

Groton Daily Independent

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Wednesday, Aug 2

Senior Menu: French dip sandwich, macaroni salad, seasoned cabbage, Waldorf salad.

Olive Grove: Men's League, 6 p.m.

Emmanuel Lutheran: Sarah Circle at 5 p.m.

Thursday, Aug. 3

Senior Menu: Roast turkey, mashed potatoes and gravy, baked squash, fresh fruit, whole wheat bread.

Emmanuel Lutheran: Nigeria Circle at 2 p.m.

Friday, Aug. 4

Senior Menu: Baked fish, baked potato, 3-bean salad, peach cobbler, whole wheat bread.

Olive Grove: Wine on 9, 6 p.m.

Sunday, Aug. 6

Emmanuel Lutheran: Worship at 9 a.m.

St. John's Lutheran: Worship with communion at 9

Official Notices

Brown County (Updated 7-26)

Groton City Book (updated 7-26)

Groton Area School (updated 7-26)

Frederick Area School Book (updated 7-26)

Westport Town Book (updated 7-26)

Frederick Town (updated 7-18)

Other Official Notices Book

Claremont Town Official Notices Book

Open: Recycling Trailer in Groton
The recycling trailer is located at 10 East Railroad Ave.

The cardboard/paper

recycling trailer at the school is **Open**



www.harrmotors.com

605-225-3078 ~ 1-800-658-3463

“ENJOY WHEN YOU CAN,
AND ENDURE WHEN
YOU MUST.”

JOHANN WOLFGANG VON GOETHE



Chicken Soup
for the Soul

August 7th is Purple Heart Day - a Day to Honor America's Combat Wounded and Fallen Heroes

Each year on August 7th, Americans pause to remember and honor the brave men and women who were either wounded on the battlefield or paid the ultimate sacrifice with their lives. The Purple Heart is awarded to any member of the U.S. Armed Forces that has been wounded or died as a result of a wound in battle. This now includes those persons who died in captivity while a prisoner of war (POW). We now celebrate Purple Heart Day on the anniversary of its inception, August 7th. On this day it is our patriotic duty to remember and recognize those people willing to serve our country, no matter the price.

This year, many States, Counties, and Cities; sport and entertainment entities; colleges and universities, and many other patriotic entities across the nation who have proclaimed themselves as Purple Heart communities will pause in recognition of the service and sacrifice of their local sons and daughters. Their commemoration of Purple Heart Day will be a reminder to all Americans that there is a price for the freedoms we enjoy and honor is due to those who gave their all in defense of those freedoms. This year, many Major League Baseball teams will pay special homage to their local Purple Heart recipients during special pre-game and 7th inning ceremonies.

The organization now known as the "Military Order of the Purple Heart of the U.S.A. Inc.," (MOPH) was formed in 1932 for the protection and mutual interest of all combat wounded veterans and active duty men and women who have received the decoration. Chartered by the Congress, The MOPH is unique among Veteran Service Organizations in that all its members were wounded in combat. For this sacrifice, they were awarded the Purple Heart Medal. With grants from the MOPH Service Foundation, the MOPH and its Ladies Auxiliary promote Patriotism, Fraternalism, and the Preservation of America's military history. Most importantly, through veteran service, they provide comfort and assistance to all Veterans and their families, especially those requiring claims assistance with the VA, those who are homeless, and those requiring employment assistance. Programs of the MOPH include VA Volunteer Service, First Responder Recognition, JROTC Leadership Award, Scholarships, Americanism, Purple Heart Trail and Cities, Welfare, and numerous community service programs, all with the objective of service to Veterans and their families.

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The smaller and old storm sewer pipe was ripped up in the block north of Second Avenue. New storm sewer pipe will be installed as work progresses on SD37.

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The new control building for the railroad crossing was lowered into place this week. Workers are planning to start ripping out the old crossing, maybe sometime next week.

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Today in Weather History

August 2, 1960: Hail, the size of a hen egg caused moderate damage to a total loss of corn, soybean, and grain crops on 50 to 75 farms in Marshall, Roberts, and Grant Counties. High winds caused damage to buildings and uprooted trees in Britton.

1954 - Severe thunderstorms produced golf ball size hail for thirty minutes in north central Kansas. One drift measured 200 feet long, seventy feet wide and three feet deep. (The Weather Channel)

1975 - Record heat gripped New England. Highs of 104 degrees at Providence, RI, and 107 degrees at Chester and New Bedford, MA, established state records. The heat along the coast of Maine was unprecedented, with afternoon highs of 101 degrees at Bar Harbor and 104 degrees at Jonesboro. (The Weather Channel)

1985: A strong and sudden wind gusts cause a plane crash at the Dallas/Fort Worth Airport in Texas that kills 135 people. The rapid and unexpected formation of a supercell, an incredibly powerful form of a thunderstorm, led to the tragedy.

1987 - Hot weather continued in the central U.S. Fifteen cities reported record high temperatures for the date, including Concordia KS with a reading of 106 degrees, and Downtown Kansas City, MO, with a high of 105 degrees. Evening thunderstorms produced severe weather in the Ohio Valley and the north central U.S. Thunderstorms in South Dakota produced wind gusts to 70 mph at Philip, and hail two inches in diameter at Faulkton. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)



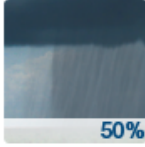




1988 - Searing heat continued from the Middle and Upper Mississippi Valley to the Middle and Northern Atlantic Coast States. Twenty-six cities reported record high temperatures for the date. Chicago IL reported a record seven days of 100 degree heat for the year. (The National Weather Summary)

1989 - Low pressure representing the remains of Hurricane Chantal deluged north central Texas with heavy rain. Up to 6.50 inches drenched Stephens County, and Wichita Falls reported 2.22 inches of rain in just one hour. Bismarck, ND, reported a record warm morning low of 75 degrees, and record hot afternoon high of 101 degrees, and evening thunderstorms in North Dakota produced wind gusts to 78 mph at Lakota. Early evening thunderstorms in Florida produced high winds which downed trees at Christmas. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

2006: Johannesburg, South Africa residents see snow flurries for the first time in at least eight years.

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Today	Tonight	Thursday	Thursday Night	Friday	Friday Night	Saturday
						
Partly Sunny then Chance T-storms	Showers	Chance Showers and Breezy	Mostly Clear	Sunny	Partly Cloudy then Slight Chance T-storms	Chance Showers
High: 78 °F	Low: 54 °F	High: 70 °F	Low: 47 °F	High: 77 °F	Low: 55 °F	High: 73 °F

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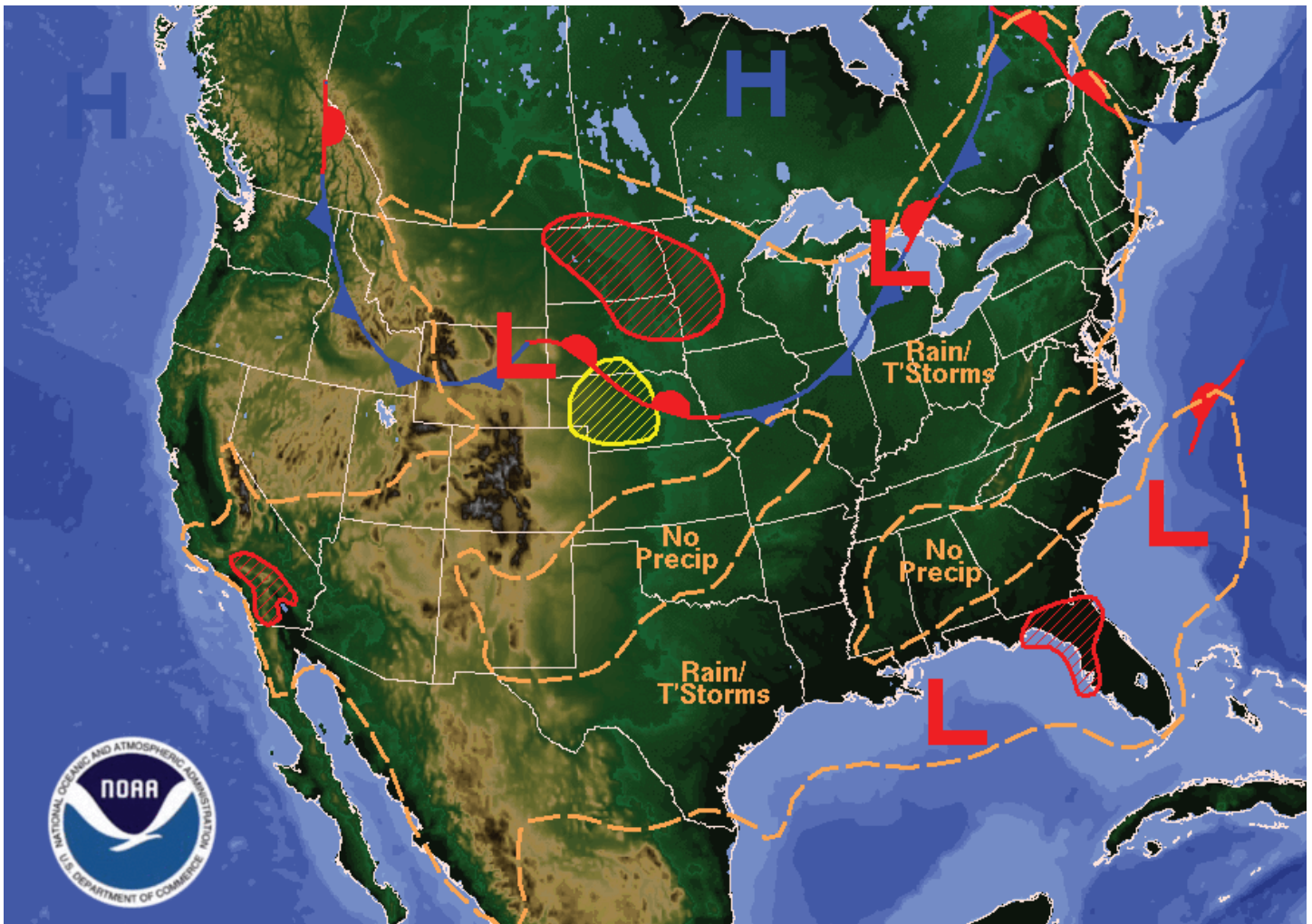
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Yesterday's Weather

High Outside Temp: 82.4 F at 4:55 PM
Low Outside Temp: 62.2 F at 6:38 AM
High Gust: 16.0 Mph at 1:46 PM
Precip: 0.00

Today's Info

Record High: 105° in 1938
Record Low: 40° in 1971
Average High: 84°F
Average Low: 59°F
Average Precip in Aug: 0.16
Precip to date in Aug: 0.00
Average Precip to date: 14.02
Precip Year to Date: 7.35
Sunset Tonight: 8:59 p.m.
Sunrise Tomorrow: 6:20 a.m.



Day 1 National Forecast Chart

Valid Wed, Aug 02, 2017, issued 4:44 AM EDT
DOC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP/Weather Prediction Center
Prepared by McCreynolds with WPC/SPC/NHC forecasts

Rain
Rain and T'Storms
Rain and Snow
Snow
Flash Flooding Possible (hatched)
Severe T'Storms Possible (hatched)
Freezing Rain Possible (hatched)
Heavy Snow Possible (hatched)



THE POWER OF A COMMAND

"The way a command is given affects the way the movement of the unit is executed," is the opening sentence in *The Drill Pad*. The importance of giving a proper military command is further described in *The Army Study Guide*: "A correctly delivered command will be understood by everyone...and demands willing, correct and immediate response."

One wonders if the writers quoted above read what David wrote in Psalm 29: "The voice of the Lord is powerful...and...majestic!" Throughout this Psalm the results of "the voice of the Lord" are staggering. That phrase – "the voice" – occurs seven times in this Psalm and coincides with the number of times that the same phrase appears in Genesis 1. Both passages of Scripture express one theme: "The glory, power and majesty of our God rest upon all of His creation." His might can be seen everywhere: the skies, the seas, on land, in the wilderness; in the mighty mountain ranges, the terrible results from bolts of lightning when they strike the earth. His power is seen when animals give birth to their young. He can even be seen in the desert regions! The glory of God is revealed wherever man looks!

Some may refuse to hear His voice or have no desire to respect the power in that voice. Those of us who do, however, are blest. Yet, we are left with two nagging questions: Why have we been chosen to see the power and majesty of God while others cannot see Him? And then, what is our obligation to God and to them? Because He loves us and has called us to serve Him.

Prayer: We thank You, Lord, for choosing us to hear Your voice. May we share its message with others. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture for Today: Psalm 29:4 The voice of the LORD is powerful; the voice of the LORD is majestic.

News from the Associated Press

Fires are torching Montana, and the money is running out

By MATT VOLZ, Associated Press

HELENA, Mont. (AP) — Montana's worst fire season in years is expected to scorch the drought-stricken landscape well into fall, long after the state's firefighting reserves run out thanks to politicians diverting millions of dollars to fill a budget shortfall.

There is only \$12 million left of the \$63 million in the firefighting fund in June, and the state is burning through that at a rate of \$1.5 million a day, state Department of Natural Resources and Conservation director John Tubbs said Tuesday.

"We will use up the remaining balance in fairly short order," he said.

The state's financial worries come as forecasters for the National Interagency Fire Center predict that eastern Montana, southern California and the western Dakotas could be exposed to major wildfire threats into October or November.

A wet winter and spring produced thick grasses in the region, but a hot June melted the snow and dried out the vegetation, leaving it vulnerable to lightning-caused fires, said Bryan Henry, a meteorologist for the fire center.

The threat of major wildfires also will remain high throughout August in northern Nevada and parts of the Northwest and northern Great Plains, he said.

More fires are now burning in Montana than any other state. So far, they have torched 578 square miles (1,476 square kilometers) — an area larger than Wyoming's Grand Teton National Park — through both mountain timber in the west and grasslands in the east.

That's already surpassed the land burned every year since 2012, when 1,907 square miles (4,939 square kilometers) burned in Montana, costing the state \$55 million.

Most of the fires started in July. The state spent \$21 million fighting fires that month — equal to the amount it spent for the 12 months before that, Tubbs said.

The eruption of wildfires caught state lawmakers and officials off guard after forecasts in the spring predicted only a moderate fire season. That's when lawmakers passed a measure mandating that \$30 million be transferred out of the fire fund if the state's income came in lower than revenue forecasts.

The revenue numbers came in last month, triggering the transfer and a slew of budget cuts across state government.

Republican Sen. Pat Connell of Hamilton said he is concerned that another major fire could erupt at any time without enough money left in the fire fund.

"We've got a long way to go through this fire season and I'm very scared about our future," Connell said.

If the fund runs dry, state officials will still be able to respond to fires, Tubbs said. His department can pull up to \$22 million from the state's general fund, and an earlier fire disaster declaration by Gov. Steve Bullock authorized an additional \$16 million.

But with the revenue shortfall, it's not clear how much cash is available. Tubbs said that will be a challenge for the governor's budget director.

Some relief came when the U.S. government last week approved a grant that will allow the state to recover three-quarters of its costs to fight its largest fire burning in eastern Montana. The amount of the savings is not yet clear.

The state is also entering into cost-sharing agreements to fight fires with the U.S. Forest Service, which will also help, Tubbs said.

AP writers Dan Elliott in Denver and Bobby Caina Calvin in Helena contributed to this report.

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SD Lottery

By The Associated Press

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) _ These South Dakota lotteries were drawn Tuesday:

Mega Millions

20-22-52-57-73, Mega Ball: 7, Megaplier: 5

(twenty, twenty-two, fifty-two, fifty-seven, seventy-three; Mega Ball: seven; Megaplier: five)

Estimated jackpot: \$303 million

Powerball

Estimated jackpot: \$261 million

Court keeps Great Lakes wolves on endangered species list

By JOHN FLESHER, AP Environmental Writer

TRAVERSE CITY, Mich. (AP) — A federal appeals court Tuesday retained federal protection for gray wolves in the western Great Lakes region, ruling that the government made crucial errors when it dropped them from the endangered species list five years ago.

The court upheld a district judge who overruled the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, which had determined that wolves in Michigan, Minnesota and Wisconsin had recovered after being shot, trapped and poisoned nearly out of existence in the previous century. They've bounced back and now total about 3,800.

Even so, courts have sided with environmental groups led by the Humane Society of the United States, which have sued to block the service's repeated efforts to strip wolves in the region of their protected status and put states in charge of them. The service made its latest attempt in 2011. U.S. Judge Beryl A. Howell struck down the plan three years later.

In a 3-0 ruling Tuesday, a panel of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit said the service had not sufficiently considered important factors. They included how loss of historical territory would affect the predator's recovery and how removing the Great Lakes population segment from the endangered list would affect wolves in other parts of the nation.

As long as wolves are on the protected list, they cannot be killed unless human life is at risk. That means the three states cannot resume the hunting and trapping seasons they had when wolves were under their control.

A spokeswoman for the Fish and Wildlife Service had no immediate comment.

The same court took wolves in Wyoming off the endangered list in May.

Environmental advocates cheered the ruling on Great Lakes wolves, saying they remain vulnerable despite their comeback in recent decades.

"The second highest court in the nation reaffirmed that we must do much more to recover gray wolves before declaring the mission accomplished," said Noah Greenwald, endangered species program director at the Center for Biological Diversity. "Wolves are still missing from more than 90 percent of their historic range in the lower 48 states, and both the Endangered Species Act and common sense tell us we can't ignore that loss."

Organizations representing farmers and ranchers, who want authority to shoot wolves preying on livestock, have long pushed to drop them from the federal list, which hunting groups also favor.

"There's no question the wolf packs have recovered," said Zippy Duvall, president of the American Farm Bureau Federation. "We only wish we could say the same of farms and ranches within their reach."

Some members of Congress have tried repeatedly to attach provisions to various bills that would "delist" wolves, return management responsibilities to the states and bar further court challenges. The efforts succeeded with Northern Rockies wolves in 2011. But the latest attempt to do likewise with Great Lakes wolves fizzled in May when congressional negotiators dropped such a proposal from a spending measure.

Rep. Sean Duffy, a Wisconsin Republican, urged the Trump administration to appeal the court ruling.

"Our farmers deserve to be able to protect their livestock, and they should not suffer because of the decisions made by an overreaching federal government a thousand miles away," Duffy said.

Humane Society President Wayne Pacelle said Congress and wildlife regulators should "recognize that wolves provide an enormous range of ecological and economic services to the regions where they live, and they do it for free."

The appeals court rejected the society's arguments that wolves are still threatened by humans and disease and that state management plans wouldn't safeguard them. But the judges said the process used by the Fish and Wildlife Service to remove protections from the wolves was fatally flawed.

By designating wolves in the three Great Lakes states and six others as a distinct population segment and dropping them from the endangered list without evaluating the effect on wolves elsewhere, the service created a "backdoor route" for lifting protections elsewhere, said the opinion written by Judge Patricia Millett.

The service "cannot review a single segment with blinders on," Millett wrote.

Follow John Flesher on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/JohnFlesher>

Sign up for the AP's weekly newsletter showcasing our best reporting from the Midwest and Texas at <http://apne.ws/2u1RMfv>

Ballot measure would hike taxes for cigarettes \$1 per pack

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — The state House speaker said Tuesday that he plans to pursue a ballot measure that would impose a \$1 tax hike on a standard pack of cigarettes to make South Dakota's four technical institutes more affordable.

Republican Rep. Mark Mickelson said he decided to push that proposal rather than a smaller package of tax increases on tobacco products. Attorney General Marty Jackley earlier on Tuesday filed an explanation of the initiative with the secretary of state's office, a step required before signature gatherers can spread out across the state.

The proposed ballot measure would increase taxes on different tobacco products including a \$1 hike per 20-cigarette pack. South Dakota's tax is currently \$1.53 per pack, according to the Tax Foundation, an independent tax policy nonprofit.

The tobacco tax plan aims to make state technical institutes more affordable and raise money to offer more programming, and Mickelson has said that lowering the cost of attendance would help keep young people in South Dakota. A June report to a state legislative panel found that South Dakota's tech institutes charge the highest average resident fees and tuition regionally.

Backers of the ballot measure need to submit nearly 14,000 valid signatures to the secretary of state in November 2017 to get on the ballot in 2018.

Voters in neighboring North Dakota last year rejected a ballot question that would have raised the state's 44-cent cigarette tax to \$2.20.

Writing error endangers South Dakota marijuana initiative

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — A writing error could cost a ballot measure campaign its chance to legalize recreational marijuana in South Dakota next year.

Cannabis advocacy group New Approach South Dakota has been collecting signatures for months in support of a proposed ballot measure meant to legalize small amounts of marijuana, the Argus Leader reported.

But the state's interpretation of the wording means it would only legalize marijuana paraphernalia, not the drug itself. Nonpartisan analysts with the Legislative Research Council said that one sentence in the 11-page proposal undermines the legalization effort.

The section legalizing marijuana paraphernalia addresses the law of "the state or the subdivision" (cities or counties), but the section legalizing marijuana itself only addresses the law of the subdivision and

doesn't include "the state or."

This means the measure wouldn't affect the state's law banning recreational marijuana, should the measure make it to the ballot next year.

New Approach Director Melissa Mentele said she wrote the measure based on existing statute and that the problem can be fixed later by the courts or the Legislature.

"There is a fix for it, so I'm not concerned about it at all," Mentele said. "It's just a typo. It's one person's perception of grammar versus another's."

Legislative Research Council Director Jason Hancock said supporters of the measure could submit an amended proposal, but that would void all existing ballot measure signatures.

"They're going to have to start over for gathering signatures," he said.

A new proposal could derail efforts to get the question on the ballot as the attorney general's office could take up to 60 days to publish an explanation.

Jesse Kelley, an attorney with the Marijuana Policy Project helping Mentele's campaign, said that the measure was written to allow for local control in deciding how to implement the decriminalization of marijuana possession, sale and use. And the group has succeeded in states where similar measures have been challenged in court, she said.

"This is not a new issue that the South Dakota group is facing," she said. "Opponents will go to great lengths to defeat these proposals."

Kelley said her group will continue to work with Mentele to pass the proposal and amend it once approved.

Supporters would have to collect nearly 14,000 valid signatures by November in order to get the measure on the 2018 ballot.

This story has been corrected to show that the attorney general's office could take up to 60 days to publish an explanation, not 90 days.

Information from: Argus Leader, <http://www.argusleader.com>

Fire is risk high in California, Northwest, northern plains

By DAN ELLIOTT, Associated Press

The threat of major U.S. wildfires will remain high throughout August in Southern California, northern Nevada and parts of the Northwest and northern Great Plains, forecasters said Tuesday.

A wet winter and spring produced thick grasses in the region, but a hot June melted the snow and dried out the vegetation, leaving it vulnerable to lightning-caused fires, said Bryan Henry, a meteorologist for the National Interagency Fire Center in Boise, Idaho, which produces the forecast.

"That's probably going to continue into the middle of September until we can get the transition into winter," he said.

A severe drought in eastern Montana and the western Dakotas is making the fire danger worse. The threat of major fires there was expected to remain above normal through October and possibly November.

Southern California could also see high fire danger into October or November, the forecast said.

In the Northwest, the August fire danger was above normal in eastern Washington, eastern Oregon and most of Idaho.

Bryan said some the vulnerable areas in the Northwest are in the path of the Aug. 21 eclipse and are expected to draw large crowds.

"We'd like to encourage people to be very careful out there," he said.

The August fire risk is also high in northern Wyoming and on Hawaii's Big Island. Fire potential was low in the Southeast and normal across most of the rest of the U.S.

Thirty-six large wildfires were burning Tuesday in nine mostly Western states, including 11 in Montana, nine in California and six in Oregon, the fire center said. Nationwide, the active fires have burned more than 900 square miles (2,300 square kilometers).

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So far this year, 39,000 fires have burned nearly 8,600 square miles (22,000 square kilometers). That compares with about 34,000 fires burning 5,500 square miles (14,000 square kilometers) at the same time last year.

Follow Dan Elliott at <http://twitter.com/DanElliottAP>. His work can be found at <https://apnews.com/search/dan%20elliott>.

State investigators reviewing deputy-involved shooting

BOX ELDER, S.D. (AP) — The state has taken over the investigation of a deputy-involved shooting in Pennington County.

Sheriff's officials asked the Division of Criminal Investigation to review the shooting by a deputy at a residence in Box Elder. A 21-year-old Rapid City man was shot and wounded Monday afternoon during a warrant check.

Attorney General Marty Jackley says state investigators are expected to forward their review of the shooting to him within 30 days. The man who was shot, 21-year-old Cruz Deleon, and 30-year-old Cassandra Quiver were arrested on outstanding warrants. Authorities allege Deleon pointed a handgun at the deputy before being shot. He suffered an injury that isn't life-threatening.

2 of 3 Rapid City fire victims identified

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — The Pennington County Sheriff's Office has identified two of the three people who died in a mobile home fire in Rapid City.

Authorities say 9-year-old Landon Gayton and 37-year-old Kelli Archer were killed when fire broke out early Friday.

Sheriff's officials and Rapid City police are working to identify the third victim. Autopsies show all three died of smoke inhalation.

The cause of the fire remains under investigation.

Midwest economy: July state-by-state glance

By The Associated Press

The Institute for Supply Management, formerly the Purchasing Management Association, began formally surveying its membership in 1931 to gauge business conditions.

The Creighton Economic Forecasting Group uses the same methodology as the national survey to consult supply managers and business leaders. Creighton University economics professor Ernie Goss oversees the report.

The overall index ranges between 0 and 100. Growth neutral is 50, and a figure greater than 50 indicates an expanding economy over the next three to six months.

Here are the state-by-state results for July:

Arkansas: The July overall index for Arkansas dropped to 61.2 from June's 66.1. Components of the index were new orders at 66.8, production or sales at 63.1, delivery lead time at 60.5, inventories at 53.9 and employment at 61.7. "Growth among Arkansas nondurable-goods manufacturers is outpacing that of the other eight states in the region. On the other hand, durable-goods producers are experiencing slow to no growth," Goss said. The manufacturing growth is spilling over into the broader state economy, he said.

Iowa: The state's overall index sank to 54.9 last month from 61.4 in June. Components of the index were new orders at 60.0, production or sales at 56.7, delivery lead time at 54.3, employment at 55.4 and inventories at 48.4. "Benefiting from growth among nondurable-goods producers, the state's manufacturing sector continues to expand," Goss said. "However, as in past months, slowdowns among durable-goods manufacturers, especially agriculture equipment manufacturers and metal producers, pulled the overall index lower for July."

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Kansas: The Kansas index plunged to a regional low of 45.9 in July from June's 56.3. Index components were new orders at 50.1, production or sales at 47.4, delivery lead time at 45.4, employment at 46.3 and inventories at 40.4. Goss said Japan's recent decision to raise the tariff on frozen beef imports will significantly harm the Kansas economy because, among U.S. states, Kansas ranks No. 4 for those sales to Japan.

Minnesota: The state's overall index declined to a very healthy 63.2 from June's regional high 68.0. Components of the overall July index were new orders at 69.0, production or sales at 65.2, delivery lead time at 62.5, inventories at 55.6 and employment at 63.7. "Technology-linked manufacturers in the state, including computer and electronic product manufacturers and medical equipment producers, expanded growth for the month, more than offsetting slight weakness among metal producers in Minnesota," said Goss.

Missouri: Missouri's overall index dipped to 52.3, compared with 53.8 in June. Index components were new orders at 57.1, production or sales at 54.0, delivery lead time at 51.7, inventories at 46.1 and employment at 52.7. Growth for both nondurable- and durable-goods manufacturers has been strong for the last several months, Goss said.

Nebraska: The July overall index for Nebraska fell to 58.0 from 61.3 in June. Components of the index were new orders at 63.4, production or sales at 59.8, delivery lead time at 57.3, inventories at 51.1 and employment at 58.5. "Nebraska's nondurable-goods sector, including food processing firms, is expanding at a brisk pace, offsetting pullbacks among durable-goods producers, including agricultural equipment manufacturers and metal producers," Goss said. Japan's recent decision to raise the tariff on frozen beef imports will harm Nebraska's economy, he said. It could shave potentially one-half of one percentage point from the state's GDP growth unless offset with expanding beef exports to China.

North Dakota: North Dakota's overall index declined to a regional high of 66.7 last month from June's 67.2. Components of the index were new orders at 72.8, production or sales at 68.8, delivery lead time at 65.9, employment at 67.2 and inventories at 58.7. "Growth among manufacturers and construction firms linked to energy more than compensated for pullbacks among firms tied to agriculture," Goss said. Surveys over the past several months indicate the state will continue to add jobs and economic activity through the fourth quarter of this year, he said.

Oklahoma: The state's index plunged below growth neutral to hit 49.4 last month, compared with 57.7 in June. Components of the overall index were new orders at 54.0, production or sales at 51.0, delivery lead time at 48.9, inventories at 43.5, and employment at 49.8. Firms linked to energy are again expanding output and creating jobs, Goss said, buoyed by oil prices above \$45 a barrel. "On the other hand, metal manufacturers and nondurable-goods manufacturers experienced no to negative growth for the month, thus pulling the overall index below growth neutral," said Goss.

South Dakota: The overall index for South Dakota plummeted to 53.3 in July from 67.4 in June. Components of the overall index were new orders at 58.2, production or sales at 55.0, delivery lead time at 52.7, inventories at 46.9 and employment at 53.7. "Expansions among nondurable-goods manufacturers in the state more than compensated for slight losses for durable-goods producers linked to agriculture," Goss said. Growth in the months ahead will be slow, he said.

North Dakota still seeking to recoup pipeline protest costs

By **BLAKE NICHOLSON, Associated Press**

BISMARCK, N.D. (AP) — North Dakota is continuing to seek federal funding to help pay state law enforcement bills related to months of protests over construction of the Dakota Access pipeline, despite being rejected on its first attempt.

The state has applied for nearly \$14 million in funding from a Justice Department program that helps pay costs related to law enforcement emergencies around the country.

The state in late June applied to the Emergency Federal Law Enforcement Assistance Program, according to U.S. Sen. Heidi Heitkamp. The North Dakota Democrat sent a letter to Attorney General Jeff Sessions on Monday, urging his agency to "expeditiously review and approve" the state's request. A decision is expected by the end of September.

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The \$3.8 billion pipeline built by Texas-based Energy Transfer Partners began moving oil from North Dakota to a distribution point in Illinois in June. The project is still being contested in federal court by American Indian tribes who fear a leak could endanger their water supply, and protests from August to February resulted in a large-scale police response and 761 arrests.

Gov. Doug Burgum in late April asked President Donald Trump for a disaster declaration to pave the way for federal aid to help recoup the \$38 million spent by the state policing the protests and spare taxpayers the expense. The Federal Emergency Management Agency denied the request in May.

Such declarations typically involve natural disasters, and the governor's office acknowledged last month that the request was a "longshot." The state did not appeal.

The Justice Department program might be better tailored to the civil unrest North Dakota experienced. One example of a past grant is about \$625,000 during the Waco standoff in Texas in 1993.

The North Dakota Legislature and Burgum earlier this year approved borrowing money to fund the protest response, but that money would have to be repaid by state taxpayers. There also is a longstanding offer from ETP to pay the state costs, and Burgum spokesman Mike Nowatzki on Tuesday said that option hasn't been ruled out.

Follow Blake Nicholson on Twitter at: <http://twitter.com/NicholsonBlake>

Police say man who held hostages knew the victims

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Sioux Falls police say a man who barricaded himself in a hotel with two hostages knew the victims.

The six-hour standoff ended peacefully with the arrest of the 34-year-old Sioux Falls man Friday night. Police say the two hostages are a 28-year-old woman and 5-year-old girl known to the suspect. They were not hurt during the standoff.

Authorities say the man earlier damaged displays at the Old Courthouse Museum, then threatened a woman before stealing her car in downtown Sioux Falls.

Officers tracked the man to the Dakotah Lodge. The man is being held in the Minnehaha County Jail.

Dakotas tribes eligible for federal land buyback program

BISMARCK, N.D. (AP) — Several American Indian tribes in the Dakotas are eligible for a federal program to return land on reservations to tribal control.

The buyback program was initiated by the Obama administration and has already spent \$1.2 billion to purchase parcels of land with multiple owners and transfer them to tribal governments.

The Interior Department has announced a plan for doling out the remaining \$540 million.

Tribes eligible in the Dakotas are the Three Affiliated Tribes and four Sioux tribes — Standing Rock, Spirit Lake, Cheyenne River and Rosebud.

The buyback program resulted from a lawsuit that alleged U.S. officials for decades mismanaged trust money held on behalf of hundreds of thousands of Indians.

Brazil's Temer confident he can survive bribery charge vote

By PETER PRENGAMAN, Associated Press

BRASILIA, Brazil (AP) — President Michel Temer appeared to have the upper-hand Wednesday going into a key vote by the lower chamber of Brazil's Congress on whether to suspend him and put him on trial over an alleged bribery scheme to line his pockets.

Despite a 5 percent approval rating in opinion polls and myriad calls for him to resign the last few months, Temer has been able to maintain most of his governing coalition in the Chamber of Deputies, where he was the presiding officer for many years.

Opposition lawmakers are hoping at least some of his support will be eroded by members having to pub-

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licly back a toxic president on national television. Major broadcaster Globo plans to transmit Wednesday's proceedings live and all 513 members of the house are up for election next year.

The opposition also believes that if it can't muster the necessary votes to suspend Temer, it can at least stall a resolution by keeping enough members from entering the chamber so a quorum can't be reached.

"Brazil and the world are watching the absurdity of the negotiations taking place in the middle of the night (at Temer's residence), the videos, the recordings, the proof of so many crimes," said Assis Carvalho, a lawmaker in the Workers' Party, the leading opposition party. "It would be absurd not to authorize the continuity of this process."

Still, the numbers appeared to be on Temer's side. To suspend the president, two-thirds of the 513 members, or 342, would have to vote against him. The government said it had at least 50 more supporters than necessary for Temer to survive.

Speaker Rodrigo Maia, a Temer ally, told reporters late Tuesday that victory was assured.

"This will be resolved by Wednesday afternoon," Maia said, adding it would be a relief for the country to be able to move on.

The months-long crisis is the latest fallout from a colossal corruption investigation that has led to the jailing of many of the country's elite, including Marcelo Odebrecht, the former CEO of giant construction company Odebrecht, and Eduardo Cunha, the former lower house speaker who is serving a 15-year sentence.

Temer, who was vice president, came to power a little over a year ago when President Dilma Rousseff was impeached and later ousted for illegally managing the federal budget.

Rousseff, a member of the left-leaning Workers' Party, accused Temer, from the ideologically barren Brazilian Democratic Movement Party, of being behind her ouster. She said Temer and others wanted her removed in part because she refused to stop the sprawling "Car Wash" corruption investigation. Temer denied that.

Since taking power, Temer's administration has been rocked by one scandal after another while still managing to move unpopular legislation forward, such as a loosening of labor rules and proposals to trim pension benefits.

The ambitious economic overhaul agenda, supported by the business class in Latin America's largest economy, has helped the 76-year-old Temer stay in office so far despite the uproar over corruption allegations against him.

A recording purportedly made in March emerged in which Temer apparently supported the continued payment of hush money to Cunha, the powerful former speaker believed to have dirt on many politicians.

As part of the probe, it came to light that Temer allegedly orchestrated a bribery scheme in which he would get payouts totaling millions of dollars for helping JBS, a giant meat-packing company, resolve a business issue. A former aide was arrested while carrying a suitcase with \$150,000, much of which was allegedly destined for Temer.

Attorney General Rodrigo Janot opened an investigation into Temer for bribery, obstruction of justice and being part of a criminal organization. Janot ultimately filed a bribery charge against the president, though at least one of the other charges is expected by the end of August, which would prompt another suspension vote in the Chamber of Deputies.

Associated Press video journalists Renata Brito and Mario Lobao in Brasilia contributed to this report.

Peter Prengaman on Twitter: www.twitter.com/peterprengaman

Venezuela's president says new assembly to convene soon

By MICHAEL WEISSENSTEIN, Associated Press

CARACAS, Venezuela (AP) — President Nicolas Maduro's government says it is close to convening a special assembly endowed with powers to rewrite the constitution, override other branches of government and punish opposition leaders.

Two of his leading foes already were dragged from their homes by heavily armed security agents and thrown in a military prison Tuesday, drawing condemnation from the United States and some Latin American countries. But many other nations and international organizations were silent or limited themselves to expressions of concern.

Opposition leader Leopoldo Lopez and Antonio Ledezma were accused by the government-allied Supreme Court of violating the terms of their house arrest by plotting to escape and releasing video statements criticizing Maduro.

Both men's supporters denied the charges and vowed to continue to try to push the ruling socialist party from power. However, they gave little indication of how they planned to do that, and the capital was unusually quiet after months of sometimes violent protests.

Lopez's supporters released a video that he taped last week saying he expected to be imprisoned again soon, and calling on Venezuelans to be firm in resisting Maduro.

"If you are looking at this video now, it's precisely because that occurred, because they came and they illegally imprisoned me again unjustly, a prisoner of consciousness, a prisoner for my ideas, a prisoner for wanting a better Venezuela," the 46-year-old Lopez said.

He also said that his wife, Lilian Tintori, is pregnant, touching her belly and saying he has "one more reason to fight for Venezuela." He called the pregnancy "the best news I've received in the last 3 1/2 years" — the time he spent behind bars before being released to house arrest last month. The couple had been allowed some conjugal visits.

Maduro appeared undeterred in his plans to seat a special assembly this week with powers to rewrite the constitution and override any other branch of the Venezuelan government. He has threatened to use those powers to go after his opponents and the arrests Tuesday appeared to show he is willing to proceed with full force.

Maduro appeared to have the full support of the country's most important institutions.

Venezuela's powerful vice president, whom the U.S. has accused of drug trafficking, said the newly elected constituent assembly would be convening "within hours."

In remarks shown on Venezuela's state television, Tareck El Aissami said the results from Sunday's election had been reviewed and the 545 assembly members would soon take the reins of the nation's government. He didn't give a specific time.

Venezuela's defense minister, Gen. Vladimir Padrino Lopez, also appeared on television to affirm his loyalty to Maduro.

"We ask for respect for our democracy, for the way in which we have decided to take the road that we deserve to take in peace, in democracy, with tolerance, without violence and without heading toward a coup," Padrino said.

Maduro called the vote for the constitutional assembly in May after weeks of protests fed by anger at his government over food shortages, triple-digit inflation and high crime. Many people accuse the ruling party of corruption and mismanagement.

Tensions have escalated since government-allied electoral authorities said more than 8 million people voted Sunday, a turnout figure that was disputed by the opposition and independent analysts and condemned by many nations in the region and beyond.

The Trump administration quickly moved against Maduro on Monday, adding him to a growing list of high-ranking Venezuelan officials targeted by financial sanctions. But the U.S. held off on sanctioning Venezuela's oil industry, which could undermine Maduro's government but also deepen the humanitarian crisis in Venezuela.

Maduro scoffed at the sanctions and said he had no intention of deviating from his plans to rewrite the constitution and go after a string of enemies. He has said he would use the assembly's powers to bar opposition candidates from running in gubernatorial elections in December unless they negotiate an end to protests that have resulted in at least 120 deaths and nearly 2,000 injuries over the past four months.

U.S. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson said Tuesday that the Trump administration was "evaluating all of our policy options as to what can we do to create a change of conditions where either Maduro decides he doesn't have a future, and wants to leave of his own accord, or we can return the government processes back to their constitution."

Later, the White House issued a statement condemning "the Maduro dictatorship" over the arrests and saying Lopez and Ledezma are political prisoners.

"The United States holds Maduro — who publicly announced just hours earlier that he would move against his political opposition — personally responsible for the health and safety of Mr. Lopez, Mr. Ledezma, and any others seized," the White House said.

Panamanian and Argentine officials and the Organization of American States also condemned the arrests, though other nations in the region were silent.

The French, British, Spanish and Mexican ambassadors to Venezuela visited the opposition-controlled National Assembly to meet with legislators as a show of support Tuesday. After they left, members of pro-government motorcycle gangs surrounded the building.

Michael Weissenstein on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/mweissenstein>

Amazon, in sign of growth, holds job fair for US warehouses

By MATT O'BRIEN, AP Technology Writer

FALL RIVER, Mass. (AP) — Amazon is holding a giant job fair Wednesday and plans to make thousands of job offers on the spot at nearly a dozen U.S. warehouses.

Though it's common for Amazon to ramp up its shipping center staff in August to prepare for holiday shopping, the magnitude of the hiring spree underscores Amazon's growth when traditional retailers are closing stores — and blaming Amazon for a shift to buying goods online.

Nearly 40,000 of the 50,000 packing, sorting and shipping jobs at Amazon will be full time. Most of them will count toward Amazon's previously announced goal of adding 100,000 full-time workers by the middle of next year.

The bad news is that more people are likely to lose jobs in stores than get jobs in warehouses, said Anthony Carnevale, director of Georgetown University's Center on Education and the Workforce.

On the flip side, Amazon's warehouse jobs provide "decent and competitive" wages and could help build skills.

"Interpersonal team work, problem solving, critical thinking, all that stuff goes on in these warehouses," Carnevale said. "They're serious entry-level jobs for a lot of young people, even those who are still making their way through school."

At one warehouse — Amazon calls them "fulfillment centers" — in Fall River, Massachusetts, the company hopes to hire more than 200 people Wednesday, adding to a workforce of about 1,500. Employees there focus on sorting, labeling and shipping what the company calls "non-sortable" items — big products such as shovels, surfboards, grills, car seats — and lots of giant diaper boxes. Other warehouses are focused on smaller products.

And while Amazon has attracted attention for deploying robots at some of its warehouses, experts said it could take a while before automation begins to seriously bite into its growing labor force.

"When it comes to dexterity, machines aren't really great at it," said Jason Roberts, head of global technology and analytics for mass recruiter Randstad Sourceright, which is not working with Amazon on its jobs fair. "The picker-packer role is something humans do way better than machines right now. I don't put it past Amazon to try to do that in the future, but it's one of the hardest jobs" for machines.

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Besides Fall River, the event is taking place at Amazon shipping sites in Baltimore; Chattanooga, Tennessee; Etna, Ohio; Hebron, Kentucky; Kenosha, Wisconsin; Kent, Washington; Robbinsville, New Jersey; Romeoville, Illinois and Whitestown, Indiana.

The company is advertising starting wages that range from \$11.50 an hour at the Tennessee location to \$13.75 an hour at the Washington site, which is near Amazon's Seattle headquarters.

Amazon is also planning to hold events for part-time positions in Oklahoma City and Buffalo, New York.

Amazon is "insatiable when it comes to filling jobs at warehouses," Roberts said. He said Amazon's job offers could also help drive up wages at nearby employers, including grocery stores and fast-food joints.

"It has a relatively healthy effect in the surrounding area," he said.

10 Things to Know for Today

By The Associated Press

Your daily look at late-breaking news, upcoming events and the stories that will be talked about today:

1. LAWSUIT: FOX NEWS COORDINATED WITH WHITE HOUSE ON FALSE STORY

The investigator looking into the killing of DNC staffer Seth Rich alleges that the cable news channel quoted him as saying things he never said and was willing to show Trump its story before it was posted online.

2. VENEZUELA'S PRESIDENT SAYS NEW ASSEMBLY TO CONVENE SOON

The body would be empowered to rewrite the constitution, override other branches of government and punish opposition leaders.

3. BRAZIL'S PRESIDENT CONFIDENT HE CAN SURVIVE BRIBERY CHARGE VOTE

Despite a 5 percent approval rating in opinion polls and calls for him to resign, Michel Temer has support in the lower chamber of Congress that will decide his fate.

4. TRUMP'S FUNDRAISING PROWESS KEEPS GOP TIES CLOSE

Leaning heavily on the president's appeal among small donors, the party has raised \$75 million in the first six months of the year — more than double what Obama raised at same point in his first year.

5. OLDER PEOPLE DYING ON JOB AT HIGHER RATE THAN ALL WORKERS

An AP analysis finds baby boomers in particular were hard hit as about 35 percent of the fatal workplace accidents in 2015 involved a worker 55 and older.

6. AP: JUVENILE LIFE RULING HAS WIDER CONSEQUENCE

Lawyers are using a Supreme Court ruling triggering new sentences for juvenile offenders serving mandatory life without parole to challenge lengthy sentences that include parole.

7. RACE FOR SESSIONS' OLD SEAT HAS SUB-PLOTS

The choices are a polished incumbent backed by the D.C. establishment or firebrand hardliners seeking an upset in the closely watched Senate race in Alabama.

8. ISLAMIC SCHOOL SEEKS TO STEER SONS OF MILITANTS TO NEW PATH

Al Hidayah's founder, a former radical preacher, wants to atone for his militant past by preventing his young charges from becoming the next generation of Indonesian jihadists.

9. READY, SET, APPLY!

Amazon is holding a giant job fair and plans to make thousands of job offers on the spot at nearly a dozen warehouses across the U.S.

10. 'COUSIN NESS' IN FOR 'UNCLE VERNE'

Brad Nessler, SEC football's new voice on CBS, fills the seat held for 17 years by friend Verne Lundquist.

Lawsuit: Investigator claims Fox News made up quotes

By DAVID BAUDER and JILL COLVIN, Associated Press Writers

NEW YORK (AP) — A new lawsuit lays out an explosive tale of Trump allies, the White House and Fox News Channel conspiring to push a false story about Democratic leaks and an unsolved killing in order to distract attention from the Russia investigation that has been swirling around the president.

The lawsuit was filed Tuesday against Fox by an investigator who had been looking into the killing of Seth Rich, a former Democratic National Committee staff member who died in 2016 in what police say was a botched robbery. The investigator alleges that Fox quoted him as saying things he never said and was willing to show President Donald Trump its story before it was posted online.

It's the second time in two days that Trump has been accused of being actively involved in pushing a public narrative to lower the heat of the Russia story. The Washington Post reported that the president had written a misleading statement for his son to give to The New York Times about Donald Trump Jr.'s meeting last summer with a Russian who promised dirt on Democrat Hillary Clinton's presidential campaign.

Rich's death has become fodder for conspiracy theorists, deeply angering the 27-year-old's family. In May, the story was thrust into the headlines again when Fox posted a story on its website in which investigator Rod Wheeler said there had been contact between Rich and WikiLeaks, the organization that posted a trove of DNC emails last year. The story was heavily promoted by Fox News host Sean Hannity, who has informally advised the president.

In the lawsuit, Wheeler now says that he never made that statement. He also contends he was told his false comments were put in the story because Trump wanted it that way.

Rich's family released a statement Tuesday night supporting the lawsuit. "While we can't speak to the evidence that you now have, we are hopeful that this brings an end to what has been the most emotionally difficult time in our lives and an end to conspiracy theories surrounding our beloved Seth," the family wrote.

Fox says it's "completely erroneous" to suggest it pushed the story to distract from the Russia investigation. Wheeler has made contradictory statements regarding the case and is simultaneously filing a racial discrimination lawsuit against the network, represented by a lawyer who has other lawsuits against Fox.

White House press secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders said Trump had no knowledge of the false story before it was posted and that it was "completely untrue" that the White House had any role in shaping it.

Wheeler, a Fox contributor on law enforcement issues, said he was brought into the Rich case by donor and Trump supporter Ed Butowsky. He says Butowsky, who has also made occasional guest appearances on Fox News, was intent on establishing a link between Rich and WikiLeaks.

Two days before the Fox article was published, Wheeler said he got a text message from Butowsky: "Not to add any more pressure but the president just read the article. He wants the article out immediately. It's now all up to you. But don't feel the pressure."

Butowsky said in a phone interview Tuesday he has never met Trump and his text message to Wheeler about the president reading the article was "tongue-in-cheek."

Fox removed the story from its website a week after it was published, saying "it was not initially subjected to the high degree of editorial scrutiny we require for all of our reporting." Hannity ultimately backed away, saying he was acting out of respect for Rich's family.

Wheeler also said that he and Butowsky had met with outgoing White House press secretary Sean Spicer and showed Spicer notes on Wheeler's investigation. Spicer asked to be kept informed, the lawsuit said.

Spicer plays down the importance of that meeting.

"Ed is a longtime supporter of the president's agenda who often appears in the media," Spicer said Tuesday. "He asked for a 10-minute meeting, with no specified topic, to catch up and said he would be bringing along a contributor to Fox News. As Ed himself has noted, he has never met the president and the White House had nothing to do with his story."

On the day the Fox story was posted, Spicer was asked about the report that Rich had emailed WikiLeaks. He said, "I'm not aware of that" and did not mention that he had met with Butowsky and Wheeler a month earlier.

One of Trump's attorneys, Jay Sekulow, also devoted attention to the Rich story during several Hannity appearances in May, before his hiring by Trump was announced.

"There's a lot more to this, I would suspect," Sekulow said on the May 18 show, which Hannity devoted almost entirely to a discussion about Rich. "You can't ignore the fact that it was a DNC staffer. You can't ignore the fact that there was nothing taken from the individual's body."

He said that while he hadn't seen "the files" on Rich, the incident "undercuts" the argument that Russians interfered in the election.

At the time, Trump was facing news stories about the investigations into Russian meddling in the 2016 campaign and possible ties between his campaign aides and Moscow. He continues to blast the inquiries as a "witch hunt" aimed at discrediting his election win and tries to focus attention on Clinton, who has largely faded from the headlines.

Jay Wallace, Fox News president, says, "The accusation that FoxNews.com published Malia Zimmerman's story to help detract from coverage of the Russia collusion issue is completely erroneous." Malia Zimmerman was a Fox producer on the story.

"The retraction of this story is still being investigated internally and we have no evidence that Rod Wheeler was misquoted by Zimmerman," Wallace said.

In May, Wheeler told Fox's local affiliate in Washington that he "absolutely" had sources at the FBI saying that there was information that could link Rich to WikiLeaks. But the station noted that Wheeler subsequently said contradictory things to other news organizations, and the station could not contact him again.

Fox News Channel's prime-time opinion hosts, particularly Hannity, make no secret of their admiration for Trump. But any charges that the network worked with Trump on a false story could harm the reputations of the network's journalists.

Trump has fostered an unusually close relationship with Fox and many of its personalities, particularly Hannity. Hannity gave Trump a frequent platform for non-challenging interviews during the campaign, along with advice on air and behind the scenes. The "Fox and Friends" morning show also is a Trump favorite.

Jill Colvin reported from Washington. Associated Press writers Donna Cassata in Washington and Shelley Acoca and Mike Stewart in New York contributed.

2 Venezuelan opposition leaders jailed as crisis escalates

By MICHAEL WEISSENSTEIN, Associated Press

CARACAS, Venezuela (AP) — Teams of heavily armed security agents seized two of Venezuela's top opposition leaders from their homes in the middle of the night Tuesday, dragging one into the street in his pajamas as President Nicolas Maduro's government defied U.S. sanctions and international condemnation of a plan to assume nearly unlimited powers.

Leopoldo Lopez and Antonio Ledezma were being held at the Ramo Verde military prison south of the capital, accused by the government-allied Supreme Court of violating the terms of their house arrest by plotting to escape and releasing video statements criticizing Maduro.

Both men's allies denied the charges and vowed to continue to try to push the ruling party from power. But they gave little indication of how they planned to do that, and the capital was unusually quiet after months of sometimes violent protests. While the United States and some Latin American allies condemned the arrests, many other nations and international organizations were silent or limited themselves to expressions of concern.

Lopez's supporters released a video he taped last week saying he expected to be imprisoned again soon, and calling on Venezuelans to be firm in resisting Maduro.

"If you are looking at this video now, it's precisely because that occurred, because they came and they illegally imprisoned me again unjustly, a prisoner of consciousness, a prisoner for my ideas, a prisoner for wanting a better Venezuela," the 46-year-old Lopez said.

He also said that his wife, Lilian Tintori, is pregnant, touching her belly and saying he has "one more

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reason to fight for Venezuela." He called the pregnancy "the best news I've received in the last 3 1/2 years" — the time he spent behind bars before being released to house arrest last month. The couple had been allowed some conjugal visits.

Maduro appeared undeterred in his plans to seat a special assembly this week with powers to rewrite the country's constitution and override any other branch of the Venezuelan government. He has threatened to use those powers to go after his opponents and the arrests Tuesday appeared to show he was willing to proceed with full force.

Maduro appears to have the full support of the country's most important institutions.

Venezuela's powerful vice president, whom the U.S. has accused of drug trafficking, said the newly elected constituent assembly would be convening "within hours."

In remarks aired on Venezuela's state television, Tarek El Aissami said that results from Sunday's election have been reviewed and the 545 assembly members would soon take the reins of the nation's government. He didn't give a specific time.

Venezuela's defense minister, Gen. Vladimir Padrino Lopez, also appeared on television Tuesday to affirm his loyalty to Maduro.

"We ask for respect for our democracy, for the way in which we have decided to take the road that we deserve to take in peace, in democracy, with tolerance, without violence and without heading toward a coup," Padrino said.

Lopez was released from the Ramo Verde prison on July 8 after serving three years of a 13-year sentence on charges of inciting violence at opposition rallies. Many human rights groups considered him a political prisoner.

Ledezma, 62, was also detained in 2015 and has been under house arrest. Like Lopez, he also recently posted a video denouncing Sunday's vote.

Shortly after midnight, black-clad members of Venezuela's state security force forced Ledezma from his east Caracas home in his blue pajamas, yanking him out into the night as a woman screamed for help.

"They're taking Ledezma!" the woman can be heard crying on a cell-phone video released by Ledezma's allies. "It's a dictatorship!"

Lopez's wife posted security-camera video of him being taken from their home and bundled into a waiting car.

"They've just taken Leopoldo from the house," Tintori wrote on Twitter. "We don't know where he is or where they're taking him."

Attorney Juan Carlos Gutierrez said the government's decision to return Lopez to prison was "completely arbitrary" and said Lopez had obeyed the conditions imposed on his house arrest and never had plans to flee.

Tensions escalated in Venezuela after government-allied electoral authorities said more than 8 million people voted Sunday and the turnout was disputed by the opposition and independent analysts and condemned by many nations in the region and beyond.

On Monday, the Trump administration added Maduro to a growing list of high-ranking Venezuelan officials targeted by financial sanctions. For now, the Trump administration has not delivered on threats to sanction Venezuela's oil industry, which could undermine Maduro's government but also raise U.S. gas prices and deepen the humanitarian crisis in Venezuela.

Maduro said Monday evening he had no intention of deviating from his plans to rewrite the constitution and go after a string of enemies, from independent Venezuelan news channels to gunmen he claimed were sent by neighboring Colombia to disrupt the vote as part of an international conspiracy led by the man he calls "Emperor Donald Trump."

Maduro has also said he would use the assembly's powers to bar opposition candidates from running in gubernatorial elections in December unless they sit with his party to negotiate an end to hostilities that have generated four months of protests, leaving least 120 dead and nearly 2,000 wounded.

U.S. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson said Tuesday that the Trump administration was "evaluating all of

our policy options as to what can we do to create a change of conditions where either Maduro decides he doesn't have a future, and wants to leave of his own accord, or we can return the government processes back to their constitution."

Later, the White House issued a statement condemning "the Maduro dictatorship" over the arrests and saying Lopez and Ledezma are political prisoners.

"The United States holds Maduro — who publicly announced just hours earlier that he would move against his political opposition — personally responsible for the health and safety of Mr. Lopez, Mr. Ledezma, and any others seized," the White House said.

Panamanian and Argentine officials and the Organization of American States condemned Tuesday's arrests, though other nations in the region were silent. A spokesman for U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said he "has taken note" of the jailings and was sending "an overall message of concern for the increase in political tensions and the country moving away from a path to finding a peaceful solution."

The French, British, Spanish and Mexican ambassadors to Venezuela visited the opposition-controlled National Assembly on Tuesday and met with legislators as a show of support. After they left, members of pro-government motorcycle gangs surrounded the building and some threw rocks and tomatoes at a legislator and another person as they left the building. Three legislators said they were breaking with the pro-government Great Patriotic Pole party and forming a new faction opposed to rewriting the constitution.

Maduro called the vote for the constitutional assembly in May after weeks of protests against his government, which has overseen Venezuela's descent into a devastating crisis during its four years in power. Due to plunging oil prices and widespread corruption and mismanagement, Venezuela's inflation and homicide rates are among the world's highest, and widespread shortages of food and medicine have left citizens dying of preventable illnesses and rooting through trash to feed themselves.

Michael Weissenstein on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/mweissenstein>

Trump on tricky legal ground with 'Obamacare' threat

By RICARDO ALONSO-ZALDIVAR, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump's threat to stop billions of dollars in government payments to insurers and force the collapse of "Obamacare" could put the government in a legal bind.

Law experts say he'd be handing insurers a solid court case, while undermining his own leverage to compel Democrats to negotiate, especially if premiums jump by 20 percent as expected after such a move.

"Trump thinks he's holding all the cards. But Democrats know what's in his hand, and he's got a pair of twos," said University of Michigan law professor Nicholas Bagley. Democrats "aren't about to agree to dismantle the Affordable Care Act just because Trump makes a reckless bet."

For months, the president has been threatening to stop payments that reimburse insurers for providing required financial assistance to low-income consumers, reducing their copays and deductibles.

Administration officials say the decision could come any day.

Playing defense, some insurers are preemptively raising premiums for next year. For example, BlueCross BlueShield of Arizona this week announced a 7.2 percent average hike for 2018. But there would likely be no increase if the subsidies are guaranteed, the company said. And BlueCross BlueShield of North Carolina earlier requested a 22.9 percent average increase. With the subsidies, the company said that would have been 8.8 percent.

The "cost-sharing" subsidies are under a legal cloud because of a dispute over whether the Obama health care law properly approved the payments. Other parts of the health care law, however, clearly direct the government to reimburse insurers.

With the issue unresolved, the Trump administration has been paying insurers each month, as the Obama administration had done previously.

Trump returned to the subject last week after the GOP drive to repeal the health care law fell apart in the Senate, tweeting, "As I said from the beginning, let ObamaCare implode, then deal. Watch!"

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He elaborated in another tweet, "If a new HealthCare Bill is not approved quickly, BAILOUTS for Insurance Companies...will end very soon!"

It's not accurate to call the cost-sharing subsidies a bailout, said Tim Jost, a professor emeritus at Washington and Lee University School of Law in Virginia.

"They are no more a bailout than payments made by the government to a private company for building a bomber," he said.

That's at the root of the Trump administration's potential legal problem if the president makes good on this threat.

The health law clearly requires insurers to help low-income consumers with their copays and deductibles. Nearly 3 in 5 HealthCare.gov customers qualify for the assistance, which can reduce a deductible of \$3,500 to several hundred dollars. The annual cost to the government is about \$7 billion.

The law also specifies that the government shall reimburse insurers for the cost-sharing assistance that they provide.

Nonetheless, the payments remain under a cloud because of a disagreement over whether they were properly approved in the health law, by providing an "appropriation."

The Constitution says the government shall not spend money without a congressional appropriation.

Think of an appropriation as an electronic instruction to your bank to pay a recurring monthly bill. You fully intend to pay, and the money you've budgeted is in your account. But the payment will not go out unless you specifically direct your bank to send it.

House Republicans trying to thwart the ACA sued the Obama administration in federal court in Washington, arguing that the law lacked specific language appropriating the cost-sharing subsidies.

A district court judge agreed with House Republicans, and now the case is on hold before the U.S. appeals court in Washington. A group of state attorneys general asked the court earlier this year to let them join the case in defense of the subsidies, and on Tuesday the court agreed. House Republicans had opposed the states' participation, but the court said the group had "demonstrated the appropriateness of their intervention in this case."

Both Bagley and Jost have followed the issue of the payments closely, and disagree on whether the health law properly approved the payments to insurers. Bagley says it did not; while Jost says it did.

However, the two experts agree that insurers would have a solid lawsuit if Trump stops the payments. Insurers could sue in the U.S. Court of Federal Claims, which hears claims for money against the government.

"The ACA promised to make these payments — that could not be clearer — and Congress has done nothing to limit that promise," said Bagley.

"I think there would very likely be litigation if the Trump administration tries to cut off the payments," said Jost.

Another way to resolve it: Congress could appropriate the money, even if temporarily, for a couple of years. Some prominent GOP lawmakers have expressed support for that.

If the president makes good on his threat, experts estimate that premiums for a standard "silver" plan would increase by about 19 percent. Insurers could recover the cost-sharing money by raising premiums, since those are also subsidized by the ACA, and there's no question about their appropriation.

But millions of people who buy individual health care policies without any financial assistance from the government would face prohibitive cost increases.

And more insurers might decide to leave already shaky markets.

"This is not a game," said California Attorney General Xavier Becerra. "Millions of people would not be able to afford health insurance for their families."

Tillerson concedes Russia ties are sour, but holds out hope

By JOSH LEDERMAN, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The top American diplomat put the onus on Russia Tuesday to take steps to repair flagging relations with the United States, even as he conceded that congressional sanctions would pose a new obstacle. Holding out hope for warmer ties, Secretary of State Rex Tillerson said he'd meet with his Russian counterpart within days.

In a wide-ranging assessment of his first six months in office, Tillerson also:

— Revealed the U.S. is looking at options to entice Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro to leave power peacefully.

— Insisted the U.S. doesn't blame China for North Korea's nuclear behavior despite the American pressure on Beijing. He said the U.S. is open to talks with Pyongyang.

— Argued that Iran's military must leave Syria for the U.S. to cooperate with Russia on ending the Syrian civil war.

— Named retired Gen. Anthony Zinni as special representative to try to resolve the Persian Gulf diplomatic crisis over Qatar.

But on Russia, Tillerson strained hardest to point to progress.

He was unable to show that the U.S. has fulfilled President Donald Trump's objective of a new, more cooperative relationship between the former Cold War foes, noting only modest efforts in Syria as a sign the nations share some common goals. While he said frustrated Americans want the U.S. to get along with the nuclear-armed power, he did not address the deep suspicions at home about the president's intentions. U.S. intelligence agencies have formally accused Moscow of meddling in the 2016 presidential election to help Trump.

"The situation is bad, but believe me — it can get worse," Tillerson said, recounting his message to Russian President Vladimir Putin when they met in March. "And it just did."

Putin this week ordered the U.S. to dramatically cut its diplomatic presence in Russia, solidifying the conclusion that a Trump-driven detente with Moscow hasn't come to pass. Though ostensibly in retaliation for a similar U.S. move last year under President Barack Obama, the Russian action came just after Congress voted to slap Russia with more economic sanctions, and to include new requirements making it far harder for Trump to ease the penalties.

"Neither the president nor I are very happy about that," Tillerson said of the sanctions bill. The diplomat had urged lawmakers not to proceed. "We were clear that we didn't think that was going to be helpful to our efforts, but that's the decision they made."

Trump plans to sign the bill nevertheless, another potent reminder of the political baggage that has beset his efforts to mend ties to Russia. If Trump were to veto the bill, Congress would almost surely override his veto. At a time when the FBI and congressional committees are investigating possible Trump campaign collusion with Russia, a veto override would make it look like lawmakers were rejecting a Trump effort to protect Moscow from U.S. punishment.

Though the White House said the bill was still being reviewed, press secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders said Trump will sign it. Vice President Mike Pence, traveling Tuesday in the former Soviet republic of Georgia, sought to reframe the sanctions as a "further sign of our commitment" to counter Russian aggression in the region.

"The president and our Congress are unified in our message to Russia: a better relationship, the lifting of sanctions will require Russia to reverse the actions that caused the sanctions to be imposed in the first place," Pence said. "And not before."

The U.S. hasn't said how many of its diplomats will have to leave Russia to comply with Putin's order that the U.S. cut its diplomatic personnel to 455. Tillerson suggested the action was expected, given the domestic pressure on the Russian leader to retaliate for steps Obama took to punish Russia after U.S. intelligence agencies concluded Moscow meddled in the election.

"Any leader of any country has their whole population watching them as well," Tillerson said. "He felt he had to do something. Does it make our life more difficult? Of course."

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In a rare question-and-answer session, Tillerson recalled Trump's meeting with Sergey Lavrov, Putin's top diplomat, three months ago. Tillerson said the president told the Russian foreign minister: "We need some good news."

Though there have been few such positive developments, Tillerson highlighted Syria, where the U.S. and Russia brokered a cease-fire in the country's southwest that appears to be holding, as proof there are opportunities for effective collaboration.

The next substantive conversation about how to move forward will likely be over the weekend. Tillerson said he plans to meet Lavrov on the sidelines of a regional summit in Manila, Philippines.

Reach Josh Lederman on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/joshledermanAP>

Senate confirms Christopher Wray, Trump's choice for FBI

By DONNA CASSATA, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Senate on Tuesday overwhelmingly confirmed Christopher Wray to lead the FBI, replacing James Comey, who was abruptly fired by President Donald Trump amid the investigation into Russian meddling in last year's presidential election.

The vote was 92-5 for Wray, a former high-ranking official in President George W. Bush's Justice Department who oversaw investigations into corporate fraud. Wray, 50, inherits the FBI at a particularly challenging time given Trump's ousting of Comey, who was admired within the bureau.

"This is a tough time to take this tough job," Sen. Amy Klobuchar, D-Minn., said during a relatively low-key Senate debate of the nomination. "The previous FBI director, as we know, was fired because of the Russia investigation. The former acting attorney general was fired. And we've had a slew of other firings throughout the government over the last few months."

Republican Sen. Ben Sasse of Nebraska said after the vote, "Chris Wray will bring character and competence to a city that is hemorrhaging public trust."

Wray won unanimous support from the Senate Judiciary Committee last month, with Republicans and Democrats praising his promise never to let politics get in the way of the bureau's mission.

Asserting his independence at his confirmation hearing, Wray said: "My loyalty is to the Constitution and the rule of law. Those have been my guideposts throughout my career, and I will continue to adhere to them no matter the test."

Trump roiled Washington on May 9 by firing Comey in the midst of his 10-year term as the FBI chief and as the law enforcement agency was investigating Russia's role in the election and possible ties to Trump campaign officials.

Andrew McCabe has served as acting FBI director during the nearly three-month interim period.

Wray has worked on white-collar crime and regulatory cases as a partner at the King & Spalding law firm. From May 2001 to May 2005, he held various high-ranking positions in the Justice Department, rising to the head of the criminal division in September 2003. He also served as principal associate deputy attorney general.

He was a federal prosecutor in the U.S. attorney's office for the Northern District of Georgia from May 1997 to May 2001. Wray had represented New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie in the so-called Bridgewater scandal.

Wray is a graduate of Yale University, where he also received his law degree in 1992.

"Mr. Wray possesses the skill, the character and the unwavering commitment to impartial enforcement of the law that we need in a FBI director," said Sen. Chuck Grassley, R-Iowa, chairman of the Judiciary Committee.

The top Democrat on the panel, California Sen. Dianne Feinstein, said Wray "has the strength and fortitude to stand up and do what it is right when tested."

She added, "We need leaders with steel spines, not weak knees, and I am hopeful that Mr. Wray will be just such a leader."

Commenting on the vote, Sen. Lindsey Graham, R-S.C., said: "Today's bipartisan show of support is in-

dicative of Wray's professionalism and commitment to independence. I have no doubt the FBI is in good hands with Mr. Wray at the helm."

Voting against the nomination were five Democrats who have opposed many of Trump's nominees: Kirsten Gillibrand of New York, Elizabeth Warren and Ed Markey of Massachusetts, and Ron Wyden and Jeff Merkley of Oregon.

With baby steps, Senate Republicans abandoning the president

By ERICA WERNER, AP Congressional Correspondent

WASHINGTON (AP) — There wasn't a dramatic public break or an exact moment it happened. But step by step, Senate Republicans are turning their backs on President Donald Trump.

They defeated an Obamacare repeal bill despite Trump's pleas. They're ignoring his Twitter demands that they get back to work on it. They dissed the White House budget director, defended the attorney general against the president's attacks and passed veto-proof sanctions on Russia over his administration's objections.

They're reasserting their independence, which looked sorely diminished in the aftermath of Trump's surprise election win.

"We work for the American people," Sen. Tim Scott of South Carolina said Tuesday. "We don't work for the president."

Those are surprisingly tough words from a Republican whose state Trump won easily less than a year ago. But after six months of controversies and historically low approval ratings, it's clear Trump isn't commanding the fear or respect he once did.

Some Republicans no doubt are giving voice to long-held reservations about a man whose election was essentially a hostile takeover of their party. But it is notable that the loudest criticism is coming from the Senate, where few Republicans are burdened with facing an electorate anytime soon. The situation is different in the House, where most Republicans represent conservative districts still loyal to Trump. For those lawmakers, the fear of facing a conservative primary challenger, possibly fueled by angry Trump followers, is real.

In the most remarkable example of public Trump-bashing, Sen. Jeff Flake of Arizona is taking aim at the president and his own party in a new book, writing that "Unnerving silence in the face of an erratic executive branch is an abdication" and marveling at "the strange specter of an American president's seeming affection for strongmen and authoritarians."

The criticism from Flake is especially striking since he is one of just two GOP senators facing competitive re-election races in next year's midterm elections, the other being Dean Heller of Nevada. The other 50 Senate Republicans are largely insulated from blow-back from Trump's still-loyal base, at least in the short term, since they won't face voters for several years.

That is likely contributing to their defiance, which is emerging now after an accumulation of frustrations, culminating in the failure of the health care bill Friday. In particular, senators were aghast over Trump's recent attacks on their longtime colleague Jeff Sessions, the former Alabama senator who is now attorney general and facing Trump's wrath over having recused himself from the investigation into possible collaboration between Russia and Trump's presidential campaign.

Sen. Lindsey Graham of South Carolina deemed Trump's treatment of Sessions "unseemly" and "a sign of great weakness on the part of President Trump." The comments were echoed by other Republican senators.

Then, White House budget director Mick Mulvaney, a former House member, suggested on a Sunday show that the Senate must pass health care before doing anything else. No. 2 Republican John Cornyn didn't hesitate to go after him.

"I don't think he's got much experience in the Senate as I recall, and he's got a big job," Cornyn said. "He ought to do that job and let us do our jobs."

The ill will flows both ways. At Tuesday's White House briefing, press secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders pointedly blamed lawmakers for the president's failures to deliver. "I think what's hurting the legislative

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agenda is Congress' inability to get things passed," she said.

Trump has been ignoring past warnings from Majority Leader Mitch McConnell to stay out of the Senate's business, tweeting relentless commands in the wake of Friday's failure on health care that the Senate should eliminate the filibuster rule that requires 60 votes to move forward on much major legislation.

"Mitch M, go to 51 Votes NOW and WIN. IT'S TIME!" the president said over Twitter.

That ignored the fact that Republicans tried to pass the health care bill under rules that required only a simple majority.

So Republicans, in turn, ignored Trump.

"It's pretty obvious that our problem on health care was not the Democrats," McConnell said drily on Tuesday. "We didn't have 50 Republicans."

Some Republicans say Trump and his administration only made it harder to pass health care by ineptly pressuring Sen. Lisa Murkowski with threats from Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke about consequences for her state, which rankled the Alaska senator. She proceeded to postpone votes in the Energy committee she chairs on a group of administration nominees, while saying it was for unrelated reasons, and voted "no" on the health bill.

"I think most Republican senators have their own identity that's separate from the president," said Alex Conant, a GOP strategist and former adviser to Sen. Marco Rubio of Florida. "If you look at the elections last fall almost every Republican senator who was up for re-election ran ahead of Trump and that's not a fact that's lost on Congress."

The House has been a friendlier place for Trump. Republicans there pushed through a health care bill in May.

"For the most part our caucus is still in support of the president," said Rep. James Comer of Kentucky. "That doesn't mean we agree with everything he says and does, but we still support his agenda, his presidency, and we're not going to fumble the ball."

In the Senate, though, lawmakers and the president appear to be going their separate ways, with some senators talking as though Trump is almost irrelevant.

"Ever since we've been here we've really been following our lead, right?" said Sen. Bob Corker of Tennessee. "Whether it was the Supreme Court justice or the Russia sanctions bill, attempting to do health care and obviously we did so unsuccessfully, and now we're moving on to tax reform, but most of this has, almost every bit of this has been 100 percent internal to Congress."

Associated Press writers Kevin Freking, Matthew Daly and Jill Colvin contributed.

GOP shows signs of reaching out to Democrats on health care

By ALAN FRAM, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Republicans showed signs Tuesday of reaching out to Democrats for a joint if modest effort to buttress health insurance markets, four days after the GOP effort to unilaterally uproot and reshape the Obama health care law crumpled in the Senate.

The Republican chairman of the Senate health committee, Tennessee's Lamar Alexander, said he'd seek bipartisan legislation extending for one year federal payments to insurers that help millions of low- and moderate-income Americans afford coverage. President Donald Trump has threatened to halt those subsidies in hopes of forcing Democrats to make concessions, which the Senate's top Democrat on Tuesday called "not what an adult does."

The No. 2 Senate Republican also seemed to imply the two parties should seek common health care ground. Texas Sen. John Cornyn said on the Senate floor, "We are forced to work together to try to solve these problems, and I think frankly bipartisan solutions tend to be more durable."

In addition, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell rebuffed Trump's demands that the Senate change its rules so it can pass a health overhaul with a simple majority vote. McConnell, R-Ky., said the Senate

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lacks the votes to end filibusters of legislation like Trump wants, and noted that getting the 60 votes needed to end filibusters wasn't why Republicans lost.

"It's pretty obvious that our problem with health care was not the Democrats. We didn't have 50 Republicans," McConnell told reporters.

The prospects for passing bipartisan health care legislation remain uncertain, with divisions between conservatives and moderate Republicans persisting on several issues. In particular, Trump, McConnell and some other Republicans have mocked the payments Alexander wants to renew as a bailout for insurers.

Nonetheless, the day's comments collectively underscored the distance Senate Republicans are keeping from White House demands that they continue voting on repealing and replacing President Barack Obama's 2010 health care overhaul. Erasing that law has been a top priority for Trump and most GOP congressional candidates, and failing to do it as they control the White House and Congress has angered many in the party.

Many top Republicans have said it's time for the GOP to move from health care to other issues.

McConnell said "there's still an opportunity" for Republicans to push health care legislation through the Senate. He said he was waiting for the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office to estimate the impact of GOP bills easing some of the party's proposed Medicaid cuts, making it easier for insurers to sell bare-bones policies and giving states block grants for health programs.

Alexander said the legislation he envisions would be "small, bipartisan and balanced." He said it should include money to continue the insurance payments in 2018 and give states more flexibility on the type of coverage insurers must provide, he said.

He said his panel would hold hearings next month on stabilizing insurance markets. That would be a departure from the lack of hearings when McConnell worked behind closed doors to craft various versions of the GOP's health care bill, which were rejected by his chamber.

Alexander said he's asked Trump to make the payments to insurers for August and September to give his panel time to write legislation. White House officials have said Trump will decide this week on the August installment.

Sen. Patty Murray of Washington state, the health panel's top Democrat, embraced Alexander's suggestions for extending the payments and for hearings.

Trump has repeatedly threatened to cut off federal disbursements to insurers. They total \$7 billion this year and are helping around 7 million people afford insurance deductibles and co-payments.

Obama's statute requires that insurers reduce out-of-pocket costs for many customers. But a federal court has blocked the federal reimbursements to insurers who do that, saying the funds have yet to be properly authorized by Congress. Trump and Obama before him have continued the payments temporarily.

The payments to insurers are backed by Democrats and some Republicans because many experts say that even the threat of blocking them is already prompting insurers to raise prices and consider abandoning some markets. Kristine Grow, spokeswoman for the insurance industry group America's Health Insurance Plans, said to cover their costs if the federal payments ended, insurers would have to boost premiums for people buying individual policies by 20 percent.

"For them to take action to harm people here in our country" would be unwise, said Sen. Bob Corker, R-Tenn.

Last week, Trump tweeted that if the Senate didn't approve health care legislation, "BAILOUTS for Insurance Companies" would end "very soon!"

"You don't hurt innocent people, Mr. President, when you lose politically. That is not presidential, that is not frankly what an adult does," Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., said Tuesday.

Stocks are at records, but it's no longer the 'Trump trade'

By STAN CHOE and MARLEY JAY, AP Business Writers

NEW YORK (AP) — The stock market has never been higher, and President Donald Trump would like more people to pay attention.

"Stock Market could hit all-time high (again) 22,000 today," Trump tweeted Tuesday about the Dow Jones industrial average, before it ended the day at a record 21,963.92. "Was 18,000 only 6 months ago on Election Day. Mainstream media seldom mentions!"

The 18,000 figure he cited was inaccurate: The Dow closed at 19,890.94 six months ago. It was at 18,332.74 on Election Day, which was nearly nine months ago. And analysts say it would be inaccurate to give Trump full credit for the market's recent records.

"Trump obviously is taking credit for a lot of this, as almost any president would do, but the things that affect the market right now aren't things that have been put in place over the last six months," said Randy Frederick, vice president of trading and derivatives at the Schwab Center for Financial Research.

Stocks did surge after Trump's electoral win in November following a couple of hours of confusion among investors caught off-guard by the voting results. The hope was that Trump and a Republican-controlled Congress would cut regulations, revamp the tax system, launch a big program for infrastructure and enact other pro-business policies.

Areas of the market that would benefit most from such policies soared much more than the rest of the market, and the effect was so strong that traders called it the "Trump trade."

Smaller companies, for example, were supposed to be big winners if U.S. tax rates dropped because they tend to do more of their business domestically, and they do not have the armies of accountants that big multinational corporations use to lower their tax bills.

As a result, the Russell 2000 index of smaller stocks surged 16 percent in the month after the election. The index includes such companies as Pier 1 Imports and Big Lots. Its gain was more than triple the 5 percent rise for the biggest stocks in the Standard & Poor's 500 index.

In recent months, though, Washington has had several high-profile stumbles, highlighted by the Senate's latest failed attempt to repeal the Affordable Care Act. That inaction has investors pushing back their expectations for when a tax plan and other policy changes could happen, and some are questioning how big those changes can be given Republicans' struggles. So the Trump trade has not only faded but reversed course, with the initial leaders and laggards flipping places.

So far this year, the small-cap Russell 2000 has had less than half the gain of the S&P 500 index, at 5 percent versus 11 percent. Producers of raw materials, which were early winners on expectations that they would benefit from a big infrastructure program, are no longer leading the market. The effect goes beyond stocks: Big rallies for yields on Treasury bonds and the dollar's value against other currencies have also faded.

So what's keeping stocks at record heights? A return to strong profit growth for U.S. companies is one of the biggest reasons, analysts say. And some of the strongest growth is coming from companies that do business all over the world. Those businesses also happen to be the ones initially thought to be the biggest losers of Trump's "America-first" policy goals.

Tech stocks in the S&P 500 get more than half their sales from outside the country, for example, and they are benefiting as economies in Europe and across the developing world finally start to climb higher. The tech sector has jumped 22 percent this year to lead the market.

Easing worries about protectionism also mean stocks from China and other emerging markets have been big winners. The MSCI Emerging Markets stock index has more than doubled the S&P 500's gain this year.

Even the Mexican peso, which was so battered by Trump's call to "build the wall" through the campaign, has recovered all its losses since the election.

Touting the market's heights is a turnaround for Trump himself. He warned during last year's campaign that stock prices may have climbed too high. At a presidential debate in September, for example, Trump talked about the dangers he saw as the Federal Reserve prepared to raise interest rates.

"We're in a bubble right now," he said. "And the only thing that looks good is the stock market, but if you raise interest rates even a little bit, that's going to come crashing down."

Since that comment, the Federal Reserve has raised interest rates modestly three times.

The stock market was also setting records under Trump's predecessor. The Dow Jones industrial average surged nearly 150 percent over Barack Obama's eight-year presidency. Trump has been in office for a little more than half a year, and the Dow has climbed 11 percent since his January inauguration.

Even if the Trump trade has faded, some effects have been longer lasting. For example, optimism among small businesses is still much higher than it was before the election, even though it's moderated a bit in recent months.

If Trump were to serve two terms and stocks performed similarly under his administration as they did during the Obama years, the Dow would surpass 49,000 — something really worth tweeting about.

Arizona's Flake takes GOP to task over Trump

By ANDREW TAYLOR, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Republican Sen. Jeff Flake has a message for his party: Get a spine and stand up to President Donald Trump. It's time for Congress to act as a brake on the president's erratic impulses.

In a scolding book, Flake argues that his fellow Republicans are letting Trump lead the country away from conservative principles and staying silent as "the government of the United States has been made dysfunctional at the highest levels."

As for Republicans controlling Congress, Flake warned in his new book, "Conscience of a Conservative," that his party may be putting "at risk our institutions and our values" even as it faces the likelihood of scoring long-sought policy victories.

In the halls of the Senate on Tuesday, however, it didn't seem as if Flake's message was being heeded.

"My primary job is to work with the White House in the best interests of my constituents and the country, so I don't really understand this argument that our job is to stand up to the president or to somehow oppose him," said No. 2 Senate Republican John Cornyn of Texas.

"We've got challenges obviously when to try to get things done around here and we've got to be able to work with the administration in order to do that," said Sen. John Thune, R-S.D., when asked to respond to Flake's missive, most widely read as an excerpt published by Politico Monday night. "So I think it's fine that everybody has different opinions about where we are and where we need to go. He chose to express his and some members may choose not to express theirs."

The Arizona Republican, narrowly elected to the Senate in 2012, has long been a critic of Trump, and it's been rumored that Trump is itching to back a primary challenge to him next year. Unlike some Republican critics of Trump, whose voices became softer after his surprise victory, Flake has remained unsparing.

"To carry on in the spring of 2017 as if what was happening was anything approaching normalcy required a determined suspension of critical faculties. And tremendous powers of denial," Flake wrote.

Flake sees himself as a conservative in the tradition of Arizona icon Barry Goldwater. The title of Flake's book, "Conscience of a Conservative," is the same title as Goldwater's 1960 book.

Flake has built a strong political brand in Arizona, but his criticism of Trump and his fellow Republicans has already lit a fire back home.

"America — strong & unapologetic under @realDonaldTrump," tweeted Flake's GOP primary opponent Kelli Ward. "#globalists like Flake are the problem #FireFlake."

Democrats praised Flake, a Mormon with a reputation as a straight shooter.

"I think he's one of the finest people I've met in politics in terms of his principles and his morality," said Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y.

Other liberal commentators acidly observed that Flake has remained a loyal vote for GOP leaders and Trump, even as he worries that Trump's penchant for bombast and ridiculing his opponents works against conservative goals.

Flake has voted for Trump's nominees and efforts to reverse Obama-era rules, and he broke with fellow

Arizona Sen. John McCain on last Friday's health care vote. On one foreign policy issue, Cuba, Flake has been at odds with Trump, steadfastly supporting rapprochement with Havana.

"If we ascribe the worst motives to our opponents and demean them and call them clowns or losers, you just lose the ability to sit down and solve the big issues and actually enact conservative policy," Flake told MSNBC's "Morning Joe." He added, "You know, somehow conservatism has become being mean or loud and you can't enact conservative policy if you act that way."

Flake said he's particularly concerned conservative tenets of free trade and limited government have been lost to a national leadership that is erratic, mean-spirited and self-serving.

The senator says that since the election conservatives have been in denial as the government at its highest levels has become dysfunctional.

Flake says in his book that people who felt abandoned by the top parties were drawn to Trump, "a candidate who entertained them and offered oversimplified answers" to complex issues.

"If by 2017 the conservative bargain was to go along for the very bumpy ride because with congressional hegemony and the White House we had the numbers to achieve some long-held policy goals — even as we put at risk our institutions and our values — then it was a very real question whether any such policy victories wouldn't be Pyrrhic ones," Flake wrote.

Asked what would finally elicit vociferous objections from Republicans, Flake said the firing of special prosecutor Robert Mueller, who is investigating Russian interference in the 2016 presidential election.

"We can't stand for that," Flake said. "I don't think Congress will."

Flake's book, published by Random House, went on sale Tuesday.

Prosecutor: St. Louis officer 'executed' suspect

By JIM SALTER, Associated Press

ST. LOUIS (AP) — A white former St. Louis police officer charged with killing a black man "executed" him after a car chase, then planted a gun in the slain drug suspect's vehicle as an excuse for opening fire, a prosecutor told a court Tuesday.

But an attorney for the officer denied the prosecutor's allegations during opening statements in the first-degree murder trial for Jason Stockley, saying the officer was protecting himself against an armed and dangerous felon.

It was the first time that prosecutors have revealed publicly that they believe that Stockley, 36, planted a gun on 24-year-old Anthony Lamar Smith after Smith was shot in December 2011. Stockley, who resigned from the department in 2013 and now lives in Houston, wasn't charged until last year, after then-Circuit Attorney Jennifer Joyce cited unspecified new evidence. The first-degree murder trial will be decided by a judge rather than a jury despite objections from prosecutors.

It's unusual for officers to be charged with killing suspects while on duty, and few officers are convicted in such deaths.

A key issue in the trial is the unloaded .38-caliber revolver that another officer later found inside Smith's rented Buick. Three cartridges were next to the gun. Stockley has said he unloaded the weapon as a safety precaution after shooting Smith.

Assistant Circuit Attorney Aaron Levinson said Stockley shot Smith five times, including once while standing 6 inches from him, which Levinson called the "kill shot." He said Stockley then returned to the Buick multiple times.

Stockley's DNA — but not Smith's — was found on the gun, though Smith's DNA was found on a bag of heroin inside the car, the prosecutor said.

"Anthony Smith did not deserve to die," Levinson said. "He may have fled from police, but he did not deserve to be executed."

But Stockley's attorney, Neil Bruntrager, said both officers saw the gun inside the car before the chase started. Stockley opened fire only after Smith refused commands to put up his hands and reached along the seat "in the area where the gun was," Bruntrager said, describing Smith as a parole violator "who

decided to do whatever was necessary to avoid arrest because he was going to jail." Smith had previous convictions for gun and drug crimes.

A longtime friend of Smith's, Kirkwin Taylor, testified that he rode in the car with Smith to the restaurant that morning and did not see a gun in the vehicle.

Video from a police dashboard camera and witnesses, along with DNA evidence, are expected to play a big role in the trial of Stockley, described by Bruntrager as a West Point graduate who served in Iraq and graduated first in his police academy class.

The shooting happened after Stockley and his partner spotted Smith in a suspected drug transaction in the parking lot of a fast-food restaurant.

Police dashboard recordings and two videos show the officers pulled behind Smith's car. As they got out, Smith backed into the police SUV and sped past Stockley, who was carrying his personal AK-47 rifle that was nearly knocked from his hands. Police have said Stockley was not authorized to carry that weapon on duty.

Stockley fired several shots from his department-issued pistol, breaking the rear window of the Buick, and the chase ensued, with speeds reaching 87 mph (140 kph). Stockley reported shots being fired. According to court records, he then said, "Going to kill this (expletive), don't you know it," — something Bruntrager denied.

The officers eventually rammed their SUV into the back of Smith's car, causing its air bags to deploy. The officers got out, leading to the fatal encounter.

The courtroom was filled with onlookers, including many people active in protests in nearby Ferguson, Missouri, following the fatal police shooting of Michael Brown in 2014. Supporters of Stockley were also present. Circuit Judge Timothy Wilson opened the hearing with a warning that any outbursts would not be tolerated.

"Earlier this year, Ringling Brothers Circus died," the judge said. "It will not be resurrected here."

Kelly wins praise across the aisle, but will Trump change?

By VIVIAN SALAMA and JILL COLVIN, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Raised voices could be heard through the thick door to the Oval Office as John Kelly — then secretary of Homeland Security — offered some tough talk to President Donald Trump.

Kelly, a whip-cracking retired general who was sworn in as White House chief of staff on Monday, had demanded to speak to the president alone after Trump complained loudly that the U.S. was admitting travelers from countries he viewed as high risk.

Kelly first tried to explain to Trump that the admissions were standard — some people had legitimate reasons to visit the country — but the president insisted that it was making him look bad, according to an administration official familiar with the exchange about a month ago.

Kelly then demanded that other advisers leave the room so he could speak to the president frankly. Trump refused at first, but agreed when Kelly insisted.

It was an early indication that Kelly, a decorated retired Marine general who served three tours in Iraq, is not afraid to stand up to his commander-in-chief.

Tapped to bring order to a chaotic West Wing, Kelly began to make his mark immediately Monday, ousting newly appointed communications director Anthony Scaramucci and revising a dysfunctional command structure that has bred warring factions. From now on, said White House press secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders, all senior staffers — including the president's son-in-law Jared Kushner and chief strategist Steve Bannon — will report to Kelly instead of the president.

Sanders said Tuesday that Kelly had spent his first day on the job speaking with members of Congress, getting to know White House staffers and working to put new procedures in place.

"It definitely has the fingerprints of a new sheriff in town," said Blain Rethmeier, who guided Kelly through the Senate confirmation process for the Homeland Security post. Rethmeier said that what stood out about Kelly during the time they worked together was the way Kelly commanded respect from everyone

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he encountered — and the way he respected others.

Kelly drew praise from lawmakers of both parties Tuesday.

Sen. Lindsey Graham, R-S.C., expressed confidence that Kelly can help restore order, saying on NBC's "Today" show that "the Marines have landed at the White House. They have a beachhead."

And Sen. Dick Durbin of Illinois told CNN that Kelly "is in a position where he can stabilize this White House, that's good for this country. The president has to be part of that."

Jason Miller, a senior communications adviser during the Trump presidential campaign, predicted on CNN that Kelly's next move will be to put people in place that will help the president. He suggested Kelly should convince ousted press secretary Sean Spicer to stay on, at least through the tax overhaul effort.

Kelly fostered a reputation as an outspoken commander who didn't shy away from unpopular opinions during his military career. Rethmeier said that Kelly also respects authority deeply — "and that's something that Trump sort of smells out, if you respect him or not."

"If he disagrees with you, he'll disagree respectfully," Rethmeier said.

It was a point Kelly made clear during his confirmation hearing in January.

"I have never had a problem speaking truth to power, and I firmly believe that those in power deserve full candor and my honest assessment and recommendations. I also value people that work for me speaking truth to power," he said.

In April, Kelly bluntly challenged members of Congress critical of the Trump administration's aggressive approach to immigration enforcement to either change the laws or "shut up."

But after being confirmed as part of Trump's Cabinet, Kelly also tried to moderate some of the president's hard-line positions, even as he publicly defended them.

Kelly and Defense Secretary Jim Mattis, another retired general, were also said to have been deeply frustrated with the rollout of Trump's refugee and immigration ban, and made clear to associates that they were not involved in drafting it or aware of its details around the time that Trump signed the original order. Both moved swiftly to address gaps in the measure, with Mattis asking that Iraqis who helped U.S. troops be exempt and Kelly clarifying that green-card holders would not be affected.

Nonetheless, Kelly launched a particularly robust defense of the order to lawmakers and reporters, which was welcomed by the White House.

Mattis and Kelly also agreed in the earliest weeks of Trump's presidency that one of them should remain in the United States at all times to keep tabs on the orders rapidly emerging from the White House, according to a person familiar with the discussions. The official insisted on anonymity in order to discuss the administration's internal dynamics.

Sen. Bob Corker, R-Tenn, said Monday that he discussed Kelly's appointment with Trump and hopes Kelly "will do everything possible to bring the appropriate discipline and focus that needs to be at the White House there."

"I hope that Gen. Kelly will absolutely, forcefully clean the place up," Corker said. "And anybody who's been a violator, who's been a part of public backbiting, part of undermining, who's been part of feathering their own nest at other people's expense, I hope they'll all be gone."

David B. Cohen, a University of Akron political science professor writing a book on chiefs of staff, applauded Kelly for doing "things that should have been done on Day One of Reince Priebus's tenure." He said Scaramucci's removal sent a clear message "that going off-script and being undisciplined" would no longer be tolerated at the White House.

But Cohen wondered how long Trump would go before undermining Kelly.

"President Trump is his own worst enemy," he said. "He instinctively likes to be his own chief of staff and he's a pretty awful one."

Bill Galston, a former Clinton administration domestic policy adviser now at the Brookings Institution, said the ball is now in the president's court to help Kelly succeed.

"If the president is not prepared to accept an orderly policy process with all of the restraints on individual conduct and behavior, then the chief of staff will not have the power to implement policy," he said.

Follow Salama and Colvin on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/vmsalama> and <https://twitter.com/colvinj>
____ Associated Press writer Matthew Daly contributed to this report.

President Donald Trump says he won't stay off social media

By CATHERINE LUCEY, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump may be trying for a reset in the West Wing, but he is making clear that he is not changing his twitter habit.

On Twitter Tuesday, Trump said: "Only the Fake News Media and Trump enemies want me to stop using Social Media (110 million people). Only way for me to get the truth out!"

The tweet came one day after retired Gen. John Kelly took over as Trump's new chief of staff. Tapped to bring order to the chaotic West Wing, Kelly quickly made his presence known on Monday — ousting newly appointed communications director Anthony Scaramucci and revising the command structure so that all senior staffers report to him.

Those moves were praised Monday by Trump allies and lawmakers, who expressed hope that Kelly would help stem internal conflicts and advance a policy agenda after six months of tumult. But less clear is how much control Kelly will have over Trump's predilection for sowing conflict and making off-the-cuff comments on social media.

White House spokeswoman Sarah Huckabee Sanders repeated on Tuesday that Kelly had full control over the staff. Asked at a press briefing if senior advisers Ivanka Trump, Jared Kushner and others would be able to drop in to see the president, she said: "I don't think anyone just wanders into the Oval Office."

Sanders added that "Gen. Kelly is going to work with the entire team as he has been doing over the last couple of days."

Sen. Lindsey Graham, speaking on NBC's "Today Show," said he was encouraged by Kelly's new role, but stressed that he was looking for "discipline" from Trump in order to move forward with issues like health care and tax reform.

"He has an obligation to be president for all of us and stop the chaos. Most of the chaos is generated by him and no one else," Graham said.

Texas calf born looking like KISS rocker Gene Simmons

KERRVILLE, Texas (AP) — KISS frontman Gene Simmons is udderly thrilled by a newborn calf born with strikingly similar black-and-white markings to the face paint he wears on stage.

Simmons tweeted his admiration for the calf on Sunday, saying, "This is real, folks!!!"

The calf was born Friday at a ranch near Kerrville, Texas, which is about 60 miles (96 kilometers) northwest of San Antonio.

Heather Taccetta (tuh-SET'-uh), who lives at the ranch with her family, said Tuesday that the calf belongs to her grandmother. It is named Genie, in honor of Simmons.

Taccetta says the calf and its mother are doing fine and that Genie is a family favorite and won't be sold for slaughter.

Bolt says no chance of loss or comeback in farewell worlds

By EDDIE PELLIS, AP National Writer

LONDON (AP) — An encore for Usain Bolt? Unthinkable.

A loss in his going-away party? Impossible.

Track's fastest man and greatest entertainer made both those points clear Tuesday leading to his final world championships this week. It was an engaging hour filled with reminiscences, chats about his plans and thoughts about where his troubled and soon-to-be-starless sport might be headed.

Sporting the goatee he wears during world championships, but not the Olympics, the superstar who went

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9 for 9 at the Summer Games, shattering records while dancing and smiling his way through the journey, dispensed any notion he might come back: "For me, the next championships should be fun because now it's time to watch and see who can hold their nerves," said the 11-time world champion, who turns 31 on Aug. 21.

As for the possibility he'd change his mind should he lose in Saturday night's 100-meter final: "It's not going to happen, so we won't have that problem. Don't worry," he said.

He said he's looking forward to a life of motivational speaking, occasional soccer games with friends and maybe dipping his toe into action movies to keep the adrenaline flowing.

As for the past, one of Bolt's most interesting revelations was that his now-famous "To the World" pose, which he debuted after winning his first Olympic gold medal in Beijing, was completely unplanned.

"It's just something that happened," Bolt said. "I guess it was by the grace of God. It became big. For me, it worked."

Almost every celebration since — the moderator said Bolt has taken 147 victory laps over his career — has been pre-planned, drenched in Jamaican flags and reggae music and every bit worth the wait. Among the few impromptu moments came at the last world championships, two years ago in Beijing, when a photographer riding a Segway accidentally upended him during his victory lap.

That man made a videotaped appearance at the news conference and told Bolt: "You inspired me to become more focused in my work."

"It was shocking," said Bolt, who popped right back up after the spill. "I didn't get hurt, so it was funny."

On a more serious note, he was asked how he has prepared for each season as his career has progressed. Like flipping through the calendar, Bolt ticked off his goals and motivations for each year since he burst onto the scene in 2008, a relative unknown whose only goal was to become an Olympic champion in his main race, the 200 meters.

Early on, he took umbrage to the slights: for instance, that despite setting four world records, his success in 2008 came because his main challenger, Tyson Gay, was hurt. Or how in 2012, many were favoring teammate Yohan Blake at the Olympics after Bolt lost to him twice earlier in the summer in Jamaica.

As the calendar kept turning and Bolt kept proving himself, his mission became more about trying to secure his place in history. When he swept gold for the third straight Olympics last year in Rio de Janeiro, he reached the legendary status he sought.

"Now that I got to my goal, I'm good with it," he said. "I've proven myself."

He fielded the obligatory questions about doping. Bolt has never been caught. Many in his country, and in the sprint game he dominates, have. The last two years have been filled with sordid stories of doping corruption in Russia that brought track and field to a new low.

"The only place track and field has to go is up," Bolt said. "Hopefully we're going to get it going in the right direction and continue going in the right direction."

His most telling comments — or non-comments — came when he was asked who might fill his shoes after he leaves.

"I'm not going down that road," Bolt said. "The last guy I said was going to be great disrespected me."

It was almost certainly a reference to Andre De Grasse, the Canadian up-and-comer who brazenly pushed Bolt last year in the Olympic 200 meter semifinals.

If there's going to be drama in Saturday's 100 final, De Grasse is the best bet to provide it.

But Bolt doesn't see that as a problem.

"You guys know if I show up at a championship, you know I'm fully confident and ready to go," he said.

He unveiled the gold-and-purple shoes he'll wear for his final championships. The purple is for his school colors back home at William Knibb Memorial High School. The gold is self-explanatory.

His sponsor, Puma, has been promoting the phrase "Fastest Forever," in the lead-up to the worlds, which will take place in the same London stadium where Bolt won Olympic medals 4, 5 and 6.

But Bolt has a different idea.

"Unbeatable," he said. "For me, that would be the biggest headline. Unbeatable. Unstoppable. Hear that guys? Jot it down."

Jordan activists celebrate repeal of 'marry the rapist' law

By ALICE SU, Associated Press

AMMAN, Jordan (AP) — The repeal of a Jordanian law that allowed a rapist to escape prison by marrying his victim was bittersweet news for a Jordanian woman whose daughter was assaulted when she was just 13 years old.

Tuesday's vote by parliament's lower house came too late for the hairdresser's daughter who was coerced into an abusive marriage to her attacker as a condition for getting out of "protective" state custody. Her assailant never served a day in jail.

"Today I'm very happy that this law was cancelled," said the 49-year-old mother of the teen, speaking on condition of anonymity to protect her daughter's privacy since victims of sexual assault are still widely stigmatized.

"But at the same time, I'm heart-broken," she said in a phone interview. "Where is my daughter's justice?"

Women's rights activists hailed Tuesday's vote as a major victory after a years-long campaign, but said a long struggle lies ahead.

Despite the country's pro-Western political orientation and cosmopolitan urban elites, many areas of Jordan remain socially conservative, with entrenched notions of "family honor."

This includes the belief that having a rape victim in the family is shameful, and that such "shame" can be expunged through marriage.

Tuesday's decision and another vote earlier this week — to prevent lenient sentences for those who kill in the name of "family honor" — must still be approved by parliament's appointed upper house and by King Abdullah II. Such approval is expected since the royal court and the government backed the reforms.

With final approval, Jordan would join Tunisia, Morocco and Egypt, which have canceled their "marry the rapist" clauses over the years. Tunisia's repeal took place less than one week ago.

The international group Human Rights Watch called Tuesday's vote "impressive" and said other countries should follow Jordan and Tunisia. Lebanon is considering repeal, the group said.

The clause remains on the books in Algeria, Iraq, Kuwait, Libya, the Palestinian territories and Syria, as well as several countries in Latin America, the Philippines and Tajikistan, according to HRW.

Tuesday's vote to scrap Article 308 of the penal code capped an emotional parliament debate, reflecting the schism in Jordanian society.

Parliament's legal committee had proposed amending Article 308 so that girls between the ages of 15 and 18 would be able to marry their rapists. They portrayed the marriage option as a way to protect minors.

When Mustafa Khasawneh, the head of the legal committee, presented those arguments, activists in the spectators' gallery murmured in disagreement.

Dima Barakat, a leading activist, later said that those forcing a girl to marry her rapist "are killing this girl a thousand times a day, at least." The attacker "took away her dignity, her honor and took away her life," Barakat said.

As the vote approached, lawmakers jumped to their feet, beckoning and yelling at others to raise their hands in support of repeal. Shouting broke out across the room while the spectators upstairs held their breath.

After several minutes of chaos, the repeal was announced.

Cheers and applause erupted in the hall. Some of the activists embraced one another, laughing. "This is a victory for the women's movement and human rights movement in Jordan," said Salma Nims, the secretary general of the Jordanian National Commission for Women.

The Islamic Action Front, a group of lawmakers affiliated with the Muslim Brotherhood, voted in favor of repeal, citing religious grounds.

Religious law, or sharia, does not condone protecting rapists, said legislator Dima Tahboub, spokeswoman for the IAF.

She said much work needs to be done in Jordan to protect women from violence. Jordan lacks psychological and social support for victims and their families, she said. Public attitudes stigmatize victims rather

than supporting them. Children borne of rape grow up ostracized, with less access to civil rights.

"We need to create an atmosphere where the victim is being supported by the wider community," Tahboub said.

Jordan also lacks safe shelters for women at risk of family attack due to "honor" issues, and often detains women in protective custody, keeping them in prison or in shelters that they cannot leave.

When the hairdresser's daughter became pregnant after being assaulted repeatedly, the state took her to a shelter for underage girls at risk. There, the mother was told that her daughter could not leave unless she married her rapist.

"I accepted the situation in order to protect her," the mother said Tuesday. "They gave me no choice. She did not want to marry him, but she was threatened by everyone. She had no choice."

So-called "honor killings" also remain a problem in Jordan and elsewhere in the region. Last year, Jordan's top criminal court dealt with 36 killings of women, including eight "honor" cases. In 2015, it dealt with 39 slayings of women, including nine labeled "honor crimes."

Earlier this week, parliament closed a legal loophole that had given courts the discretion to impose sentences of as little as six months on those who killed female relatives in the name of "family honor."

Under the new amendment, killing "in a fit of rage" can no longer be considered a mitigating circumstance in such cases.

These two amendments work together to close an escape route for rapists and remove an excuse used by men to get away with killing their female relatives.

"Today is a great victory for women," said Musa Maaytah, minister of Political and Parliamentary Affairs.

Associated Press writer Reem Saad in Amman, Jordan, contributed to this report.

Kushner says Trump campaign was too dysfunctional to collude

By RICHARD LARDNER, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump's son-in-law told a group of congressional interns that the Trump campaign couldn't have colluded with Russia because the team was too dysfunctional and disorganized to coordinate with a foreign government.

The remarks on Monday by Jared Kushner, a senior adviser to the president, came in response to a question about Special Counsel Robert Mueller's investigation into Russia's meddling in the 2016 election and whether the Trump campaign worked with Moscow.

ForeignPolicy.com first reported Kushner's remarks, which were intended to be off the record. "They thought we colluded, but we couldn't even collude with our local offices," Kushner said, according to the website.

A Democratic congressional aide knowledgeable of the meeting confirmed the accuracy of the remarks and others that Kushner made. The aide spoke on condition of anonymity to freely describe the talk.

Kushner also told the interns that the White House doesn't know where Mueller's inquiry is headed. He said he didn't think he'd embark on a career in government and politics after Trump's victorious White House bid so he didn't carefully track his contacts with foreign officials, which is required information on a security clearance application.

His meeting with the interns is part of a regular series in which guest speakers meet with them each year. The organizers of the event initially asked the interns to write down their questions and Kushner would randomly select them to answer. But the congressional aide said Kushner insisted on taking live questions and didn't hesitate to answer them.

Kushner met privately last week at the Capitol with members of the Senate and House intelligence committees. He acknowledged four meetings with Russians during and after Trump's victorious White House bid and insisted that he had "nothing to hide."

Kushner said: "All of my actions were proper."

Hours before meeting privately with the committees, Kushner released an 11-page statement that de-

tailed four contacts with Russians during Trump's campaign and transition. He described each contact as either insignificant or routine and he said the meetings, along with several others, were omitted from his security clearance form because of an aide's error.

Kushner cast himself as a political novice learning in real time to juggle "thousands of meetings and interactions" in a fast-paced campaign.

Contact Richard Lardner on Twitter: <http://twitter.com/rplardner>

Flying ace Sully makes case against privatization

By KEVIN FREKING, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Who are you going to trust when it comes to what's best for the flying public? Members of Congress or the hero of the Miracle on the Hudson, retired Capt. Chesley "Sully" Sullenberger?

Proponents of privatizing air traffic control, a top priority of President Donald Trump, face fierce resistance from some Republicans, many Democrats and various advocacy groups who have a forceful voice: Sullenberger, the pilot who managed to land an airliner in the Hudson River without the loss of a single life after the plane lost thrust in both engines.

Privatization plus another proposal that would make it easier for co-pilots to get academic credit for certification have drawn congressional opposition and stalled efforts to reauthorize the Federal Aviation Administration, a must-do for Congress by Sept. 30.

Sullenberger said he considers the legislative proposals an attempt to boost the bottom lines of the airlines at the expense of the public. He's speaking out, knowing that the actions he and his crew took that January day in 2009 have given them a bully pulpit with the American public.

"They trust us," said Sullenberger, most recently portrayed on film by actor Tom Hanks. "They know we're experts at what we're talking about."

Republicans opposed to privatization recognize they have a flying ace to make their case.

"No man was better when it came to safety standards. And then he demonstrated it that day, that he knew what he was talking about," said Rep. Steve Russell, R-Okla. "I think we need to take pause, and take a step back, and listen."

The push for privatization of air traffic control operations has some powerful backers, but supporters still have more convincing to do to secure a vote in the House. GOP leaders have delayed a vote until after the August recess.

The bill's backers argue that Washington budget dysfunction and the FAA's ineffective contract management have hindered the agency's efforts to keep pace with technology. Major projects consistently exceed cost estimates and fall behind schedule, including a critical move to satellite-based navigation and digital communications, which will reduce airport delays.

They want an entity that operates more like a business.

"We cannot let a broken government structure and old-fashion Washington bureaucracy drag down a proud American tradition," said Rep. Bill Shuster, R-Pa., the chairman of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee and the bill's primary sponsor.

The new, non-profit would be run by a 13-member board of directors representing the numerous stakeholders invested in the nation's skies. Meanwhile, the FAA would continue to serve as a safety regulator. Many foreign countries have gone the privatization route, including Canada, Germany and Great Britain.

Sullenberger stresses that the nation is experiencing a golden age in flight safety with no fatal commercial airline crashes in more than eight years.

"The FAA is not broken," said Sullenberger, who added, "What this proposal does is take an extreme solution to a non-problem."

Sullenberger argues that privatization would allow a corporate monopoly heavily influenced by the major airlines to manage the nation's skies. It would make key investment decisions that could put profits over safety and reduce access for the general aviation community, which includes company jets, recreational

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pilots and agriculture sprayers.

"It gives the keys of the kingdom to the four largest airlines," Sullenberger said. "I can guarantee you the four largest airlines don't always have the interests of the traveling public in mind."

Exhibit A, he said, is the shrinking seat sizes that airlines are incorporating in their planes.

Still, unions representing commercial airline pilots and air traffic control workers have endorsed privatization. Patricia Gilbert, executive vice president at the National Air Traffic Controllers Association, said the lack of a stable and predictable funding from Congress has contributed to antiquated air towers and equipment, and a shortage of air traffic control workers.

"All of those things need a focus," Gilbert said. "And we're not seeing that."

Backers also say the board is too diversified for any one aspect of the aviation community to dominate it. A Senate bill reauthorizing aviation programs ignores the privatization issue. Democratic lawmakers called it a non-starter, and some Republican lawmakers from rural states are also wary.

But the bill seeks changes in the training requirements for co-pilots. Supporters see it as a way to ease a pilot shortage faced by smaller, regional airlines. But Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., has threatened to block the entire FAA bill if the provision is included.

After the nation's last fatal commercial airline crash in February 2009, Congress required that any pilot operating as a first officer, or co-pilot, with an air carrier would need a minimum of 1,500 hours of flight experience. The prior threshold had been what Sullenberger calls an "insanely low" minimum of 250 hours." The bill would expand the type of training that could be credited toward the 1,500 hours.

Sullenberger said he feared that people watching videos in hotel ballrooms would be able to count that experience. He contends that the worst-run regional airlines are having the biggest trouble recruiting pilots. He said the nation shouldn't lower its standards to address their concerns.

"If we were having a problem attracting primary care physicians, would we suggest the solution was to reduce medical school a year or two?" Sullenberger asked.

On Twitter, reach Kevin Freking at <https://twitter.com/APkfreking>

Priests mistaken for bachelor party turned away by UK pub

LONDON (AP) — A British pub has apologized for turning away a group of trainee priests after mistaking them for rowdy bachelor-party revelers in costume.

The Archdiocese of Cardiff said Tuesday that seven Roman Catholic seminarians went to the City Arms in Cardiff, Wales, last week to celebrate the ordination of one of the group.

Father Michael Doyle said the clerics were turned away by a doorman, who told them "sorry gents, we have a policy of no fancy dress and no stag dos."

Doyle said the group was reprieved when a bar manager realized the clergyman were real. They were allowed in and given a round of beer on the house.

Assistant manager Matt Morgan said "thankfully they were all great sports and saw the funny side of the situation."

Pence pledges support for Georgia, condemns Russian moves

By NATALIYA VASILYEVA, Associated Press

MOSCOW (AP) — U.S. Vice President Mike Pence pledged support Tuesday for the former Soviet republic of Georgia, his second stop on a European trip backing nations that feel threatened by Russian aggression.

Russia and Georgia fought a brief war in 2008, which led to two breakaway Georgian regions, South Ossetia and Abkhazia, declaring independence. Russia has since been supporting the regions both financially and militarily.

The U.S. "strongly condemns Russia's occupation on Georgian soil," Pence said Tuesday at a joint news conference with the Georgian prime minister in Tbilisi, the Georgian capital. "We will reject any claim at

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any time by any nation that undermines this enduring principle.”

The visit comes a day after Pence met with the presidents of three NATO countries — Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania — in the Estonian capital of Tallinn and pledged that “an attack on one of us is an attack on us all.”

Georgia and the three Baltic nations were all occupied for nearly five decades by Soviet troops before regaining their independence in 1991 after the collapse of the Soviet Union.

Later on Tuesday Pence will inspect troops taking part in joint U.S.-Georgian military exercises.

Pence’s European trip comes several days after the U.S. Senate voted last week to approve the new financial sanctions against Moscow. The legislation bars U.S. President Donald Trump from easing or waiving the penalties on Russia unless Congress agrees.

Pence told reporters on Tuesday that Trump would sign a bill on a new package of U.S. sanctions against Russia, adding the package was “improved significantly.”

The bill underwent revisions to address concerns voiced by American oil and natural gas companies that sanctions specific to Russia’s energy sector could backfire on them to Moscow’s benefit. U.S. lawmakers said they also made adjustments so the sanctions on Russia’s energy sector didn’t undercut the ability of U.S. allies in Europe to get access to oil and gas resources outside of Russia.

Russia on Friday ordered the U.S. Embassy and three U.S. consulates in Russia to drastically cut its personnel there. President Vladimir Putin said on Sunday that means 755 staffers have to go. Russia also ordered to shut down the U.S. Embassy’s recreational compound on the outskirts of Moscow. The Russian leader warned that he has more tricks up his sleeve to hurt the U.S., but he voiced hope that he wouldn’t need to use them.

Pence indicated the U.S. was willing to improve ties with Russia but for that to happen “Russia has to change its behavior,” he said, referring to Russia’s support for separatists in eastern Ukraine and for Syrian President Bashar Assad.

Russia is planning Zapad 2017 military exercises with 13,000 troops near the Baltic states’ borders in September, a move that may further strain relations.

Asian stocks stronger on upbeat earnings, China factory data

By YOUKYUNG LEE, AP Business Writer

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — Asian stock markets were higher on Wednesday following Dow industrial’s record-high finish, as upbeat corporate earnings reports and China factory data boosted investor confidence. Apple’s surprise earnings report pushed up share prices of its Asian suppliers.

KEEPING SCORE: Japan’s Nikkei 225 rose 0.6 percent to 20,108.10 and South Korea’s Kospi gained 0.3 percent to 2,430.30. Hong Kong’s Hang Seng index advanced 0.5 percent to 27,667.39 while Shanghai Composite index added 0.1 percent to 3,294.41. Australia’s ASX/S&P 200 bucked the region’s trend, falling 0.3 percent to 5,752.60 as commodity prices dropped. Stocks in Southeast Asia were mostly higher.

ECONOMIC DATA: Analysts said robust Chinese factory output report earlier this week continued to embolden investors as they waited for more data releases later this week. On Tuesday, Caixin/Markit factory purchasing managers’ index, a private Chinese manufacturing survey, showed activity expanded last month to its highest level in four months. Overnight in the U.S., the Institute for Supply Management reports showed that U.S. factories expanded again last month albeit at a slower pace than in June. Later Wednesday, U.S. payroll processor ADP will give its employment updates for July. But the biggest highlight will be the U.S. jobs report due Friday.

ANALYST’S COMMENT: “Despite the blemish from softer crude prices, markets in the Asian region are poised for further up move in the morning,” said Jingyi Pan, a market strategist at IG in Singapore. “Early movers in the region, with the exception of the Australian market, continued to bask in the glow of the positive Caixin PMI data from Tuesday and could continue this trend midweek.”

iPHONE IMPACT: Apple reported Tuesday that its quarterly earnings rose 12 percent to \$8.7 billion, exceeding expectations, as demand for iPhones rose and gave an upbeat revenue forecast for the current

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quarter. It also eased concerns about production problems for the next-generation iPhone. Shares of Apple's suppliers in Asia rose. Samsung Electronics Co. rose 0.6 percent and LG Display Co. jumped 2.1 percent. Taiwan-based contract manufacturer Foxconn Technology Co., which assembles Apple's iPhones, climbed 2.2 percent.

WALL STREET: U.S. stocks finished higher on Tuesday. The Standard & Poor's 500 index rose 0.2 percent to 2,476.35. The Dow Jones industrial average climbed 0.3 percent to 21,963.92, closing at a record high for the fifth day in a row. Nasdaq composite added 0.2 percent to 6,362.94. The Russell 2000 index of smaller-company stocks gained 0.2 percent to 1,428.33

OIL: Benchmark U.S. crude fell 48 cents to \$48.68 per barrel in electronic trading on New York Mercantile Exchange. The contract shed \$1.01, or 2 percent, to close at \$49.16 a barrel on Tuesday. Brent crude, the international standard, lost 50 cents to \$51.28 per barrel in London. It dropped 94 cents, or 1.8 percent, to finish at \$51.78 a barrel on Tuesday.

CURRENCIES: The dollar rose to 110.52 yen from 110.36 yen. The euro strengthened to \$1.1808 from \$1.1802.

Today in History By The Associated Press

Today in History

Today is Wednesday, Aug. 2, the 214th day of 2017. There are 151 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On August 2, 1776, members of the Second Continental Congress began attaching their signatures to the Declaration of Independence.

On this date:

In 216 B.C., during the Second Punic War, Carthaginian forces led by Hannibal defeated the Roman army in the Battle of Cannae.

In 1876, frontiersman "Wild Bill" Hickok was shot and killed while playing poker at a saloon in Deadwood, Dakota Territory, by Jack McCall, who was later hanged.

In 1892, movie producer Jack L. Warner was born in London, Ontario, Canada.

In 1923, the 29th president of the United States, Warren G. Harding, died in San Francisco; Vice President Calvin Coolidge became president.

In 1927, President Calvin Coolidge issued a written statement to reporters: "I do not choose to run for President in nineteen twenty-eight."

In 1939, Albert Einstein signed a letter to President Franklin D. Roosevelt urging creation of an atomic weapons research program. President Roosevelt signed the Hatch Act, which prohibited civil service employees from taking an active part in political campaigns.

In 1943, during World War II, U.S. Navy boat PT-109, commanded by Lt. (jg) John F. Kennedy, sank after being rammed in the middle of the night by the Japanese destroyer Amagiri off the Solomon Islands. Two crew members were killed.

In 1967, the crime drama "In the Heat of the Night," starring Sidney Poitier and Rod Steiger, premiered in New York.

In 1974, former White House counsel John W. Dean III was sentenced to one to four years in prison for obstruction of justice in the Watergate cover-up. (Dean ended up serving four months.)

In 1985, 137 people were killed when Delta Air Lines Flight 191, a Lockheed L-1011 Tristar, crashed while attempting to land at Dallas-Fort Worth International Airport.

In 1990, Iraq invaded Kuwait, seizing control of the oil-rich emirate. (The Iraqis were later driven out in Operation Desert Storm.)

In 1997, "Naked Lunch" author William S. Burroughs, the godfather of the "Beat generation," died in Lawrence, Kansas, at age 83.

Ten years ago: Mattel apologized to customers as it recalled nearly a million Chinese-made toys from

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its Fisher-Price division that were found to have excessive amounts of lead in their paint. A Marine Corps squad leader was convicted at Camp Pendleton, California, of murdering an unarmed Iraqi man during a frustrated search for an insurgent. (Sgt. Lawrence G. Hutchins III was sentenced to 11 years in prison; he served more than half of his sentence before his conviction was overturned. Although convicted in a 2015 retrial, Hutchins received no additional prison time.) Two small Russian submarines completed a voyage below the North Pole where they planted the country's flag on the Arctic Ocean floor.

Five years ago: Kofi Annan resigned as peace envoy to Syria, blaming the Syrian government's intransigence, the growing militancy of Syrian rebels and a divided U.N. Security Council that he said failed to forcefully back his effort. Gabby Douglas became the third American in a row to win gymnastics' biggest prize when she claimed the all-around Olympic title; Michael Phelps added to his medal collection with his first individual gold medal of the London Games in the 200-meter individual medley.

One year ago: President Barack Obama castigated Donald Trump as "unfit" and "woefully unprepared" to serve in the White House, and challenged Republicans to withdraw their support for their party's nominee, declaring "there has to come a point at which you say 'enough.'"

President Obama welcomed Singaporean Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong (lee shyehn loong) to the White House to celebrate the 50th anniversary of U.S. diplomatic relations with the Southeast Asian city state. A bus plowed into a highway pole in California's heavily agricultural San Joaquin (san wah-KEEN') Valley, killing four passengers. Actor David Huddleston ("The Big Lebowski"), 85, died in Santa Fe, New Mexico.

Today's Birthdays: Actor Nehemiah Persoff is 98. Former Sen. Paul Laxalt, R-Nev., is 95. Rock musician Garth Hudson (The Band) is 80. Singer Kathy Lennon (The Lennon Sisters) is 74. Actor Max Wright is 74. Actress Joanna Cassidy is 72. Actress Kathryn Harrold is 67. Actor Butch Patrick (TV: "The Munsters") is 64. Rock music producer/drummer Butch Vig (Garbage) is 62. Singer Mojo Nixon is 60. Actress Victoria Jackson is 58. Actress Apollonia is 58. Actress Cynthia Stevenson is 55. Actress Mary-Louise Parker is 53. Rock musician John Stanier is 49. Writer-actor-director Kevin Smith is 47. Actress Jacinda Barrett is 45. Actor Sam Worthington is 41. Figure skater Michael Weiss is 41. Actor Edward Furlong is 40. Rock musician Devon Glenn is 37. TV meteorologist Dylan Dreyer (TV: "Today") is 36. Singer Charli XCX is 25. Actress Hallie Eisenberg is 25.

Thought for Today: "The trouble with this country is that there are too many people going about saying, 'The trouble with this country is...'" — Sinclair Lewis, American author (1885-1951).