobine’s street in Rose-

Two Leagues Decide Not to Play,  
Roiling College Football Season

By ALAN BLINDER and BILLY WITZ

Two of the nation’s wealthiest, most powerful college football conferences, the Big Ten and the Pac-12, abandoned their plans to play this fall over coronavirus concerns, a move that fractured the season and promised repercussions far beyond the playing field, even as other top leagues were publicly poised to begin games next month.

The decisions by the two conferences extended the greatest crisis in the history of college athletics, a multibillion-dollar industry that depends heavily on football to underwrite lower-profile sports and which provides universities with a national profile they use to recruit students and attract donations.

By canceling games this autumn, the two conferences defied calls by coaches, players and President Trump to mount a season in the face of the virus’s largely unchecked spread. The plans of other leading leagues to start playing by late September could now quickly change, and the Big Ten and Pac-12 may ultimately move their seasons to the spring.

Other Top Conferences  
Planning to Compete  
in the Fall, for Now

Playing at this stage of the pandemic, though, presented “too much uncertainty, too much risk,” Kevin Warren, the Big Ten commissioner, said in an interview on Tuesday.

“You have to listen to your medical experts,” Warren said. “There’s a lot of emotion involved with this, but when you look at the health and well-being of our student-athletes, I feel very confident that we made the right decision.”

The moves by both leagues came after intense deliberations among university presidents and chancellors, but the decisions were not universally supported by administrators, coaches and players.

“This is an incredibly sad day for our student-athletes, who have worked so hard and been so vigilant fighting against this pandemic,” said a Big Ten spokesman.

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**Seattle Police Chief Resigns**

After city officials approved drastic cuts to the force, its top officer, Carmen Best, said she “can’t do it.”

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**Smelling Blood on Payroll Tax**

The president’s call to cut taxes that fund Social Security has opened a line of attack for Democrats.

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TRACKING AN OUTBREAK A4-9

**Putin Says Russia Has a Vaccine**

The country is the first to approve a possible vaccine against the virus, despite warnings from global authorities against cutting corners.

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**Retail Chains Exit Manhattan**

Restaurants and stores are closing in the city, which has been emptied of office workers and tourists.

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**Thai Students Protest Military**

Thousands of young people are channeling Harry Potter as they call on the army to get out of politics.

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**Finding Refuge in a Game**

Bergamo, a proud Italian city hit hard by the coronavirus, has found unity and solace in its overachieving and title-chasing soccer team.

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**The Risk of Eating Out**

Bars and restaurants have become a focal point for clusters of Covid-19 infections across the country.

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**Taking On a Workplace Taboo**

Zomato, a global food-delivery company based in India, drew praise for introducing paid leave for periods.

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**A Full-Body Scream**

Jonathan Majors stars in HBO’s horror series “Lovecraft Country,” which isn’t afraid to take on racial injustice.

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**Rescuing a W.P.A. Mural**

A Black nurse who saved lives in 19th century California may now be saving a piece of art in San Francisco.

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**Far More Than Grilled Meat**

In the Mexican state of Sonora, carne asada is a weekly ritual, a tight-knit gathering of friends and family.

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**Not Giving Up on 2020**

There’s no indoor dining yet, but the Miami chef Niven Patel has opened a Caribbean-inspired restaurant.

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**Frank Bruni**

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