

Hollywood vs. China

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ABOUT
HIS ROLE IN
TRUMP'S
WHITE HOUSE

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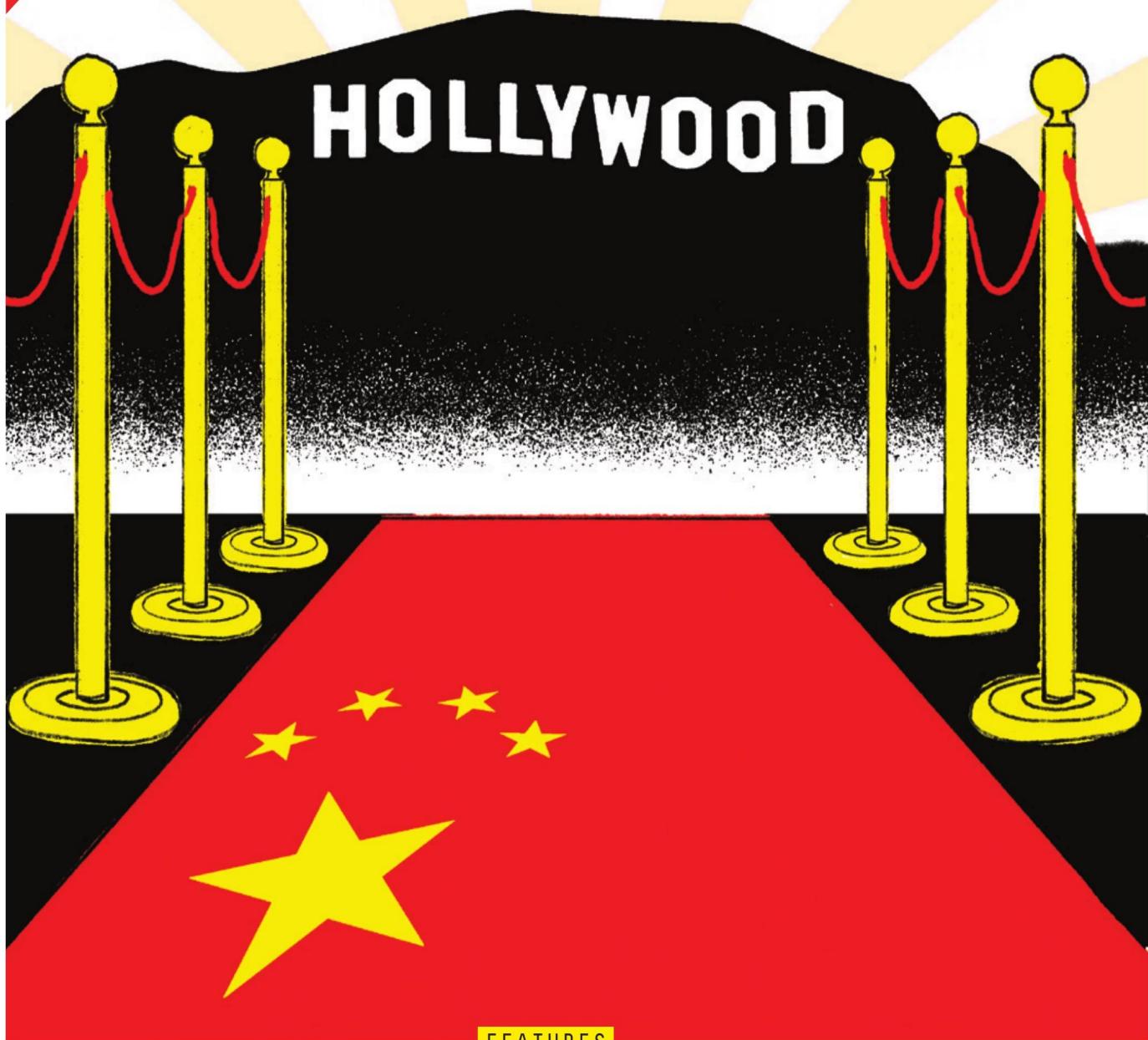




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FEATURES

WALKING THE RED CARPET

Putting an American film on China's movie screens means not just catering to Chinese audiences' tastes. It also means avoiding a long list of politically sensitive subjects that Chinese authorities don't want discussed at all.

COVER CREDIT

Photo Illustration by **Gluekit** for Newsweek;
Kushner by Zach Gibson/Getty



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The Utility Player

President Trump has asked his son-in-law Jared Kushner to handle everything from the wall to the West Bank. How's that been working out?

BY BILL POWELL

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Banned in Beijing

Hollywood has been quietly placating communist censors to get movies shown in China. Will rising tensions with the U.S. put an end to that?

BY PAUL BOND

LOCAL FLAVOR

Maybe you can't visit the world great cities this summer, but you can still savor their signature cocktails.

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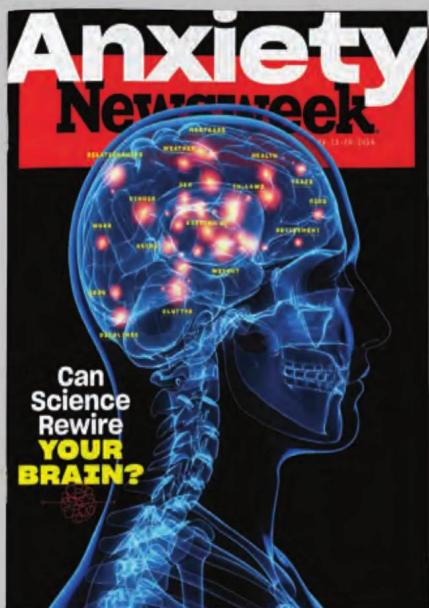
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“Journalism I don’t see elsewhere until later, if at all.”

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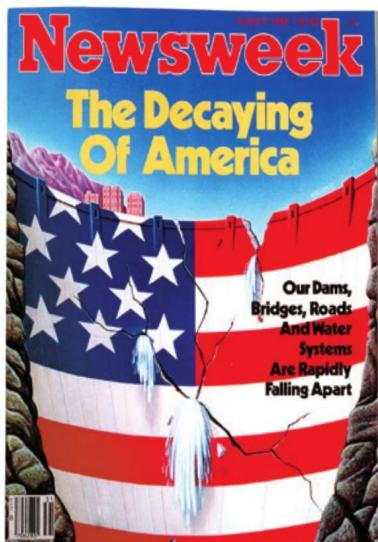
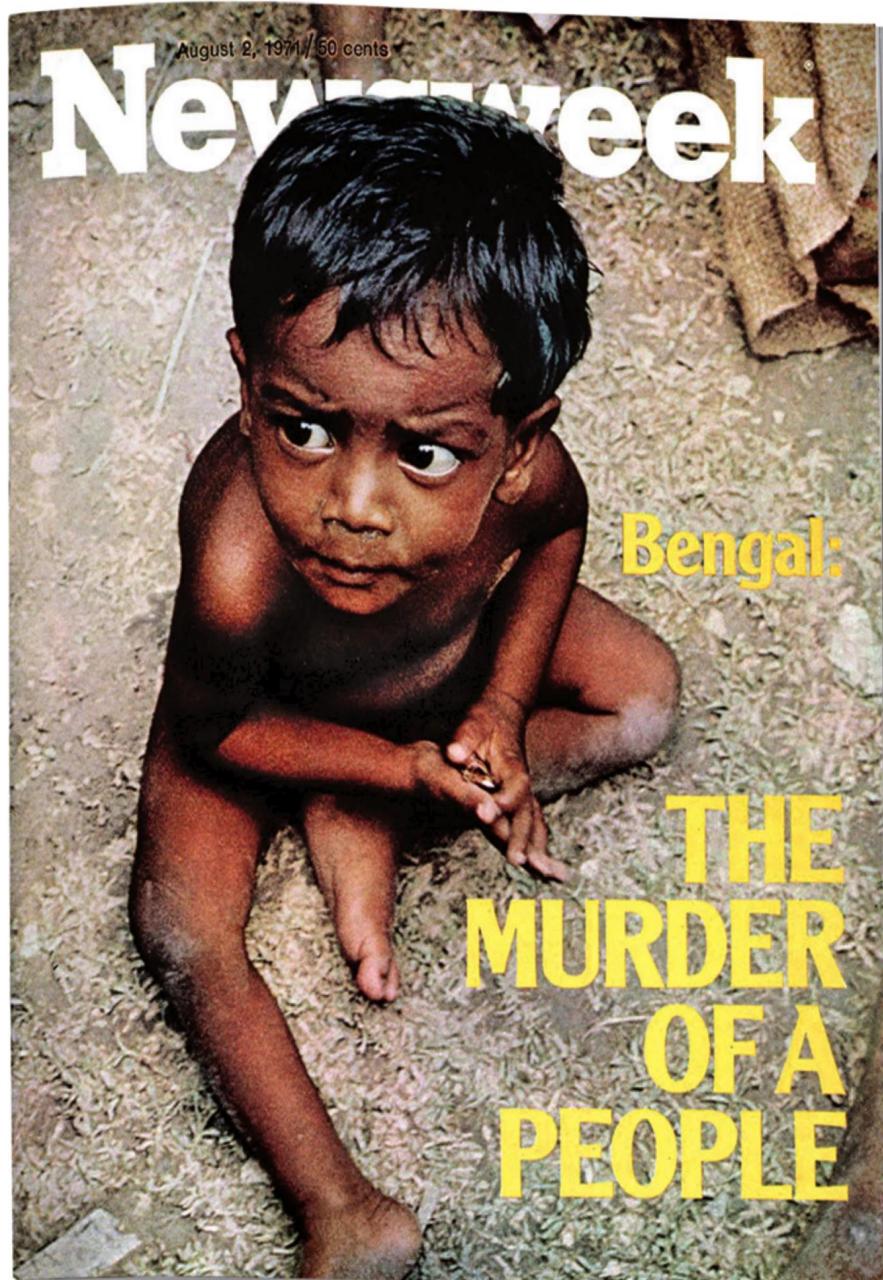
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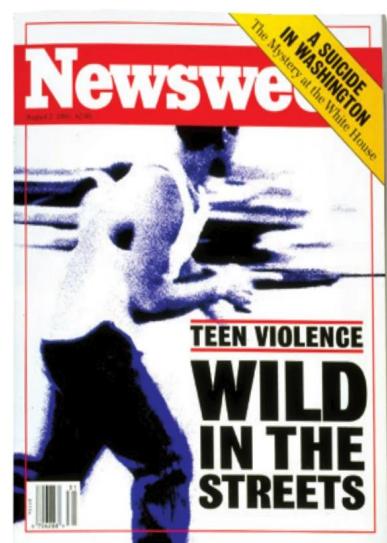
1971

Pakistan's civil war left "a quarter of a million Bengalis dead, and another 6 million or more driven into desperate exile," according to *Newsweek*, and "the realities of geopolitics have confronted the U.S. with the thankless task of choosing between strategic and humanitarian considerations." The U.S. sided with China for a united Pakistan, but within months, an independent Bangladesh emerged victorious, led by Sheikh Mujibur Rahman as its first prime minister. Rahman was assassinated by military officials in 1975, and one of his killers was arrested and executed in Bangladesh earlier this year.



1982

"America's infrastructure is heading towards collapse," said *Newsweek*—"most acute[ly] in older industrial cities, but clogged highways and strained water systems also threaten to strangle booming Sun Belt towns." Estimates say that the U.S. must invest \$4.5 trillion in infrastructure by 2025 to fix the decay.



1993

Newsweek wrote that an "epidemic" of teen violence marked by "younger and younger kids committing more and more serious crimes" was "devastating this generation, as surely as polio cut down young people 40 years ago." Teen homicides declined from a high of 20.3 per 100,000 in 1993 to a record low of 6.6 per 100,000 in 2014. ■

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SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA

Fire Fight

A fire aboard the military ship USS Bonhomme Richard blazed for four days before it was extinguished on July 16. According to Navy Rear Admiral Philip Sobeck, 63 sailors and civilians suffered minor injuries and, at press time, the cause of the fire and fate of the ship were unknown.

→ SP2 AUSTIN HAIST



MASS COMMUNICATION SPECIALIST 2ND CLASS AUSTIN HAIST/U.S. NAVY/GETTY



CLOCKWISE FROM RIGHT: ANDREJ ISAKOVIC/AFP/Getty; ANDREI PUNGOVSKI/AFP/Getty; CARL DE SOUZA/AFP/Getty



RIO DE JANEIRO, BRAZIL

Space Oddity

Brazilian accountant Tercio Galdino, 66, and his wife Alicea walk along Copacabana beach wearing protective suits on July 11. Galdino, who has a chronic lung disease, made the protective gear at home using suits used by health professionals. He says that, in addition to protection against the coronavirus, the couple also wear the suits for fun. He and his wife have a huge interest in astronomy, he says.

→ CARL DE SOUZA



BUCHAREST, ROMANIA

Free Us

On July 12, a woman prays during a protest against the Romanian government and its measures against the coronavirus pandemic. Cases of COVID-19 have been rising significantly and the blame has been placed on the easing of restrictions in recent weeks.

→ ANDREI PUNGOVSCHI



BELGRADE, SERBIA

COVID Clash

Protesters battle with police in front of Serbia's National Assembly building in Belgrade on July 8 during a demonstration against a weekend curfew announced to combat a resurgence of COVID-19 infections. Chaotic scenes rocked the capital after thousands of people streamed into the city center to protest the president's announcement that authorities would reimpose a round-the-clock weekend lockdown.

→ ANDREJ ISAKOVIC

Periscope

— NEWS, OPINION +



GUIDANCE

The Supreme Court has given conservatives detailed guidance on how to prevail in the future.



"Less than an hour later, I was fighting for my life" »P.14



OPINION

Wait Til' Next Year

Why the Christian right's Supreme Court batting average this term was a lot better than you thought.

IT IS UNDERSTANDABLE IF AMERICANS FEEL LIKE they have a bad case of whiplash given the Supreme Court's recent rulings on a string of culture war cases. In June, the conservative-dominated court ruled in favor of LGBTQ rights, and two weeks later it struck down a restrictive abortion law. Progressives heralded the rulings, and social conservatives were disoriented, not knowing what to make of the court that Donald Trump had promised to deliver to them. In July, however, the two sides switched places. In a string of three cases, the court has most recently announced that parents can use state money to send their kids to religious schools, that religious employers can be exempted from employment-discrimination claims, and that employers can deny contraceptive coverage to their employees for religious or moral reasons.

While at first glance this looks like a 3–2 record for Christian conservatives in this year's Supreme Court, a closer examination shows that their apparent losses are likely only temporary setbacks. The Supreme Court has given them detailed guidance on how to prevail in the future. In both losses, conservative court justices are guiding right-wing Christians away

from "swing for the fences" legislation and court arguments, and toward an incremental approach that will both preserve the court's legitimacy and ensure them victory over the long-term.

In *June Medical Services v. Russo*, conservative Chief Justice John Roberts provided the final vote necessary to strike down Louisiana's restrictive abortion law. He also, however, made clear that he did not want to vote to strike the law down. Instead, he was compelled to do so by the court's ruling in a case four years earlier—a case where he voted to uphold a very similar law but was outnumbered. In explaining his decision, he bends over backwards to stress that states can continue to incrementally regulate abortion so long as such regulations don't clearly decimate abortion access.

In writing the majority opinion in *Bostock v. Clayton County*, Trump appointee and social conservative Justice Neil Gorsuch wrote that sexual orientation is protected under the federal Civil

Rights Act. He also, however, stresses the importance of "preserving the promise of the free exercise of religion enshrined in our Constitution." Thus, while LGBTQ activists have won here, social conservatives can return

BY

JOSHUA C. WILSON &
AMANDA HOLLIS-BRUSKY

in future disputes arguing that the court needs to deliver on this promise. As the most recent rulings show, the court has already begun to do just that.

The three Christian right court victories all focus on religious liberty. In the religious schools case, the court determined that Montana's prohibition on parents using state scholarships at religious schools unconstitutionally discriminated against religion. In the employment discrimination case, it argued that allowing courts to make decisions about who an organization decides is a "minister"—even if it is a teacher, and not a minister as commonly conceived—would unduly risk "entanglement in religious issues." Finally, in the contraception case, the court ruled that requiring such coverage against an employer's moral or religious objections "substantially

burdens the exercise of religion."

The common theme here is that the court majority in these cases only sees one right at stake: the right to freely practice religion. In the cases where progressives prevailed, the court majority saw competing rights claims, as well as the limits set by past rulings.

The task, then, for cultural conservatives moving forward is to continue to develop an expansive version of religious liberty and return to an incremental politics of abortion—an

"The task, then, for cultural conservatives moving forward is to continue to develop an expansive version of religious liberty."

under-the-radar approach that relies on state laws to chip away at abortion rights. Within the Christian right, an elite set of legal organizations have become prominent by being attentive to these cues given by the justices.

The Christian conservative legal movement is a collection of litigators and institutions related to, but distinct from, the secular conservative legal movement popularly understood through the Federalist Society. Its early years were defined by its insistence on making legal arguments rooted in religion's perceived special status and for an all-or-nothing approach to litigation. But its most effective organizations have come to learn that the best strategy for winning cases is to pay careful attention to what the Supreme Court has signaled in its rulings.

Pragmatic litigation organizations like Becket and Alliance Defending Freedom have established their reputations as patient, pragmatic and thus highly successful litigators. While they and others in the Christian conservative legal movement undoubtedly wish that they had a clearer string of victories this summer, we can expect to see them back in the court soon. What's more, one should expect that the next time they appear in court, they will demonstrate through their legal arguments that they have listened to the justices. In turn, they should expect that the justices will listen more attentively to them. ■

→ **Joshua C. Wilson** is an associate professor of political science at the University of Denver. **Amanda Hollis-Brusky** is an associate professor of politics at Pomona College. They are co-authors of the forthcoming **SEPARATE BUT FAITHFUL: THE CHRISTIAN RIGHT'S RADICAL STRUGGLE TO TRANSFORM LAW & LEGAL CULTURE** (OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS).



SCHOoled? The Christian right has come to learn that the best strategy for winning cases is to pay careful attention to what the Supreme Court has signaled in its rulings.

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OPINION

Egyptian Women's Brave "Me Too" Moment

Journalist Lara Logan's rape and assault in Cairo in 2011 made headlines, but far away from media attention women in Egypt continued to suffer. That may be changing

INSIDE THE TENT THE AIR WAS close and electrifying. Hosni Mubarak had just resigned, ending an era in Egypt that had seemed as permanent and unassailable as the water flowing forever along the banks of the Nile. The regime's collapse, seen from the streets that night in 2011, was spectacular.

Next to me in the tent filled with men, a young Egyptian boy captured my attention, constantly interjecting as I sat interviewing his father. He was anxious for me to meet his mother. As soon as our *60 Minutes* cameras stopped rolling, he pushed into my hand a folded Egyptian banknote—a relic of the regime—that he told me to keep so I would remember this moment when Egypt changed.

Then he took my hand and led me from the tent, excited. I still have that note today. Outside in Tahrir Square it was dark, parts of the square were lit and thousands of people were celebrating and cheering. I've always said it made me think of crowds celebrating right after their team just won the Super Bowl.

But the boy stopped in a dark spot not far from the big tent where I could barely make out any people until my eyes adjusted. What I saw was familiar, a group of women huddled together, many of them older, sitting on the ground with their bodies and faces covered in the traditional black chador (robes) so only their eyes were visible.

I crouched down with the boy and met his mother, speaking through our translator. This translator was an incredible young Egyptian student who was

BY
LARA LOGAN
@laralogan



also an invaluable guide to understanding the revolution as he had been at the center of it from the start.

The mother and I spoke for some time and I will never forget that when I stood up, I turned to my translator and said: "I see freedom for Egypt does not yet mean freedom for women in Egypt." He looked at me, alarmed, and said: "You don't want me to translate that do you?" I shook my head no. He was smart and kind and I let him off the hook—and I would never have said that to these women anyway.

Less than an hour later, I was fighting for my life in the dirt as I was gang-raped, sodomized and beaten by a mob of 200 to 300 men, not far



TURNING OF THE TIDE Above: a woman in Cairo's Tahrir Square in 2011 after President Hosni Mubarak said he would step down. Lara Logan was also there.



from that tent in Tahrir Square, while that young man—my translator—screamed for help with all the power in his lungs and strength in his body.

Later still, I would read an academic study that opened my eyes to sexual assault, violence and rape in Egyptian society and how these terrible crimes were used as a weapon of social control to suppress women.

I would discover that for many women in Egypt, going outside the home without a man present was not only discouraged, it was an unpleasant experience that justified discouraging them.

For unskilled female workers from countries like Sudan, taking public transport in Cairo was traumatic, running the gauntlet of sexual harassment and attacks every day with no power to fight back and no expectation of justice of any kind. I would learn about young female students for whom the

“Less than an hour later, I was fighting for my life in the dirt.”

only safe space was the inside of their car as they drove to class in Cairo every day—but once they reached their university’s parking lot, that was no longer enough to protect them.

Of course, I learned about the burden of blame put on Egyptian women by the state, the police, the faithful and the family. I read about the posters on the streets reminding women of their duty to dress appropriately so as not to encourage the wrong attention—a familiar theme of “blaming the victim” that echoes across many societies, including this one, but thankfully much less so in

the U.S. than ever in our history.

I have no doubt that I was one of many women raped and sexually assaulted in Tahrir Square that night, and that most of those victims were Egyptian and those attacks did not make headlines across the world. I know there were other African women raped over this time in Cairo because they wrote to me and their stories were horrific and live with me still.

Seeing that the women of Egypt have recently taken to social media for their own “Me Too” movement, speaking out about their experiences of sexual assault and coming together online to support one another, fills me with hope.

This female uprising prompted authorities to investigate and ultimately charge an Egyptian student with three counts of indecent assault. It shows us that the Egyptian women’s voices are having an impact, as they should.

I know that every time I meet anyone from Egypt, especially men, they are at pains to apologize and assure me that all Egyptian men are not “like that.” My answer is always the same and I mean it—I know that good and bad exists everywhere, and I don’t blame Egyptians, who are wonderful people.

I have never had a moment of anger in my heart. But I do have hope that the tide is turning in Egypt for those who live with this injustice and abuse.

I have hope that brave women standing up against norms that have defined generations know that they are not alone and that it is worth the fight. And I know with certainty that it takes people of courage, men and women alike, to fight and stand together. ■

→ **Lara Logan** is the host of FOX Nation’s *LARA LOGAN HAS NO AGENDA* and is an Emmy award-winning investigative journalist. All views expressed in this piece are the writer’s own.



OPINION

The End of the Prison-Industrial Complex?

How we can abolish for-profit jails forever

FROM LEFT: PETER DAZELEY/GETTY; DANIEL ACKER/BLOOMBERG/GETTY

ONSCREEN, ONE OF US PORTRAYED a prisoner. In real life, one of us was actually a prisoner.

In the dictionary, "justice" is defined as just behavior or treatment: a concern for peace and genuine respect for people. "And genuine respect for people" sends ripples through our conscience. The very notion of a for-profit prison is inherently against such a thing.

As Black men, we both have experienced the impact of the country's prison-industrial complex in some way, shape or form. It is a corrupt system that profits from pain and imprisonment.

For private prison companies to make money, they need commodities of value, and the commodities they are trading are human beings. The allowance of prisons to become privatized businesses is the downside of capitalism run amuck.

Using human beings as commodities to make money is akin to pre-Civil War slavery. It is disgusting, deplorable, and the mere thought of such a thing should make your stomach queasy.

We want everyone who reads this to see the images in the mirror we are holding up to society in a clear unbiased way.

Overall crime has been going down for years, yet America has around 2.3 million people locked behind bars. If nothing changes, one out of every 17 white men, one out of six Latinos, and close to one out of four Black men born today will end up in jail at some point in their lives.

An absurd amount of our tax

COMMODITIES The allowance of prisons to become privatized businesses is the downside of capitalism run amok; a privately run facility in Mississippi.

dollars are spent to house prisoners each year. Non-violent offenders (especially drug addicts), and those who simply can't afford bail for minor charges, get swept up in an unjust system and the American people foot the hefty bills for their incarceration. There are more viable, sustainable options that can come at a minimal cost to taxpayers, but the modern-day prison system in this country is built on making profit. Let that sink in. As tax-paying citizens, we would much rather someone suffering from addiction be put into a non-profit, state-funded drug rehabilitation program, or a program that specializes in mental health than some expensive, overcrowded for-profit prison.

Now, do some people break the law and deserve to be held accountable? Of course. But the prison system should also work to

correct and restore those who have served their penance to the community. Our modern-day prison system is designed to entrap people, and entangle them in webs they can't escape.

Even worse, our government has done next to nothing to fix this. As the Black Lives Matter movement gains recognition and support, we cannot lose this moment to enact real and substantial policy reform to overhaul our criminal justice system.

We are here to say we have the power to fix this mess. People power.

We can abolish private, for-profit prisons. They hold 10 percent of America's prison inmates, and three-quarters of all immigrant detainees. Private prisons spent \$64 million dollars lobbying our government over the past decade, and when you consider they earned \$6 billion dollars in revenue from our tax dollars, that most certainly should raise concern. Imagine a world where we

"Our government should work for you and your family. Join us, and together, we can make real change. Change that puts the power back into the hands of the people."





OPINION

WHO PROFITS? Corrections officers and bail bondsmen, the authors say. Meanwhile, taxpayers are footing the bill; prisoners from the Weott facility in California.

organization). Desmond sits on the board. The Anti-Corruption Act would ban gifts from lobbyists to politicians, close the revolving door between Congress and the prison industry, and enfranchise even more voters—so politicians actually represent we, the people.

Time and again, average citizens think they can't make a difference, but they can. Desmond has proved it is possible. After he served time in prison, he led a grassroots campaign that brought conservatives and progressives together to win back voting rights for 1.4 million felons in Florida. The Florida Rights Restoration Coalition effort began with the collection of more than 760,000 signatures from citizens and ended with the passage of Florida Amendment 4, which was supported by Democrats and Republicans alike.

Our government should work for you and your family. Join us, and together, we can make real change. Change that puts the power back into the hands of the people. **N**

→ **Omar Epps** is an award-winning American actor whose film roles include JUICE, HIGHER LEARNING, THE WOOD, IN TOO DEEP and LOVE AND BASKETBALL. He co-starred on the critically-acclaimed FOX medical drama, HOUSE, for which he received an NAACP Image Award for “Outstanding Supporting Actor in a Drama Series” in 2007. **Desmond Meade** is President and Executive Director of the Florida Rights Restoration Coalition, a Floridians for Fair Democracy Chairman, a TIME 100 honoree, a RepresentUs board member, and an attorney. In 2018, he led a historic victory to restore voting rights to 1.4 million inmates in Florida.

could spend this money actually rehabilitating people, investing in improving lives, investing in communities, breaking the school to prison pipeline.

We can enact bail reform. People sitting in jail often have not been convicted of a crime, but simply can't afford bail. Many lose their jobs and apartments while waiting for trial. Who benefits from this system? Corrections officers and bail bondsmen. Meanwhile, you and I are footing the bill. It makes no sense.

We can change the way we pick judges. Many are elected by voters. Research shows that to keep their jobs, judges are more likely to hand out harsher sentences as they approach Election Day. They get campaign donations from lawyers, lobbyists, and business interests who have a vested interest in keeping the system just the way it is. We call this corruption.

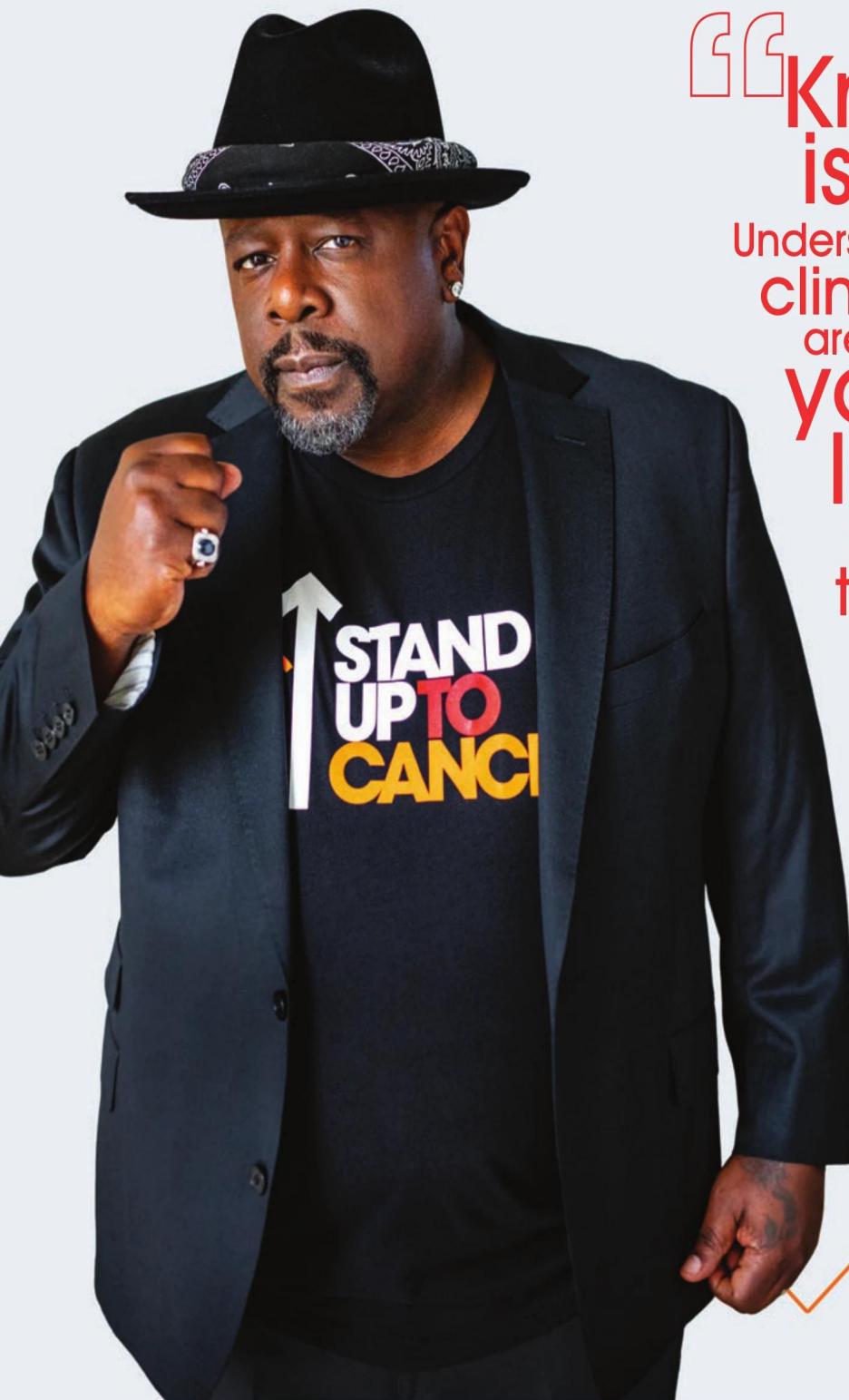
We can ban corporations from

using cheap prison labor instead of hiring paid workers. Inmates cleaned up the BP oil spill, making pennies on the dollar, in Louisiana, where companies can earn a \$2,400 tax break for every inmate used. Corporations not only save money on prison labor—they directly profit from those tax credits!

We can do all of this, and the American people support it. So, what's standing in our way?

Special interests—prosecutors, police unions, drug companies, lobbyists. On this issue, just like so many others, special interests have a grip on our elected officials, and they stymie the progress we so critically need.

A path to putting power back in the hands of everyday Americans exists right now. States across the country are passing the provisions of the American Anti-Corruption Act championed by RepresentUs (the nation's leading right-left anti-corruption



CC Knowledge
is power.
Understanding what cancer
clinical trial options
are available to
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loved ones**
can make all
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CEDRIC THE ENTERTAINER
Stand Up To Cancer Ambassador



Photo By
JEFF KATZ

WATCHING MY MOTHER GO THROUGH HER CANCER DIAGNOSIS TAUGHT ME THE IMPORTANCE OF CLINICAL TRIALS.

When my mom was diagnosed with uterine cancer, I knew that I wanted her to have access to the best treatments available. The journey taught me about the importance of learning all that you can about the options available to you. I want all people diagnosed with cancer to have access to the treatments that can help them become long-term survivors.

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Stand Up To Cancer is a division of the Entertainment Industry Foundation (EIF), a 501(c)(3) charitable organization.

NEWSMAKERS

Talking Points


“The science should not stand in the way of this.”

—WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY
KAYLEIGH MCENANY
ON SCHOOL REOPENINGS


“I'M INCREDIBLY GRATEFUL TO BE ALIVE AND THAT I'M EXPECTED TO MAKE A FULL RECOVERY.”

—HIP-HOP ARTIST MEGAN THEE STALLION ANNOUNCING THAT SHE IS RECOVERING FROM GUNSHOT WOUNDS



Megan Thee Stallion


“Showing up for work as a centrist at an American newspaper should not require bravery.”

—FORMER NY TIMES OPINION WRITER BARI WEISS, RESIGNATION LETTER


“The moment we're living through right now asks all of us to do more. It's a moment when your voices and your action have never been more urgently needed.”

—MEGHAN MARKLE, SPEAKING AT THE 2020 GIRL UP LEADERSHIP SUMMIT



Meghan Markle


“I FEEL FINE... I WAS PRETTY SHOCKED THAT I WAS THE FIRST GOVERNOR TO GET IT.”

—Oklahoma Governor Kevin Stitt on testing positive for COVID-19



Kevin Stitt


KTLA 5

“We just felt that there was no way that we'd be able to host a Rose Parade this year.”

—TOURNAMENT OF ROSES CEO DAVID EADS ON THE FIRST CANCELLATION SINCE WWII


“IF WE COULD GET EVERYBODY TO WEAR A MASK RIGHT NOW, I THINK IN FOUR, SIX, EIGHT WEEKS WE COULD BRING THIS EPIDEMIC UNDER CONTROL.”

—Dr. Robert Redfield, Director of the Centers for Disease Control



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TRUMP HAS ASKED **Jared Kushner** TO HANDLE EVERYTHING FROM THE WALL TO THE WEST BANK. HOW'S THAT WORKING OUT?

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by Bill Powell

PHOTO ILLUSTRATION by GLUEKIT

The Utility Player



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HY WOULD SOMEBODY 37 YEARS OLD, with no diplomatic experience, take on the job of making peace in the Mideast? "My father-in-law asked me to do it," Jared Kushner says.

Never mind that Henry Kissinger, James Baker and Bill Clinton, among others, had failed to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. President Donald Trump told Kushner to get it done, so that's what Kushner set out to do. He spoke to experts and negotiators from previous administrations. One was Aaron David Miller, a senior fellow at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. When Kushner told him what he was up to, a dumbfounded Miller spoke for sons-in-law everywhere: "Wow, I wish my father-in-law had the kind of faith in me that yours has in you!"

When the history of Donald Trump's tumultuous time in the White House is written—and that may be sooner than later—it will show one thing for certain: His most influential adviser, by far, was Jared Kushner. Now 39, Kushner has been a de facto chief of staff, influencing the hiring and firing senior White House aides; an important architect of Trump's foreign policy, including the renegotiation of the North American Free Trade Agreement; he became a key member of the coronavirus task force; the

prime force behind initiatives like criminal justice reform; and now, increasingly, a critical adviser to a struggling re-election campaign. He is, in fact, the most influential presidential relative—first ladies aside—since Robert F. Kennedy served as attorney general for his brother, President John F. Kennedy.

Kushner differs far more from Trump than the intense RFK did from his elder brother, known more for his cool reserve. Trump and Kushner are in many ways an odd pairing. He is reserved, thoughtful and disciplined (traits no one associates with Trump). Trump is bombastically bumptious. Kushner is quietly sure of himself. He does his homework. He reaches out for different points of view—including to Democrats. And though criticism comes his way, and it frustrates him and his friends, he doesn't vent about it in public or seem to feel sorry for himself in private.

The RFK analogy is not a reach. As with Bobby Kennedy, Kushner has been portrayed by much of the press as an entitled rich guy who lacks the proper experience for the job he's been given. He got to where he is now only because of nepotism. Or, as his friend Adam Boehler, whom Kushner brought in to work on the coronavirus response in March, puts it, "The myth of the son-in-law who hasn't earned it."

ALL IN THE FAMILY
Kushner (seen here, top left, in the White House press briefing room in April) is his father-in-law Donald Trump's most trusted adviser—a role that Robert Kennedy (far right) played when his brother John was president.

It's true that Kushner had no government or political experience before coming to Washington (though he did run his family's large real estate company). "He and his wife [Ivanka] aren't even basically qualified for the sensitive positions they hold on the White House payroll," wrote one outraged *Washington Post* reader after a columnist dared to say something nice about Kushner in print. The view that his power and influence in the Trump White House is the product of nepotism is accurate—as far as it goes. RFK got precisely the same heat nearly six decades ago.

The criticism, Kushner insists, doesn't bother him. His role as Senior Adviser to the President—his official White House title—is, in his view, straightforward: "I'm a utility player," Kushner tells *Newsweek*. "I can give [Trump] a point of view on the severity of a given problem, I can give him some diagnoses and a prescription."

On issues as different as the Mid-east and criminal justice reform, his approach was similar: Ask experts, study previous efforts—and then do something different. "The thing that guided me was, I didn't want to do what had failed in the past," he says. That willingness to blow things up is a technique he shares with Trump. "The president's very good at eliminating the status quo," he says.

Unlike his father-in-law, though, Kushner seems a pragmatist more than a political animal, proud of being someone who simply gets things done. "Take the Wall," he says. "This isn't what I came to do. But [John] Kelly and [Kirstjen] Nielsen failed. And by the end of this year we'll have over 200 miles out of 450 built...I feel I've been able to take on challenges, I feel like I know Washington better, and I've been effective...I have the ability to build relationships and have trusted dialogues, and the president knows they won't leak." Adds Anthony Scaramucci, who served briefly as White House Communications Director, "That is the president's bottom line: loyalty."

If filial devotion were all that mattered, though, Eric Trump would be Senior Adviser. So it's fair to assume that Kushner brings something else to the job. What, more than three years in, has he accomplished? Has he been bouncing from one important issue to another, diving into things he doesn't really understand? Why did he take on the issues that he did? And what, at the end of the day, does he

think about the fact that for all his efforts, President Trump may well lose an election that six months ago his team was supremely confident of winning?

Newsweek interviewed Kushner himself twice, at length—by phone because of the pandemic—as well as dozens of people inside and outside the White House, to examine how he's handled the most important, high-profile assignments he's taken on. What we found doesn't always jibe with the caricature of the entitled failure. There have been failures, to be sure. But there also have been some successes, and efforts that fall somewhere in between. And through it all, he has been loyal. Here are a few of the notable projects he's worked on, and how he and others see the results.

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"The thing that guided me was,
I didn't want to do what had **FAILED** in the past."



The Pandemic

KUSHNER HAD HOPED—BELIEVED, ACTUALLY—that by now the worst of the COVID-19 pandemic would be behind the nation, “that by July we’d be rocking again as a country,” as he put it in a mid-June interview. That hasn’t happened: Even as the virus has receded everywhere from east Asia to western Europe, cases are soaring in the United States. In late June and early July, Kushner was more involved in the re-election campaign, particularly after the president’s poorly attended rally in Tulsa, Oklahoma on June 20. He conferred more frequently with campaign manager Brad Parscale—which for him was not a good sign: Amidst worsening poll numbers, Parscale was demoted and replaced on July 15. Kushner, aides say, has also been trying to get the president to focus more consistently on the campaign. But as the number of virus cases rises, he’s been drawn back in, fielding frequent phone calls from governors who in many cases now need more PPE and medical personnel.

The coronavirus crisis showcased both the president’s reliance on his son-in-law and Kushner’s modus operandi. In early March, it was clear that the virus, which Trump downplayed for weeks, was spreading. It had seeded far more widely on both East and West coasts than the administration understood. Kushner met in the Oval Office with Trump and other advisers to thrash out a decision on shutting down travel from Europe. As the meeting ended Trump asked Kushner to wait. “He then asked me to drop everything I was doing and work with Vice President Pence on the coronavirus task force,” Kushner says.

Kushner’s status as a family member would often irk senior administration officials. But the standard jealousy receded a bit, according to multiple sources, because of the magnitude of the crisis. Says Kushner: “The gap was quite great between what we needed to do versus what we were doing...I attribute it to the fact that [the virus outbreak] was unprecedented. It was as if we were standing on a beach watching a tsunami coming. There were some very, very dark and daunting days. I didn’t always feel necessarily that we would meet the challenge.”

With Pence’s approval, he focused on three key areas, PPE supplies, ventilator production and testing, all of which were huge problems and showed just how unprepared the U.S. was for the crisis. He recruited his friend Boehler, a former health care executive whom Trump had put in charge of the

Center for Medicare and Medicaid Innovation in 2018. Boehler in turn asked health care entrepreneur Brad Smith, an executive at insurance giant Anthem, to join. They brought in several Wall Street and private equity executives to work on the three key problems.

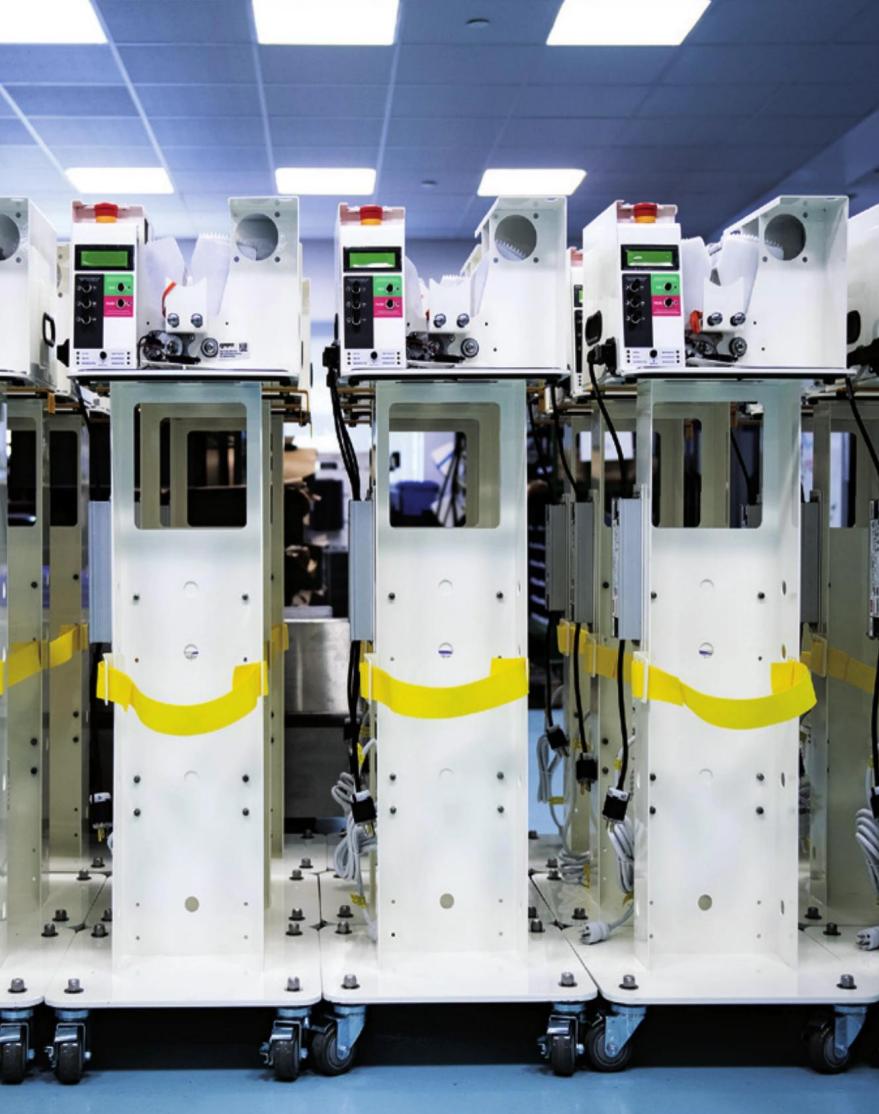
Critics questioned why a bunch of relatively young health care and finance types—the junior varsity, in other words—was suddenly in the middle of things that the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) would normally handle. But press reports about general chaos brought on by Team Kushner were overwrought, Kushner’s people insist. They say the stories of crossed wires between agencies were exaggerated, and that the people they brought in had skills and industry contacts—the “big Rolodex,” as Kushner says—to help in a crisis.

Take testing. Kushner, Boehler and Smith rounded up private sector companies such as Walmart and CVS to participate in setting up drive-through sites. “I never really had a problem working with Jared’s team,” says Admiral Brett Giroir, an assistant secretary at the Department of Health and Human

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“There were some very, very dark and DAUNTING DAYS. I didn’t always feel necessarily that we would meet the challenge.”





COVID COMMAND
Procuring ventilators
(above, partially assembled ones in New York City) was one of Kushner's earliest pandemic tasks. Says HHS assistant secretary, Admiral Brett Giroir, who was in charge of setting up coronavirus testing sites, "I never really had a problem working with Jared's team."

Services and a physician who was in charge of deciding where the sites should go and setting them up.

Still, when Trump announced the plan in the Rose Garden on March 13, it was widely derided. The announcement was premature, to be sure. The companies were nowhere near ready. But Boehler says there are now more than 3,000 of the drive through testing sites, and overall testing now exceeds 600,000 per day, compared to less than 15,000 per day in mid-March. The administration still insists one million tests per day will be available by the fall, but lines are lengthening for tests now in hot spots as demand surges. The administration also didn't anticipate the lags in processing test results that are now hampering efforts to do effective contact tracing.

Kushner's crew faced the same criticism in its hunt for PPE: that he brought in cronies not suited to the task. That's wrong, Boehler insists, saying Kushner's team played an important role in finding supplies. "There are thousands and thousands of offers coming in at crazy prices from random traders in China," Boehler says. "You don't know what's real and what's not. People who source deals for investment firms, like the people we brought in, go through offers and tee them

up for senior people." Look at the net results, he says: "we got the PPE, and we didn't get defrauded."

Kushner was effective at negotiating. For example: he got involved in a dispute between the government of China and U.S. multinational 3M, which manufactured masks at a factory in Shanghai at a rate of 50 million a month. The Shanghai government had expropriated the factory. The U.S. needed masks, the sprawling health bureaucracy was ill-suited to figure out how to make that happen quickly, and U.S.-Sino ties were deteriorating rapidly. Kushner called Cui Tiankai, China's ambassador to Washington, and told him, "this is a time when a lot of people are saying a lot of things. If we can't get masks from the 3M plant in Shanghai this will not play well [with the American public]." Twelve hours later, Kushner says, his team had a deal with 3M.

Meanwhile, Kushner worked closely with Dr. Deborah Birx of the White House COVID-19 task force, to prevent a crisis in ventilators, she says.

Some state governors, most notably New York's Andrew Cuomo, feared they wouldn't have enough machines to prevent mass casualties. The White House shared the concern. A senior official says one internal estimate showed that the U.S. might need 130,000 new ventilators by May 1. At the time the Centers for Disease Control's Strategic National Stockpile had between 12,000 to 13,000 ventilators. Kushner helped persuade Trump to invoke the Defense Production Act in April to kickstart more production. His team worked with the six companies involved in manufacturing, and Kushner got on the phone with governors.

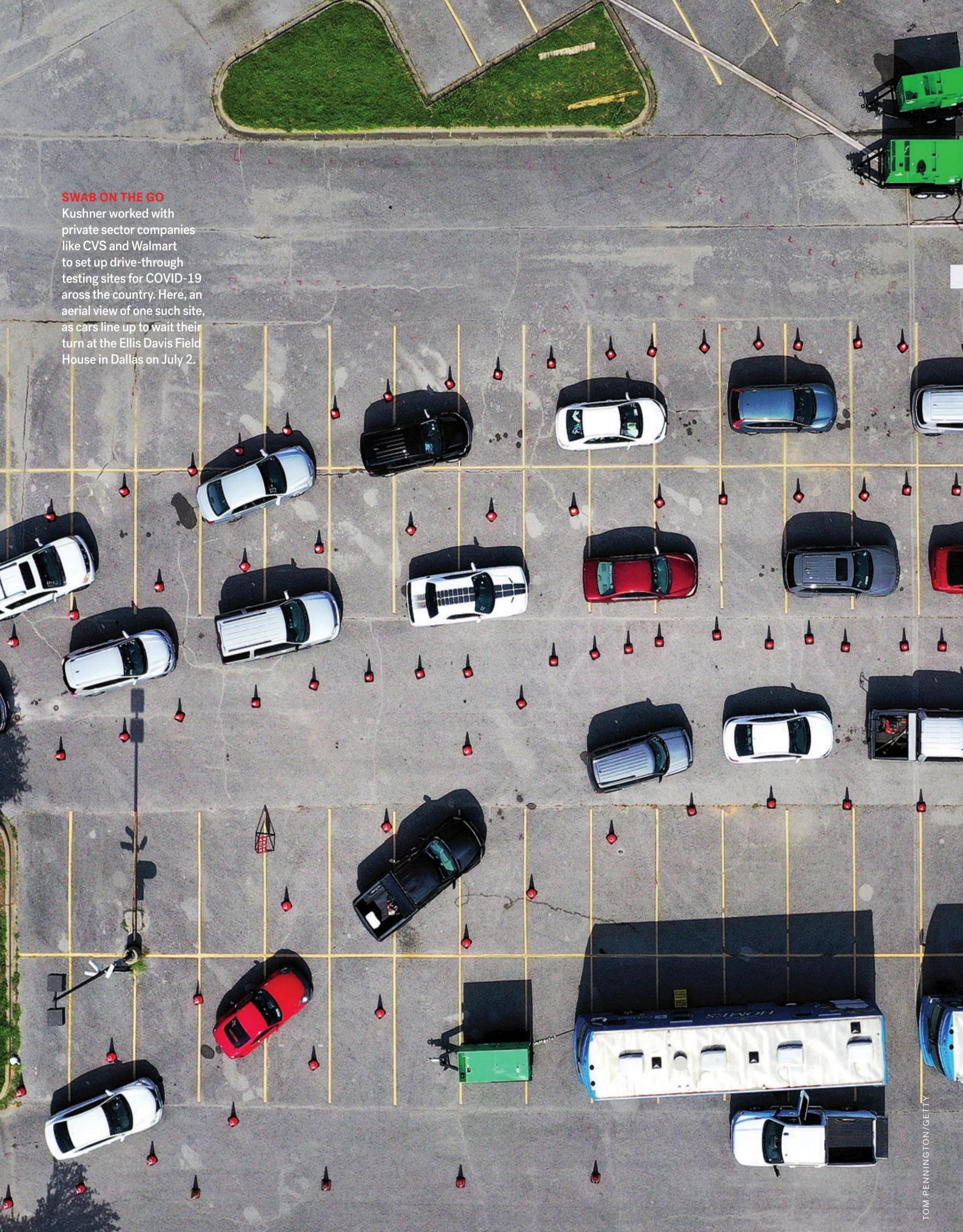
"We tried to force discipline on them," he says. "How many [ventilators] do you have, what's your utilization rate? Some governors were quite competent, other governors literally didn't know how many they had."

Kushner says he had a good working relationship with Cuomo, and quickly came to share the governor's view that ventilators didn't need to be supplied throughout the country simultaneously. They needed to go to hot spots, like New York—and then sent elsewhere once the need dissipated. That is what the White House strategy became, and Cuomo praised Kushner for it. It is fair to say Kushner played a role in averting what could have been a ventilator crisis.

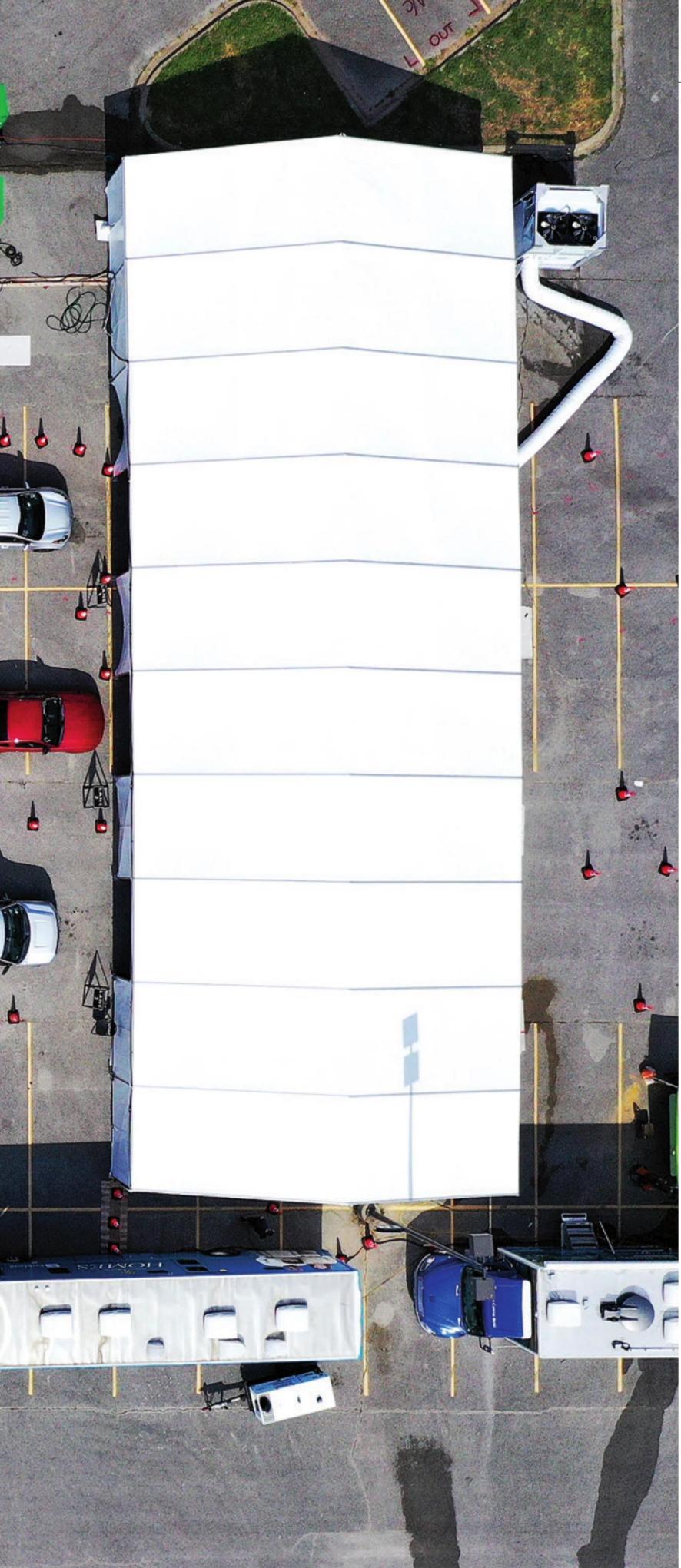
By early summer, after three months of frantic work, Team Kushner thought the worst was behind them. But as COVID-19 cases spike in states including Texas, Florida, Arizona and California, spot shortages

SWAB ON THE GO

Kushner worked with private sector companies like CVS and Walmart to set up drive-through testing sites for COVID-19 across the country. Here, an aerial view of one such site, as cars line up to wait their turn at the Ellis Davis Field House in Dallas on July 2.



TOM PENNINGTON/GETTY



of PPE are flaring, according to the American Medical Association. In Fort Worth, Texas, Kathryn Mandal, a physician at Continuum Pediatrics, says her office was just able to order a box of protective gloves for the first time in a month, and they paid five times what they used to pay pre-COVID-19. Kushner's team and HHS say that PPE supply chains should be able to withstand the current increases in cases. But it's clear that premature economic reopenings—urged by Trump, who downplayed the importance of mask-wearing while insisting “we've got to get the country open again”—contributed to the surge, undercutting Kushner's efforts.

The resurgence now might lay waste to Kushner's summer plans. Instead of focusing on his father-in-law's floundering re-election campaign, he is finding himself in the medical supplies business again.

Prisons

CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORM IS NOT AN ISSUE associated with Republicans. But few in Washington were surprised when Jared Kushner took it up in early 2018. After all, the whispers about the politics of Kushner and his wife, Ivanka Trump, have been consistent: “You know, they’re really New York liberals.” Although the couple had donated to Democratic candidates in the past, Kushner disputes these characterizations. Instead, this is an issue he’s passionate about for personal reasons. The passage of the First Step Act, as the reform legislation was known, is Kushner’s clearest success to date.

In 2004, Kushner’s father, Charles, was convicted of federal election law violations, tax evasion and witness tampering. Kushner cut a plea deal with then-New Jersey U.S. Attorney Chris Christie, and was shipped off to a federal prison in Montgomery, Alabama. (He served 14 months before being sent to a halfway house.) While visiting his father in prison, Kushner says, “I met a lot of good people who didn’t have the same chances that I had, that my father had. That really struck me. It was something that I knew intellectually, but to meet people who were good people who had just made one mistake, it hit home. People need a second chance.”

His first task was to convince Trump. Kushner says he walked the president through the numbers, showing, for example, that without training and education programs in prison, recidivism rates are higher. “What are these people going to do when

they get out?" Kushner says. "They are going to commit crimes." He also showed his father-in-law how many people—particularly young African American men—were in jail because of minor drug offenses. Trump gave the okay to push for legislation.

Kushner began working with a bipartisan group in both the House and Senate. There were skeptics, of course, like Arkansas Republican Senator Tom Cotton. "They thought we were just all about letting murderers and rapists out of prison. It wasn't true," Kushner says. He never got Cotton's support—the senator thought the bill would make Trump look soft on crime—but Kushner did gain a key ally: former Obama administration official and CNN commentator Van Jones, who had started #cut50, which was billed as a bipartisan organization aimed at pursuing criminal justice reform.

In 2018, Kushner invited Jones and organization co-founder Jessica Jackson to the White House. "I was very skeptical," says Jackson. But when Jackson heard Kushner speak about his father, she sympathized: When she was 22, her then-husband was convicted on a drug charge. "They threw him in a cage for three and a half years," she says. Hearing Kushner out, she became convinced "he was in it for the right reasons." She and Jones agreed to work with Kushner "though we were doubtful he would get it done, even if his heart was in the right place."

The Jones/Jackson endorsement showed Democrats that Kushner might be serious. Jackson acknowledges that she and Jones took some grief. "People were calling us saying, how could you do this, how can you do something that might give Trump a win?"

Kushner set about working his right flank. He says he called "Hannity [Fox News' Sean] and Laura [Ingraham] and [radio host] Mark Levin" to promote the bill. Another conservative skeptic, radio chat show host Hugh Hewitt, got three phone calls to go over details. In the end Kushner got an initially skeptical Mitch McConnell, the Senate Majority leader, to schedule a floor vote. At Kushner's urging, Trump had lobbied McConnell himself. "Jared was persistent, worked the issue hard, and persuaded me of the bill's merits," McConnell tells *Newsweek*.

On December 18, 2018, the Senate passed the First Step Act, 87-12; the House followed and Trump signed. The bill discharged thousands of prisoners from federal jails—including first-time offenders—relocated thousands more to prisons closer

to their families, got rid of the "three strike" rule mandating life in prison for a third conviction and increased funding for in-prison education.

"After it passed I met Matthew Charles, one of the first guys let out of prison under the bill," Kushner says. "Hearing his story when he came by my office, it was like having a shot of espresso."

Says Jackson: "Everything [Kushner] said he would do, he did. Van and I still sort of shake our heads about that."

By all accounts Trump was serious about trying to boost his share of the Black vote from 8 percent in 2016 to 13 percent or more in 2020. His campaign believed, pre COVID-19, that the record low unemployment rate among Black Americans (5.5 percent in December), plus rising wages, plus the criminal justice bill would give him a case to make.

Now, of course, that hope is largely gone. The deep pandemic-driven recession has driven Black unemployment back up to 16.7 percent, and the killing of George Floyd and other African Americans by police has prompted widespread outrage and social unrest. Trump's law-and-order rallying cries and support for Confederate symbols haven't helped.

Asked if he still thought his father in law could still increase his share of the African American vote, Kushner says, "Maybe. Maybe not."

PERSONAL STAKES

Kushner's interest in criminal justice reform grew after father Charles went to prison in 2004; below, the two at a 2012 event for Ivanka Trump's fashion line. Working on Mideast peace reunited Jared with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu (right), a Kushner family friend.



Peacemaking

SUCCEEDING IN A BITTERLY DIVIDED WASHINGTON IS hard enough, and then there's the Mideast. Kushner says his effort to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict was done in good faith—that it was not a plan designed to spotlight Palestinian intransigence so that Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, a longtime Kushner family friend, could do whatever he wanted on the West Bank.

"I understand that people are going to criticize," he says. But "it's okay to take on hard challenges. I'd rather spend time on harder things."

Kushner went about the task with his characteristic mix of earnestness and self-assurance. He studied previous deals and met with Middle East experts and former negotiators—Miller at the Carnegie Endowment, Clifford May, the head of the Foundation for the Defense of Democracies, and several others. All describe him as respectful personally but dismissive of previous efforts to resolve the conflict. "A lot of the former peace negotiators told me the goal is to give hope, it's not to actually make a deal," Kushner says. "I said the goal is to make a deal and finish this thing." He did not want to go down the road of past negotiations only to fail again. (Robert Satloff, executive director of the Washington Institute for Near East Policy retorted, "Oh, so you want to fail in a whole different way!" Kushner, he says, laughed.)

Kushner also insisted he wasn't going to be guided by "the history of the conflict, and the history of the peace process—those are traps." To which Miller replies, "But the history is the conflict."

Kushner did have one thing going for him. Anyone in the Israeli government or the Palestinian Authority knew that when you were talking to Kushner, you were talking to Trump. "That is how it was for Baker, when he was Secretary of State under Bush 41," says Miller, who worked for Baker. "There was no daylight."

Kushner's problem was the plan itself. It did put forth a two-state solution. But it required the Palestinians to forgo control over exit and entry into the proposed new state, and allow Israel to oversee its internal security. "In other words, it takes away the most basic functions of a nation-state," Satloff says. Kushner coupled that with economic incentives for the Palestinian Authority that shrank over time. To



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"I have the ability to build relationships and have TRUSTED DIALOGUES, and the president knows they won't leak."

Satloff, this was Kushner's real estate background poking through. "It was like a landlord trying to entice a tenant to get out of a building because he wants to put up condominiums: You give him 25 cents on the dollar now if he takes the deal, but if he waits two weeks he only gets 10 cents."

The deal died almost as soon as it was unveiled but Kushner is unapologetic. "Does it make Israel more secure? Yes. Does it lead to Palestinians living a better life? Yes," he says. He blames the Palestinians for the plan going nowhere. "They say they want to compromise, but they are never willing to get into the technical discussions that are going to lead somewhere." He says much of the rest of the Arab world is fed up with the Palestinian Authority. "They view them as an uncapped liability," he says.

Along with others in Washington, Miller believes that domestic political considerations—"Trump's desire to be the most pro-Israel president in history"—shaped the plan. He had already fulfilled

a campaign promise by moving the U.S. Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. A lopsided deal favoring Israel would solidify his support among evangelical Christians and conservative Jews. Kushner denies politics drove the peace effort, but concedes the plan "was very popular with the president's base."

The Prince

KUSHNER IS NOT WRONG TO SUGGEST THAT MUCH of the Middle East is exasperated with Palestinian leadership. The Trump administration, including Kushner, has encouraged the Gulf states to move closer to Israel. Kushner has been involved in the reorientation of U.S. policy away from Iran and back toward traditional allies, most importantly Saudi Arabia. This wasn't his baby, the way criminal justice reform was. Other key members of the administration—then National Security Adviser H.R. McMaster and Defense Secretary James Mattis—broadly supported the policy, and so have their successors. But Kushner was important, not least because of his relationship with Mohammed bin Salman, aka MBS, the controversial Crown Prince and de facto ruler of the House of Saud. And when that relationship proved troublesome, Kushner stood by the Saudi prince.

Riyadh was delighted by Trump's campaign promise to junk Obama's nuclear deal with Iran and urged an early meeting after the inauguration.

Kushner had never met the Crown Prince, but the two began communicating; Trump's visit in May 2017 was his first overseas trip as president. During their meetings, MBS told Kushner what the son-in-law would later relay to the president: "he had very ambitious goals," Kushner says. "He wanted to modernize his society. But he said he needed space and time. 'Let me do this in my time.'" Trump's circle viewed the 2017 Saudi trip as a triumph, the elation captured by a photo of Kushner high-fiving McMaster on the tarmac in Riyadh.

But in October of the following year, *Washington Post* columnist Jamal Khashoggi, a vocal critic of the Saudi monarchy, was killed and dismembered in the country's Istanbul embassy. It was a high profile—and brutal—assassination; the CIA told the White House that it believed MBS had signed off on it, and the administration was taking serious heat over the murder. But Kushner and other advisers including Bolton and Secretary of State Mike Pompeo urged Trump to hang tough



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"To meet people who were good people who had just made ONE MISTAKE, it hit home. People need a second chance."

rather than alienate Riyadh while they were breaking off the Iran deal.

Kushner still defends MBS—and his own decision to stand by the prince. He says MBS has cleaned out some of the most radical Imams in the mosques and tamed the notorious religious police. The new foreign policy maven speaks like a hardened "realist" when talking about MBS and the Saudis. If Team Trump had to bear some unpleasantness in the pursuit of broader goals with the Saudis, so be it. "There have been a couple of missteps," he says, "but they've been a very good ally."

Kushner's close relationship with MBS proved useful earlier this year. Moscow and Riyadh were engaged in a ruinous oil price war, wreaking havoc on the U.S. energy sector. Demand was plummeting because of the COVID-induced economic coma. But the two largest foreign producers, the Saudis and

CAST OF CHARACTERS

Kushner views Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman (above) as a key ally in the Middle East; (right) Kushner, with Vice President Mike Pence and Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, listens as Trump and Netanyahu talk in the Oval Office earlier this year.



the Russians, were not cutting production in order to boost prices. Instead, they were increasing the flow. Kushner called MBS several times asking the Saudis to halt. He and Energy Secretary Dan Brouillette also lobbied Moscow. Finally, the two superpowers called a truce. Critics say the administration should have pressured the Saudis earlier and harder. Kushner deflects the criticism. "Ultimately, we got it done," he says. "That's what matters."

Presidential Politics

THE CAMPAIGN COULD BE THE LOYAL SON IN LAW'S final task. Joe Biden has been pulling ahead, COVID-19 cases are soaring, and Republicans around the country are increasingly nervous about the race.

If Kushner is nervous, he doesn't let on publicly. But the mid-July demotion of former campaign manager Parscale in favor of Bill Stepien, the former White House political director and Parscale's deputy, was a bow to reality. Parscale had been a Kushner ally but campaign insiders say his fate was sealed by the horrible optics of the Tulsa rally. It's unclear if Kushner tried to talk Trump out of demoting him.

As recently as mid June, Kushner was praising the campaign team he helped build. He had brought back Jason Miller and Brian Jack, two veterans of the 2016 run. (Miller focuses on campaign strategy, while Jack runs the White House's office of political affairs.) The campaign, he boasts, has a \$60 million, state-of-the-art data operation,

which Parscale, who ran digital and data strategy in the 2016 campaign, will continue to oversee. "We're message-testing what will make [voters] like Trump more, and Biden less. We have a big war chest, our operation is clicking. We have an eternity of time." Kushner recently signed off on a tough new ad tying Biden to the rise in crime in cities like Seattle, Minneapolis and New York in the wake of the George Floyd murder.

The public polls that show the president trailing badly are "all bullshit," Kushner says. "I'm not a political strategist but I know what the message is: He may not be the politically correct one, but he gets things done." The fact that Trump has not yet laid out a vision for a second term also doesn't faze Kushner. "The strategy side matters more in the last 90 days," he says.

To anxious Republicans, Kushner's assessment sounds divorced from an increasingly grim reality. The "eternity of time" is slipping away, as Trump's poll numbers drop on the economy and the virus seems to be killing him politically. If Kushner has doubts, he doesn't share them with a reporter. But it's unclear how he can help overcome the hardening perception that Trump's handling of the pandemic has been a disaster.

Dutiful and discreet, Jared Kushner has done whatever his father-in-law has asked of him. The question is, what has that earned him? Kushner wants to see his father-in-law re-elected, and hopes his work helps. But neither Kushner nor anyone else around the president can undo the damage from the early, shambolic response to the virus, which helped produce a summer of rising cases and renewed economic shutdowns—a lethal political combination. Nor does he control Trump's Twitter feed, which continues to be a source of self-inflicted wounds. The White House, Kushner included, loved Trump's July 3rd speech at Mt. Rushmore and the patriotic themes it struck. But Trump then stepped all over the message by tweeting criticism of NASCAR for banning Confederate flags, and of Bubba Wallace, the African American driver who Trump said had taken part in a "hoax" regarding the noose found in his team's garage. It was as tone deaf as anything Trump has said as president and at a time when millions of Americans are confronting racial injustice.

It's lucky for Kushner that he likes big challenges. Getting Donald Trump re-elected may not be as tough as achieving Mideast peace. But it's close. ■



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Kushner Gets Candid

**TRUMP'S SON-IN-LAW
ON WHAT HE'S LEARNED,
HOW HE OPERATES AND
THE CHALLENGES OF
'PLAYING WITH LIVE AMMO.'**

JARED KUSHNER SPOKE TO NEWSWEEK'S Bill Powell at length in mid-June. These excerpts have been edited for length.

What he thought his role would be in January 2017:

JK: That feels like a lifetime ago. I was in a different place in my life then. When we got to the White House at first I was helping [him] find his way; there were so many people with so many agendas coming at him, it was important to make sure people weren't end-running him, because we were playing with live ammo now. We had to be his eyes and ears to help good people flourish and be a check on people who were playing games. I always had his back.

I think I was good at spotting trends, making decisions and managing organizations. We were doing a lot of learning about how to accomplish his core objectives: get wages rising, rebalance some of the [trade] deals to create long term growth, basically making sure that his big visions had policies put in place below. Every day there are a million crises, you have to figure out how to keep moving forward. In terms of pursuing things that I had interest in, if I identify an objective I get a lot of permission to run. But look, the fact is that I spend most of my time on things the president wants done. I'm a utility player.

The more I was out campaigning with him the more it became clear that he was representing people who needed a voice. It became clear that the intelligentsia feels one way but the people in the country feel differently. I saw what he was fighting for.

His work on the COVID-19 crisis:

JK: The biggest issue was ventilators and testing. I worked with commercial providers. You needed a lot of components to come together, supply chains needed to be dusted off, set approvals for different types of tests and stay in touch with



the companies that can create them. We were able to get a lot of that loosened up. Cut through the bureaucracy and then power through. Get testing unleashed.

On ventilators, the situation varied considerably state by state. We identified what resources were in the private sector and where, and then basically started calling the states asking how many ventilators do you have, what's your utilization rate? We forced discipline on the process.

At the time we were looking at the numbers growing and thinking, holy shit, we may not be able to make 130,000 [ventilators] by May 1. If we don't flatten the curve we might be like Italy, with people dying on gurneys.

I was criticized for saying that's not your stockpile, but the idea was, we are working through all these situations, figuring out the best way to get ventilators to where they were needed. We were not sure we were going to make it, but we did.

On the masks, we had brought in a small group of private equity guys who could sift through bullshit. There was a lot of hoarding going on. We tried to find out how much each state was actually using, in as close to real time as possible. Using data and moving fast—not something that government is always good at. I said, I'll take the heat if there are mistakes.

I think Operation Warp Speed will hyper-accelerate a bunch of vaccines; we've made progress on therapeutics and testing. We need to be vigilant about screening and testing and monitoring new cases. Overall we need to do a better job of protecting the most vulnerable. People who are older should shelter. People

with comorbidities should shelter. But there appears to be little risk for people who are under 45 and who are healthy. We need to figure out a way to continue to open the country safely. Losing one person is too many, so the goal is to prevent as much death as possible. I believe the president and the vice president made a lot of the critical decisions necessary to balance issues of public health and economic health.

Why he took on criminal justice reform:

JK: I had this situation where my father was in prison. For too many people, prison becomes a revolving door. What we find is that 73 percent of the [prison population] had committed a crime previously. It makes you ask, what is the purpose of prison? Because if it's only punishment, then we know where the future criminals are: They're in prison.

[The president] knew I had a personal knowledge of the issue and a passion for it. For the first six months I just studied what had been done before and what had failed. People were saying I was naive and an optimist. People criticize. I don't care. It's okay to take on hard challenges.

The president helped [persuade Republican senators]. He's really aggressive in terms of making things happen when he wants something. He makes people uncomfortable with the status quo. I worked 18 hours a day for three months, going deep on the issue. I did the legal work. I got an education.

What have you proved to President Trump?

JK: That when he gives me a project nothing leaks, I'm able to get things

done. I feel I've been able to take on challenges, I feel like I know Washington better, and I've been effective.

Why did you take on Middle East peace?

JK: Well, my father-in-law asked me to do it. He's very passionate about the U.S.-Israel relationship. It's an issue that's very important to his constituency. He wanted to make sure it was done in a way he was comfortable with.

The dynamics were much larger than just sitting down with the Palestinians and the Israelis. That conflict is a cancer. It's almost like if you can treat the tumor or extract it, then it provides the opportunity for a major reconciliation. So the first thing that we did, we went to Saudi Arabia and tried to set out the president's goals for the Middle East.

The first goal was confronting Iran and their aggression and undo the disastrous damage that had been done by the previous administration. The second priority was ISIS. If ISIS had been able to keep growing you would destabilize the entire region, so we had to stop that—but we had to do it together. The third thing was extremists. They needed to clean out their mosques and stop funding institutions that are promoting radicalism. The fourth one was the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. We needed to start pushing everyone's relationship closer with Israel.

Arabs have to have access to the mosque. You have to be in a position where the Palestinians can govern themselves. That becomes economic opportunity. So what I did was to get Israel to agree to a state. It was the first time that Israel had actually drawn a map. And then we said to the Palestinians, if you have technical changes, come back and tell us what they are. I feel like it put them in a position internationally where they have to defend the status quo while Israel is saying okay we're ready to solve this thing.

And what we've also done with the region is, no more cherry-picking issues. If you're with America and we are helping you with your biggest problems, ISIS and Iran, you can't cross us on Israel. And quite frankly they have economic and security reasons to get together with Israel. I think if you look over three years, number one there has been no real violence, which is a success.

Now the goal is to push for more steps toward normalization between Israel and the Arabs, and to keep saying to the Palestinians, we're not going to allow you to hold yourself hostage. If you want money and want respect, you have to do the things normal countries do. It's almost as if they put a knife to their wrist and say if you don't give us what we want we'll kill ourselves. You're not gonna kill yourself. We stopped buying their bull-

...

"Every day there are A MILLION CRISES. You have to figure out how to keep moving forward."

We sat down with the Israelis and the Palestinians and what I found was, everyone wanted to focus on process or history. Those are traps. I looked at different peace deals that were done—and I found that it's almost like they never started, it was almost an excuse for people to keep getting what they were getting. The Palestinian Authority could keep getting money and Israel could keep getting land. Neither side was actually motivated to solve the problem.

Moving the embassy to Jerusalem—the president asked me, is this going to make it harder or easier to get to peace? And I said, long term much harder because the Palestinians will just run from the table.

Pushing the Arabs closer to Israel—that's the only way that you can actually get this thing done. Where we need to be is that all

shit. And we put in place a lot of policies that long term make Israel safer, more secure. and Frankly I think the president's political base is thrilled with how we handled this so far.

What are the Gulf Arab partners telling the Palestinians now?

JK: They probably give them happy talk, but I think they've all given up on it. They'd love to help the people, but unfortunately the people are hostages to bad leadership. They've grown less scared of them because their publics don't care as much. In Saudi Arabia they care about jobs for Saudis, not the Palestinians. In Bahrain they want jobs for Bahrainis. From our Gulf allies' standpoint, Iran is number one through 10 on their concern meter. Israel is an ally against Iran. The economy is number 11 through 20.

On Saudi Arabia, Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman and the murder of Jamal Khashoggi.

JK: We were worried that their policies at home, their repression, was creating more terrorism. Trump was not going to stand for it. I told them we want to be a great ally, but you have to show us. MBS said we want to rebuild a good relationship, give me some space and time. I want to start modernizing our society. I have to invest. I'm setting ambitious goals. Let me do this in my time. I think he has tried to keep his word. There have obviously been a couple of missteps. But they've been a good ally.

[The murder of journalist and dissident Jamal Khashoggi] was a very, very tough situation. We told them we weren't happy and we urged them to be transparent. But we couldn't upend the entire relationship.

His role in the 2020 campaign:

JK: My role is the same as the last campaign: organizer, problem solver and builder. I have been taking everything that worked from the last campaign and built on that. The polls are all bullshit. If you look at all the public opinion polls from Labor Day to the election last time, we were ahead in none. We have our own data operation. We know there are more than enough Trump voters to give the president a big victory. We were in a very strong position prior to the outbreak of the pandemic. Who do you think can go back and do the same now? Try Trump, he gets things done.

In the wake of the George Floyd killing and the subsequent outrage and unrest, can you increase Trump's share of the African American vote?

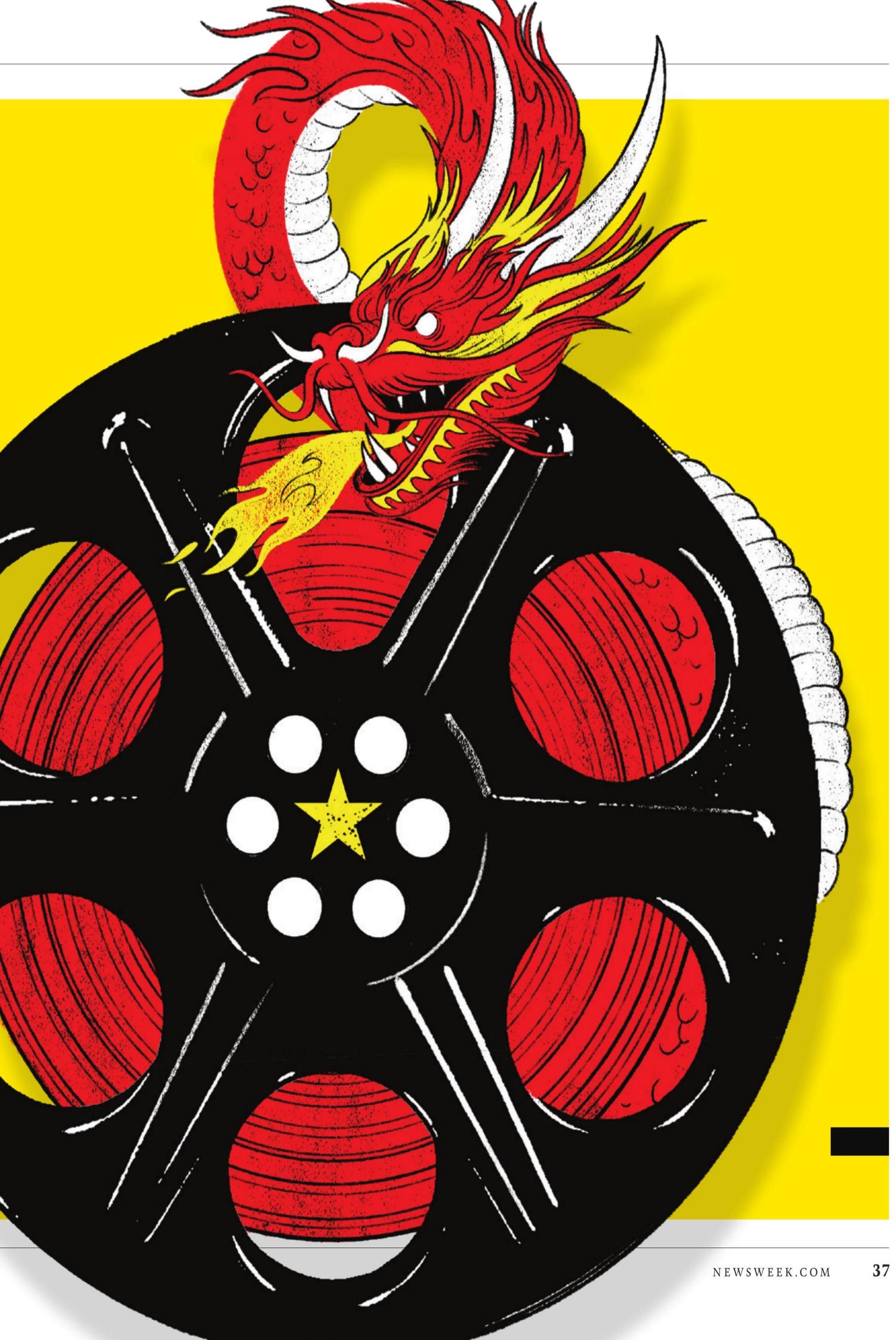
JK: Maybe. Maybe not. We worked hard to court the African American vote. Criminal justice reform. School choice. Opportunity zones. We have built a coalition and shown up in places where [Republicans] haven't shown up before. There are big race issues in America, obviously. They [the Democrats] are offering emotion. We offer substance. We've been trying to cultivate a whole generation of Black conservative Republicans. Last time not a lot of [Black] Trump supporters put on a red hat and knocked on doors. I have a lot of those now. When you lay out what he has done, his favorability jumps. He has promised to fight for all forgotten Americans and that community has been forgotten. He's not a panderer. He offers action and a framework. Our offering is better than theirs. We believe we have a real shot to compete for every vote. ■

For years Hollywood has been quietly placating
COMMUNIST CENSORS to get their movies shown in China.
Will the growing tension between the U.S. and China put a stop to that?

BANNED IN BEIJING

BY Paul Bond

ILLUSTRATION BY Alex Fine



F

OR HOLLYWOOD, CHINA IS A BIG OPPORTUNITY and maybe a bigger headache. The opportunity is that it is an enormous movie market, expected to soon become the biggest in the world. As Tuna Amobi, an entertainment analyst with investment research firm CFRA, says. "Every studio understands that to be successful internationally, the growth lies in China."

The headache is that if Western producers want to show—or make—a film in China they must first deal with an army of bureaucrats who decide what Chinese audiences can see. Their names are appropriately Orwellian: the State Ethnic Affairs Commission; the State Administration for Religious Affairs; the Publicity Department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China; the Ministry of State Security and Safety and many more. Their jobs are to make sure not only that China is always portrayed favorably, but also that some subjects are never mentioned. Chief among them are the three T's: Taiwan, Tibet, Tiananmen. Also off limits: president Xi Jinping's attempt to extend his term of office indefinitely; the detention and torture of 13 million Uyghurs, Kazakhs and Turkish Muslims; the suppression of Christianity in China and the harassment of pro-democracy activists in Hong Kong.

Hollywood has mostly gone discreetly along with that since China began opening to the western movie business in a big way in the 1990s (for a look at some of the films that have been censored, see page 41). Last summer Paramount Pictures, for instance, released a trailer for *Top Gun: Maverick*, its upcoming sequel to the 1986 blockbuster, co-produced with Chinese internet giant TenCent. (Originally set for release this June, the pandemic has pushed the film back to December.) One shot features Tom Cruise, as the now middle-aged title character, putting on what looks like the brown leather jacket he wore in the first film. In 1986, the jacket had commemorative Navy exercise patches featuring the flags of Taiwan (which split from mainland China in 1949) and Japan (China's bitterest regional rival). In the new trailer, the jacket looks the same, but the flags are gone. Paramount declined to talk about it with the press.

There are some small but real signs, however, that the days of studios quietly tailoring American movies for China are numbered. U.S. relations with China have grown tense across the board. The change began with President Trump's trade

SHOW BUSINESS

war and now charges and counter-charges about COVID-19, Beijing's crackdown on Hong Kong and its ambitions in the South China Seas have only increased the temperature.

Meanwhile, although public discussion of Chinese censorship remains taboo for the big studios, some filmmakers have been increasingly willing to complain and even, in a few cases, resist. This spring, Congressional conservatives proposed legislation that would punish American producers for censoring their films to satisfy Beijing. Exhibit A? Tom Cruise's jacket. As Texas Republican Ted Cruz asked from the floor of the U.S. Senate this May, "What message



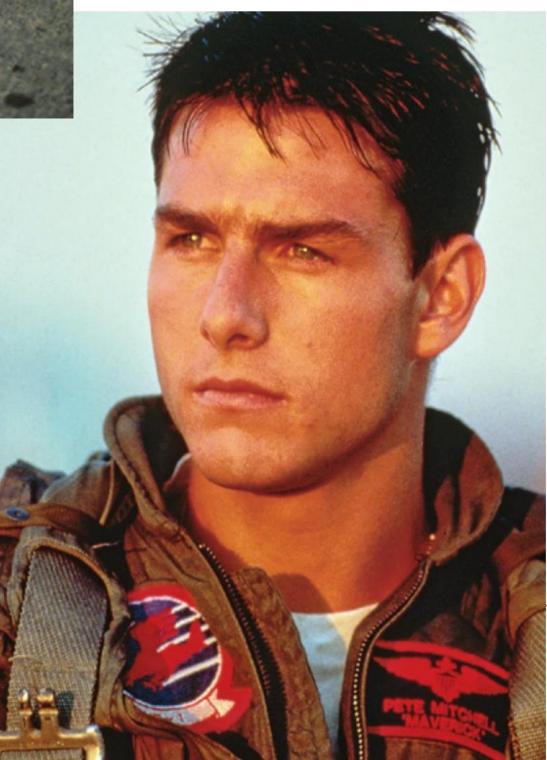
"WHAT Message DOES IT SEND
THAT MAVERICK, AN AMERICAN ICON,
IS APPARENTLY AFRAID
OF THE CHINESE COMMUNISTS?"

FROM TOP: TOMOHIRO OHSUMI/BLOOMBERG/GETTY; BRIAN SOKOL/GETTY; PARAMOUNT PICTURES/ARCHIVE PHOTOS/GETTY



DIFFERENT LOOKS

Top: Moviegoers in 3D glasses in Beijing. Left: a Tibetan Buddhist nun detained by Nepali police at a pro-Tibet protest outside the Chinese embassy in Kathmandu in 2008. Below: Tom Cruise in 1986's *Top Gun*. A trailer for the forthcoming sequel contained a significant change to the hero's signature jacket.



does it send that Maverick, an American icon, is apparently afraid of the Chinese communists?"

Paramount, Universal Pictures, Disney, 20th Century Fox, Sony Pictures, MGM and Warner Bros. declined to speak to *Newsweek* about their China strategies. *Newsweek*, however, spoke to dozens of current and former movie industry insiders, all of whom said censorship is the primary impediment into breaking into the Chinese market in any meaningful way.

Staggering Potential

BEFORE CORONAVIRUS SHUTTERED THEATERS worldwide, China was on track to become the planet's biggest movie market in 2021, with \$11.2 billion in box office receipts compared to \$10.9 billion for the U.S., according to PricewaterhouseCoopers. At the end of 2019, China boasted 69,000 movie screens, up from just 9,700 a year earlier, according to *The People's Daily*, a mouthpiece for the country's ruling Communist party. CFRA analyst Amobi, says, "2020 is a lost year, but there's no question China will regain its prominence probably in 2021."

Hollywood has been chasing Chinese revenues since 1971 when President Richard Nixon ended a two-decade trade embargo and allowed studios to license their films to China, usually for

about \$20,000 a film. A nominal fee, but the alternative was surrendering to rampant piracy and getting nothing. By the 1990s, China was allowing a few U.S. films into China every year on a revenue-sharing basis, including hits like Warner Bros's *The Fugitive*, Paramount's *Forrest Gump* and Disney's *The Lion King*, according to the book *China's Encounter with Global Hollywood* (University Press of Kentucky, 2016) by Wendy Su. But the dollars for Hollywood were still small, with studios only getting about 13 percent of ticket sales, according to Chris Fenton, a production executive who has done business with China for more than two decades.

Since a deal was struck in 2012, China now allows 34 foreign films into the country annually and the studios get 25 percent of the box office with the rest going to Chinese firms, including government-owned distributors China Film Group and Huaxia Film Distribution Co.. But movie industry insiders, speaking on condition of anonymity, say 34 is more a floor than ceiling, especially since studios can co-produce with a Chinese company and thus avoid having their movie classified as "foreign." That was the case with *The Great Wall* which featured Matt Damon and a cast of Chinese and western supporting actors, in 2016, and the upcoming *Top Gun: Maverick*.

"The fact that major American blockbusters have been casting Chinese film stars, or even filming scenes in China, as a way to capture their moviegoers' attention is extremely telling," says Jeff Bock, a senior analyst with Hollywood data firm Exhibitor Relations Co. "While studios don't receive as large a cut from the box office in China as they do domestically or in other territories, the growth potential is staggering and worth the risk."

Jamie Chen, a Shanghai-based senior analyst at investment firm Third Bridge Research, agrees, pointing out that while about 1,000 films are produced annually by China's domestic film industry only about 400 of them are deemed worthy of theatrical release. Even prior to COVID-19, "the vacancy rate in Chinese cinemas was huge," Chen says. That leaves a large void for U.S. studios to fill—if they are willing to play ball.

Those considering not playing have long had the example of Richard Gere to consider. On the red carpet outside the 1993 Oscars, Gere, then near his A-list star peak, protested China's "horrendous" occupation of Tibet. Gere has said his continuing stand on Tibet seriously damaged his career as the Chinese



BEIJING DIDN'T LIKE THE WAY TARANTINO PORTRAYED **Bruce Lee** IN ONCE UPON A TIME . . .

market grew in size and importance. In 2017, Gere, who declined to speak to *Newsweek*, told an industry trade publication, "I recently had an episode where someone said they could not finance a film with me because it would upset the Chinese." (Similarly, Brad Pitt's role in 1997's *Seven Years in Tibet* reportedly landed him on China's do-not-cast list for a while, though in 2013 *World War Z* was allowed to open in Hong Kong where it earned a modest \$5.5 million).

Since then Hollywood filmmakers have gotten used to Chinese interference over things big and little. Producer Jerry Molen, who has produced several Steven Spielberg movies including *Schindler's List*, says often the meddling is about trivia. "The Chinese will ask for everything expecting to get something," he says. "Sometimes, it's an actor or scenes filmed in China. It doesn't mean you have to show Shanghai, Beijing and The Great Wall in all their glory, but you can never show them in a bad light." In 2018, Molen was executive producer on *The Meg*, a co-production of Warner Bros. and China Media Capital about an enormous prehistoric shark. The hero scientists in the movie are Chinese.

The film was a box office success, earning \$530 million worldwide, \$153 million coming from China.

For Disney's 2013 *Iron Man 3*, state-owned China Film Group wanted a hospital scene to be filmed in one of its then-new sound stages in Beijing. Producer Chris Fenton was at time president of Beijing-based DMG Entertainment Motion Picture Group which released the film in China. He's now CEO of Media Capital Technologies and the author of *Feeding the Dragon: Inside the Trillion Dollar Dilemma Facing Hollywood, the NBA & American Business*, which Post Hill Press will release on July 28. Fenton says, "The floors were made of faulty, cracked bricks that slowly disintegrated into dust as the crew and equipment moved over them. The bricks coughed up more and more dust to the point where we all needed to wear masks in order to breathe." Ultimately, most of the hopelessly foggy hospital footage was unusable.

A Chinese requirement for co-productions with foreigners is that there be only one version shown worldwide, effectively allowing Chinese censors to decide what international audiences can see. Producer Matthew Malek, who has helped get multiple

FIELDS OF BATTLE
Top left: *Forrest Gump* was among the big American movies permitted in Chinese theaters during the 1990s. Top right: Bruce Lee in 1971's *Fists of Fury*. Right: President Trump with Chinese president Xi Jinping at an event for business leaders at Beijing's Great Hall of the People in 2017.

U.S. movies into Chinese theaters says, "Even when the Chinese tell you they just want control over what's seen in China, the contracts they send over have a clause that the China version becomes the master version. They don't admit that, but I've seen it enough times. There's no way around it, unless you're a giant studio that's created a movie knowing what the Chinese want from the beginning."

Sometimes the requirement can be finessed. On *Iron Man 3* in 2013, Disney appeased Beijing by adding a few Chinese actors and products to the film—only for a version released in China. The same year, however, Paramount's zombie apocalypse thriller *World War Z* starring Brad Pitt was released. In Max Brooks's 2006 novel, scientists and doctors believe a pandemic of undead cannibalism had its start in China. There is no mention of that in the film. At the time of release, Paramount denied reports that a scene discussing China as possible zombie ground zero had been shot for a planned non-China version of the film, but cut when Chinese authorities

IN HOLLYWOOD AND BANNED THE MOVIE.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: SUNSET BOULEVARD/GETTY; BETTMANN/GETTY; NICOLAS ASFOURI/AFP/GETTY



MADE TO ORDER

Movies that were changed to suit Chinese authorities

The Mummy: Tomb of the Dragon Emperor

2008

Censors insisted the namesake "emperor" never be identified and that he not resemble Mao Zedong or any other Chinese leader.

The Karate Kid

2010

In the Chinese version of producer Will Smith's reboot, children in China are not bullies, they are responding to aggressions made by the young protagonist.

Red Dawn

2012

Prior to its release in all countries, the Chinese army in MGM's remake was digitally altered to suggest North Korea was invading the U.S.

Men in Black 3

2012

A scene where Asian Americans have their memories wiped after witnessing U.S. agents battle space aliens was wiped for the China version.

Titanic 3D

2012

In the Chinese version, Leonardo DiCaprio does not sketch Kate Winslet posing nude.

Cloud Atlas

2012

The sci-fi film from the Wachowskis was 39 minutes shorter in China after censors cut scenes of sex and violence.

Skyfall

2013

Sony Pictures and MGM removed a scene in the James Bond movie where a Chinese security guard is killed.

Iron Man 3

2013

Disney's Marvel Studios released a different version of the superhero flick in China that included scenes with Fan Bingbing, a leading movie star.

World War Z

2013

In the book, a pandemic causing a zombie apocalypse starts in China. In the film, there is no mention of patient zero's nationality.

21 & Over

2013

In the Chinese version of the raunchy comedy, sex and alcohol are portrayed as American attributes rejected by China's youth.

Bohemian Rhapsody

2019

The Chinese version was three minutes short as all scenes relating to Freddie Mercury's homosexuality were omitted.

Abominable

2019

The DreamWorks Animation release, co-financed by a Shanghai company, included a map suggesting China's border extended to most of the South China Sea.

Top Gun: Maverick

DECEMBER 23, 2020

Paramount's sequel is co-produced by Chinese firm Tencent. In the trailer, Tom Cruise's jacket no longer carries the flags of Japan or Taiwan. ■

insisted only one version be released worldwide.

Of the major studios, insiders say, Disney is the most successful at doing business with China, as the studio's ability to manage the authorities on *Iron Man 3* shows. The company has successfully partnered with the government on its theme parks in Shanghai and Hong Kong, even replacing trademark attractions like Space Mountain with spectacular only-in-China rides at the insistence of authorities. Last year the studio's *Avengers: End Game* became the biggest grossing film in history, hauling in \$2.8 billion worldwide, with \$614 million, or about 22 percent, coming from China.

Similarly, Disney has high hopes for its upcoming live-action version of *Mulan*, based on the Chinese folk tale of a young woman who poses as a man to take her ailing father's place in the army. When a teaser trailer for the film went online last year, 52 million people in China watched it in the first 24 hours. But last summer in the midst of a growing crackdown on dissent in Hong Kong, actor Liu Yifei, who plays the title character, tweeted her support of the Hong Kong police. The backlash was swift and loud and spawned an ongoing campaign to boycott the movie when it opens. After Liu's tweets, Twitter suspended about 1,000 accounts boosting the hashtag #SupportMulan, saying they were Chinese state-backed bots designed to undermine "the legitimacy and political positions of the protest movement."

While studios like Disney have worked hard to get along with China, some filmmakers have spoken out. Speaking on a panel at the 2014 Beijing International Film Festival director Oliver Stone said he had tried and failed three times to complete co-productions with Chinese film companies due to meddling from authorities. One project was an adaptation of the memoir *Red Azalea* (first published by Pantheon Books in 1994) by Anchee Min, a lesbian love story set during the Cultural Revolution of the 1960s. Same-sex relationships are forbidden by Chinese censors. 20th Century Fox cut all references to Freddie Mercury's homosexuality from Chinese prints of its 2019 hit *Bohemian Rhapsody*. Even more sensitive is any discussion of

the Cultural Revolution and any criticism, implicit or otherwise, of Chairman Mao or the Communist party's actions during those agonizing years.

Last year, China blocked Quentin Tarantino's *Once Upon a Time in...Hollywood* over its portrayal of martial arts legend Bruce Lee. In the film, Lee, played by Mike Moh, is depicted as a preening blowhard who is fought to a draw by stuntman Cliff Booth, played by Brad Pitt. Lee's family didn't like it and neither did Beijing, which insisted it be cut from the film. Tarantino, the rare director who is able to insist on final cut, refused.

Wakeup Call?

IF THE PUSH AND PULL BETWEEN HOLLYWOOD AND China has mostly been played out in offices and editing rooms, it has now begun to move to a much noisier arena. On May 21, Senator Ted Cruz introduced a bill dubbed SCRIPT ("The Stopping Censorship, Restoring Integrity, Protecting Talkies Act") that would cut off the help studios receive from the Department of Defense if they censor films to placate the Chinese.



EAST MEETS WEST

Left: Ted Cruz wants to punish U.S. studios that go along with Chinese censors. Right: The Dalai Lama with actor Richard Gere at a 2007 ceremony at the U.S. Capitol. Below: A young fan tries out his repulsors at a Beijing promotional event for Iron Man 3.





FROM LEFT: ALEX WROBLEWSKI/GETTY; WANG ZHAO/AFP/GETTY; MARK REINSTEIN/CORBIS/GETTY

"HOLLYWOOD HAS **Difficult** DECISIONS TO MAKE BETWEEN THE BOTTOM LINE AND THE VALUES IT STANDS FOR."

Hollywood companies have learned that China censors American films, so they often change their films in advance of submitting them to the Chinese market," Cruz tells *Newsweek*. "Chinese censors control not just what Chinese audiences see, but also what American audiences see." Cruz, one of three U.S. lawmakers recently barred by Chinese officials, says his bill is a "wakeup call" to Hollywood and would also prevent the FBI and the Department of Homeland Security from helping studios that submit to Chinese censors. Cruz says the point is forcing producers "to choose between the assistance they need from the American government and the

money they want from the Chinese film market."

Hollywood is not taking Cruz's bill very seriously. Producer Chris Fenton thinks it should. "Whether this particular bill gets momentum should not be the focus...Surveys have shown voters are wary of China, and it's an election year," he says.

Meanwhile Wisconsin Representative Mike Gallagher, a Republican, is lobbying U.S. studios to disclose when their films are presented—at every stage, from screenwriting through completion—to China's censors. What Gallagher has in mind is a notice in the credits like the "no animals were harmed in the making of this film" disclaimer many films carry.

A particularly egregious example of Hollywood appeasement of China, Gallagher tells *Newsweek*, is the 2012 remake of *Red Dawn*, produced by the small studio Film District along with MGM and Sony. When principal photography was over, the film was about a bunch of small-town American teens fighting off an invasion by China. In post-production, though, MGM and Sony digitally altered it so the invasion came from North Korea. Gallagher says he doesn't see any pro-Chinese Communist Party ideology in that kind of move by Hollywood, just a desire to make money. He says, "Filmmakers aren't waking up each morning thinking about the nature of the CCP, but it's fair to say they haven't woken to the threat it poses, either."

"Hollywood has difficult decisions to make

between the bottom line and the values it stands for," says Gallagher. "Hollywood certainly has no reservations about preaching to Americans, and there's no shortage of movies portraying America as evil, bad and racist. But it certainly seems it's on the wrong side when it comes to China, which is engaged in ideological warfare."

This is the same ideological battle that the Soviet Union fought and lost when it tried to keep Western movies, music, books and ideas out during the Cold War. The Chinese learned an important lesson from that failure and decided not to ban Western culture. Instead, they have worked hard—and for the most part successfully—to co-opt it. ■

Culture

HIGH, LOW + EVERYTHING IN BETWEEN





UNCHARTED

Vacation In a Glass: Cocktails Around the World

Dreaming of exotic escapes? While travel may be limited this summer, a creative cocktail hour doesn't need to be. You can sip your way around the world from Tokyo to Mexico City to Maui. From a smoky mezcal-roasted coffee Negroni in Milan to a blue algae-gin drink served on driftwood in Vancouver, these drinks will give you a taste of somewhere else. Visit Newsweek.com for the recipes. —Kathleen Rellihan



02 Deep Cove Cocktail

Vancouver, Canada

Dreaming of a dip in the sea? Or a taste of the ocean? In a nod to their city by the sea, Botanist, the chemistry-inspired cocktail bar, concocted this piece of art. The refreshing Deep Cove cocktail mixes Island Gin, sea buckthorn liqueur and blue algae syrup, and it's served on a piece of locally sourced driftwood. The cucumber garnish evokes kelp ribbons.



2



03 Merriman's Mai Tai

Maui, Hawaii

We all want to "get off this island," but you don't need a flight to be transported to Maui with this tiki twist. Pioneer of Hawaii regional cuisine, Merriman's take on this "Aloha in a glass" is made with local distillery Hawaii Sea Spirits' light and dark rums, macadamia nut orgeat syrup, orange curaçao and topped with honey-lilikoi foam which gives it a light touch of sweet and tart.



01 Rob Roy

New York City

When you long for the bright lights of the big city to inspire you, the Rob Roy—similar to a Manhattan but made with scotch whiskey—is the next best thing. Invented in 1894 by a bartender at the Waldorf Astoria hotel, this classic cocktail combines scotch with sweet vermouth and a dash of bitters.



1



05 Neutral Ground Side

New Orleans

Neutral Ground is a term for a street median in New Orleans—it's also a local favorite cocktail. Compère Lapin takes the history and culture of the city and gives it a touch of whimsy with this different "Side": a colorful mix of King Cake Cachaça, Hoodoo Chicory Liqueur, lemon juice and bitters, garnished with a toasted marshmallow.



04 Aguacate

Mexico City

To drink this strong agave spirit made of mezcal liquor properly, don't shoot it, smell it before tasting, following up with a bite out of an orange sprinkled with worm salt. Some bars add avocado and top it off with blackberry to sweeten it up.



06 Coco Tostado Mojito

San Juan, Puerto Rico

You've mastered the at-home piña coladas, and are now looking for a step up. Escape to Puerto Rico with the island's national spirit: white rum and a mix of fresh mint leaves, lime juice, cane sugar syrup and toasted coconut—blended to a frozen dream.

8

07 Sailor's Negroni

Milan

Bitter, boozy and bold, the Negroni—born in a bar over 100 years ago in Florence—is being riffed in bars the world over. A fun twist on the three-ingredient cocktail of gin, vermouth and Campari is this one by Flavio Angiolillo at MAG in Milan, which substitutes Sailor's Coffee Liqueur for gin and adds mezcal for an extra smoky jolt of energy.



9



08 Chacha Sour

Tbilisi, Georgia

Chacha, Georgia's national liquor, is a strong spirit made from the grape residue from wine making. Lolita bar in Tbilisi blends new and old worlds with their Chacha Sour, a combination of chacha, water, sugar, lemon and a few drops of egg white that smooths this bold, local liquor.

8

09 Gothic and Lolita

Tokyo

A playful nod to the trendy Harajuku neighborhood in Tokyo, TRUNK(HOTEL)'s locally inspired Gothic and Lolita mixes an unexpected pairing of lemongrass-infused gin and soymilk with chocolate and tops it off with a dusting of kinako soybean powder and edible dried roses. This grown-up chocolate milk is a play on the sweet and dark cosplay trends in one of the world's most famous fashion districts.

9



PARTING SHOT

Kermit the Frog

↗ THE MUPPETS HAVE BEEN ENTERTAINING AUDIENCES SINCE THE 1950S, and now, nearly 70 years later, they're back and "working without a script" on *Muppets Now*, a brand-new show on Disney+. It's a mostly improvised talent show with lots of special guests, not to mention tons of surprises. "We've got something for everyone," Kermit the Frog says about the show. But one familiar thing audiences can expect is the return of Kermit's on-again, off-again love. "Miss Piggy and I have always had a great working relationship, and on *Muppets Now* it really shines through. This is the real us, in the here and now, with no filters." *Newsweek* reached out to Miss Piggy for her response to working with Kermit again. "Kermit and I have cleared up a lot of things and now we get along better than ever. You might say, we've come to an understanding," she said. Considering Kermit's popularity, he could do anything, even run for office, but Kermit is committed to *Muppets Now*. "I'm just happy being your everyday singing, dancing, talking amphibian."



"I'm just happy being your everyday singing, dancing, talking amphibian."

After such an impressive Hollywood career, what makes *Muppets Now* different from your other projects?

For the first time ever, the Muppets are working without a script. It is totally spontaneous and improvised.

What sort of things can we expect?

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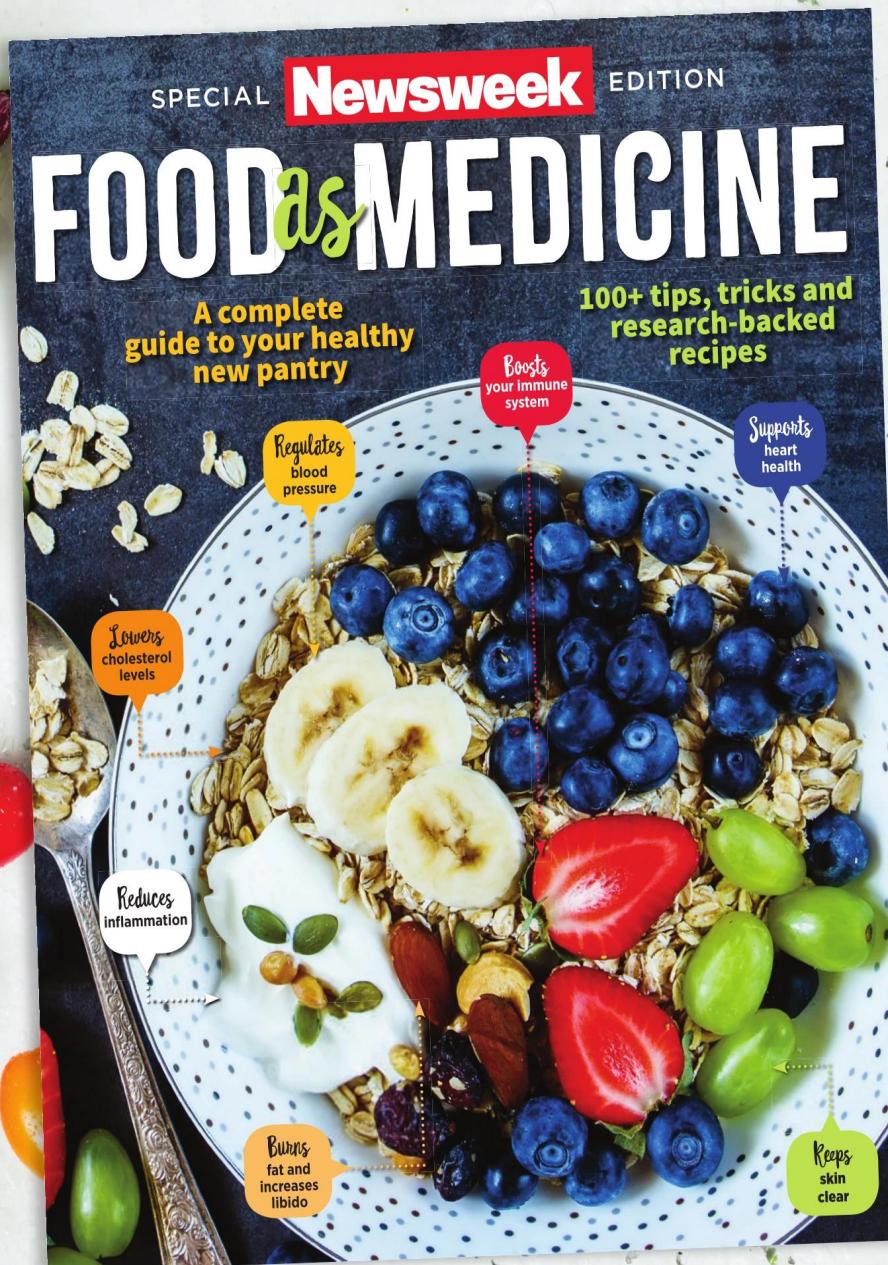
What famous roles do you regret turning down?

Hulk. Being green I thought I was a shoo-in for that part, but they decided to go with someone slightly more muscular. And Mark Ruffalo has done a really great job...I also thought I'd get the part of Yoda, but I couldn't master the dialogue. Backward talking, harder than it looks, it is. Plus, Yoda himself was available, so naturally they went with him. Great job, too, he did.

You've always had a way of bringing people together. Have you ever considered running for office?

No. Sure, they say Washington is a swamp, but I still don't think politics is for frogs. Oh and that's another great thing about *Muppets Now*: No politics. Just laughs. —H. Alan Scott

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