



Derek Chauvin Found Guilty in Murder of George Floyd

Originally Published April 20, 2021
By Michael Gordon

On Tuesday, April 20th, 2021, former police officer Derek Chauvin was found guilty on three charges, including the murder of George Floyd. The former officer was tried in the Hennepin County District Court of Minnesota, where jurors came to the conclusion that Chauvin was guilty of third-degree murder, second-degree unintentional murder, and second-degree manslaughter. This is a result of the events of May 25th, 2020 when Chauvin killed 46-year-old George Floyd by kneeling on his neck for nine minutes and twenty-nine seconds. Chauvin continued to restrain Floyd in the aforementioned manner for several minutes

after he became unresponsive. The defense cited Floyd's frequent drug usage as a potential cause for his death, rather than suffocation. However, a forensic toxicologist brought by the prosecution stated that the levels of fentanyl and methamphetamine in Floyd's blood were not near fatal levels. Floyd's death was a catalyst in the Black Lives Matter movement that caused millions of Americans and people around the world to protest police brutality and systemic racism, propelling the movement to the forefront of racial justice advocacy. President Biden showed support for the ruling, stating that "...[the verdict] can be a giant step forward in the march towards justice in America."

Sources: CNN, AP News, Insider.com

OPINION

How to Fix American Patriotism

Originally Published May 7, 2021
By Joel Swirnoff

The lines defining today's American patriotism have been blurred to the point where it is almost unrecognizable. For example, after the events at the Capitol on January 6th, rioters were referred to as "patriots" by certain politi-

cians and members of the media. True American patriotism is to uncover the injustices of this nation and effect the necessary change to resolve them. In order to revitalize this patriotism, we must teach the younger generation to implement these changes.

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Bill To Grant Statehood To Washington D.C. Passes In The House

Originally Published April 22, 2021
By Isaac Ostrow

On Thursday, April 22, the House of Representatives passed for the second time a bill that would grant Washington D.C. statehood if enacted in the Senate and signed by President Biden. The bill was passed in the previous Congress but was not voted on in the then-Republican-controlled Senate. In the House, the measure passed along party lines (216-208), and nothing suggests that the result will be different in the Senate. Although the Democrats hold a slight advantage in the Senate, as a result of the 50 Democratic or Democratic-leaning votes and Vice President Kamala Harris, it is likely that the Republicans will filibuster the bill. This would mean that ten Republicans would need to cross party lines in support of the bill in order for it to pass. The

District of Columbia has a greater population than 77 congressional districts and both Wyoming and Vermont, according to the Census Bureau. During the 2020 presidential election, over 90% of D.C. residents voted for Joe Biden. Representative Comer (R-KY-1) alleges that the bill, House Resolution 51, is a ploy "to reshape America into [a] socialist utopia" by adding two safely Democratic Senate seats. In support of her bill, Washington D.C.'s nonvoting House delegate and Democrat Eleanor Holmes Norton says that the bill would "enfranchise the people of DC and empower them to participate fully in our democracy;" while Democratic House Speaker Nancy Pelosi said that she "hope[s] that momentum will help [the bill] pass in the Senate."

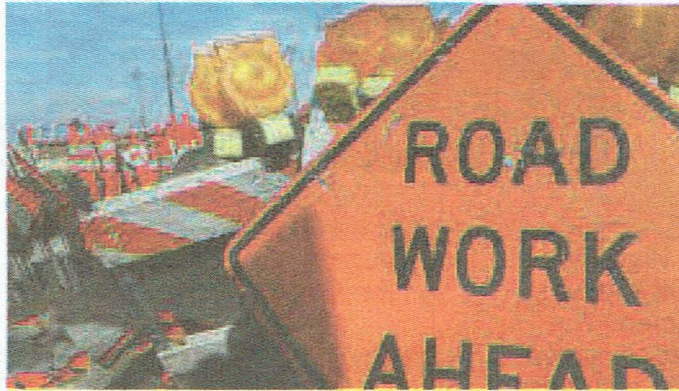
Sources: USA Today, CBS News, CNN

Russia Orders Troops to Withdraw from Ukrainian Border

Originally Published April 28, 2021
By Ezekiel Moroze and Michael Gordon

Russia has recently begun to roll back the presence of its armed forces on its Eastern border with Ukraine. The number of Russian troops had been increasing for a number of weeks, although the amount of troops present has been disputed. Russian State Media claims that 10,000 servicemen and 1,200 units of military equipment were moved in the "inspection" while the European Union estimates that more than 100,000 troops had amassed along the Russo Ukrainian border. The Kremlin claimed that the mobilization was simply a "snap inspection", but it remains unclear if Russia is trying to de-escalate conflict with Ukraine. Russian State Media claims they are planning to leave a sizable amount of heavy munitions and artillery in Crimea, a Russian-occupied region of Ukraine. Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu cited NATO's "provocative activities" with an "anti-Russian focus" as causes for the destabilization of the Donbass conflict zone in Ukraine. Pro-Moscow separatists in Eastern Ukraine have been fighting the Ukrainian military for years in hopes of Russian annexation. The region will continue to be a hotbed for international tension as long as Russian forces remain in the area, which will likely be the case for the foreseeable future.

Sources: Axios, Washington Post, CNN



Bipartisan Infrastructure Bill Gains Momentum

Originally Published August 5th, 2021

By Ezekiel Moroze

A bipartisan infrastructure bill has recently been proposed by the Democratic half of the senate, with the support of 10 Republican senators. Titled the "Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act", it is a revised version of President Joe Biden's "American Jobs Plan". Several notable changes have helped this new bill attract bipartisan support. The new plan calls for \$550 billion in new spending as opposed to the original's \$2.6 trillion budget increase. The bipartisan bill would invest \$312 billion into transportation. This is a significant decrease from

Biden's original proposal which included \$546 billion for transportation, in large part due to \$142 billion in cuts from programs promoting electric vehicles. By far, the biggest cuts from Biden's original plan were from education, clean energy, and community care. \$326 billion in housing and education development were cut completely from the bill in this revised version. Republicans were most opposed to these cut provisions, and their omission will likely see this bill pass with bipartisan support.

Sources: Whitehouse.gov, The Guardian

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Covid Crisis Continues; Delta strain has emerged

Originally Published August 5th, 2021

By Michael Gordon

Millions of Americans viewed the development and mass distribution of COVID-19 vaccines as the ultimate solution to the current pandemic. Over the past month, however, it has become abundantly clear that COVID remains a threat to the general

American public. In recent weeks, the Delta strain of COVID has emerged as a prominent health threat. This recent development comes as public areas have begun reopening to millions of Americans. Research has shown that this variant is the most contagious to date, significantly increasing the likelihood of infection for the unvaccinated. Vaccinated people may also carry the virus and spread it to others, even if asymptomatic. Despite the fact that most Delta variant cases are

seen in unvaccinated Americans, breakthrough infections for the vaccinated are becoming increasingly common. Although vaccines cannot always prevent breakthrough infections, new data suggests that inoculation significantly reduces the chance of experiencing serious, life-threatening illness.

According to the New York Times, approximately 97% of hospitalized COVID patients reported being unvaccinated. On August 3rd, 2021, the USA reported over 150,000 new COVID cases, indicating that a third wave of COVID infection is already underway. In response, the CDC has issued new guidance, once again recommending that all individuals wear masks when indoors.

Sources: New York Times, CNBC



Democrats Cannot Wait. Biden Must Act.

Originally Published August 6th, 2021

By Henry Han

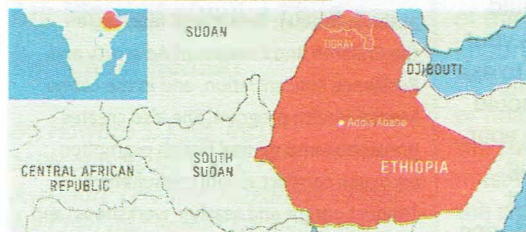
On July 28, 2021, senator Krysten Sinema (D-AZ.), refused to support the Democrats' \$3.5 trillion reconciliation package, reestablishing the political gridlock that often characterizes Congressional Democrats. Democrats are once again acting as a coalition rather than a unified cohort of Blue Dogs, moderates, liberals, progressives, and democratic socialists. There are two Democrats standing in the way of such unity: Krysten Sinema of Arizona and Joe Manchin of West Virginia. Sinema and Manchin sit comfortably waiting for their re-election in 2024 while representatives in swing congressional districts face the wrath of public disapproval. It's time for Biden to step up against these moderates—to be a strong president and lead his party.

Sources: Data For Progress, New York Times



Ethiopia's Humanitarian Crisis

By Michael Gordon



Famine conditions are beginning to set in within Ethiopia's Tigray region as the federal government enforces their total blockade over the region. During the past few years, tensions have steadily risen between Ethiopia's federal government and the Tigrayan regional government, controlled by the Tigray People's Liberation Front.

In November of 2020, the regional government launched a full-scale assault of a federal military base in Sero, Ethiopia. The Ethiopian government soon deployed troops to major cities of the Tigray region, which is home to over 7 million ethnic Tigrayans. In June, the Ethiopian government issued a federal blockade of the Tigray region in response to the reclamation of the region by rebel forces.

The U.N. has since called the measure a "a de facto humanitarian aid blockade," (NPR). The malnutrition rate in Tigray has now topped 22%, and experts have given grim warnings about the future. Currently, only 10% of needed humanitarian aid is reaching the Tigray region (AP News).

Months ago, experts estimated that over 400,000 Tigrayans were facing famine conditions. Internet blackouts in the area have made it difficult to collect consistent data to update that number. As famine sets in, the first reports of death by starvation in the Tigray region are surfacing. In an interview with AP News, the U.N. humanitarian chief decried the crisis as a "stain on our conscience."

Sources: AP News, NPR

<https://apnews.com/article/africa- united-nations-on-ly-on-ap-famine-kenya-ef9fe79cc0cf35917fd190b6e9bd0f46>
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<https://www.npr.org/2021/09/20/1038858345/i-just-cry-dying-of-hunger-in-ethiopia-blockaded-tigray-region>

Haitian Immigrants Harassed at U.S. Border

By Ezekiel Moroze

During the week of September 20th, 2021, footage and photos were released of United States Border Patrol Agents detaining Haitian migrant families, brandishing their horses' reigns like whips.

These accounts have reignited fierce debate on how the worsening immigration crisis should be handled on the US-Mexico border. Many of these Haitian immigrants were fleeing political turmoil, which had caused the assassination of Haiti's president. Others were fleeing costly natural disasters.

On Friday, September 24th, President Joe Biden addressed the footage, promising that there would be consequences pending an investigation into the Border Patrol Agents on horseback. He also went on to say that "it sends the wrong message around the world," and that "it's simply not who we [the United States] are."

The recent uptick in Haitian immigration is partly attributed to economic decline in Chile and Brazil due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Many Haitians migrated to these countries following the 2010 earth-

quake which killed an estimated 200,000 people. This increase has caused further conflict on the US-Mexico border beyond the recent surge from turmoil in Haiti. Now, many migrants are being deported right back to where they started, Haiti. 2,000 migrants have already been deported to Haiti, with a further 17,400 people either being processed or having deportation hearings.

Sources: LA Times, CNN

<https://www.latimes.com/politics/story/2021-09-24/biden-haitian-migrants-border-critics-claim-racism>
<https://www.cnn.com/2021/09/24/politics/biden-harris-texas-migrants/index.html>

Texas Bans Abortions After 6 Weeks

By Joel Swirnoff

On Wednesday, September 1, a Texas bill banning abortions after 6 weeks of pregnancy became law. An emergency appeal had been made on the bill to the US Supreme Court to prevent the bill's passage. However, in failing to act upon the appeal, the Supreme Court permitted it to pass. The law states that abortions in Texas are illegal once a "fetal heartbeat" can be detected. However, the definition of "fetal heartbeat" used by Texas legislators for the law has been

criticized by medical professionals, considering the fact that embryos do not have hearts and are not yet considered fetuses at six weeks. Furthermore, the law includes that anyone involved in "aiding and abetting" the abortion, including doctors, nurses, providers, or even ride share drivers can be sued by private citizens.

Source: Texas Tribune

<https://www.texastribune.org/2021/08/31/texas-abortion-law-supreme-court/>



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