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DOW JONES | News Corp ***** MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 2021 - VOL. CCLXXXVIII NO. 68 WSJ.com ★★★★★ \$4.00
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What's News

Business & Finance

A surge in natural-gas prices is prompting concerns about winter shortages and forecasts for the most expensive fuel since frackers flooded the market more than a decade ago. **A1**

◆ **Tesla is readying** a major upgrade of its driver-assistance software, but the head of the NTSB says the move may be premature. **A1**

◆ **Boeing is investigating** the discovery of two empty liquor bottles that were found on one of its new Air Force One planes under development in San Antonio. **B1**

◆ **Investment firms** Tiedemann and Alvarium are close to a deal to merge and go public through a blank-check company. **B3**

◆ **European cloud-services** provider OVHcloud plans to launch a possible IPO as soon as Monday that could value the business at more than \$4.7 billion. **B4**

◆ **TikTok maker ByteDance** said it would restrict access to Douyin, the Chinese version of the app, to 40 minutes a day for users under 14. **B2**

◆ **Vivendi's spinoff** of Universal Music Group, expected Tuesday, will test the market's appetite for music as an asset class. **B1**

World-Wide

◆ **France stepped up** its opposition to a security agreement the U.S. crafted with Australia and the U.K., criticizing the Biden administration's failure to keep its allies apprised of sweeping foreign-policy initiatives after the pact led to the loss of a lucrative French submarine deal. **A1**

◆ **The Senate** parliamentary rejected Democrats' plan to provide a pathway to citizenship for millions of immigrants in the country illegally in a wide-ranging \$3.5 trillion proposal. **A4**

◆ **An antiabortion group** in Texas says it is looking into a physician's claim that he defied a controversial state law by performing an abortion on a woman past the sixth week of her pregnancy. **A3**

◆ **Russia's ruling party** appeared on course to maintain its majority in parliament, early results showed, an outcome that would cement Putin's control over his country's main levers of power. **A8**

◆ **Top U.S. health officials** urged patience on broader approval for coronavirus-vaccine booster shots. **A6**

◆ **Israeli security forces** captured the last two of six Palestinian militants who escaped from a high-security prison. **A9**

JOURNAL REPORT
Wealth Management:
Lessons for home
buyers and sellers. **R1-8**

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Migrants Are Flown Back to Haiti as Border Crowd Grows



ENCAMPMENT: Migrants seeking asylum in the U.S. crossed back and forth in the Rio Grande on Sunday as they waited to be processed. On Sunday, the first flights removing people from this new wave of migrants departed Texas for Haiti. **A3**

Rising Gas Prices Stir Supply Fears

Heating fuel reaches levels not seen in years, prompting worry about winter shortages

By RYAN DEZEMBER

A surge in natural-gas prices is prompting concerns about winter shortages and forecasts for the most expensive fuel since frackers flooded the market more than a decade ago. U.S. natural-gas futures ended Friday at \$5.105 per million British thermal units. They were

about half that six months ago and have leapt 17% this month. It is supposed to be off-season for demand, and prices haven't climbed so high since blizzards froze the Northeast in early 2014. Analysts said it might not have to get that cold this winter for prices to reach heights unknown during the shale era, which transformed the U.S. from a gas importer to supplier to the world.

Rock-bottom gas prices have been a reliable feature of the U.S. economy since the financial crisis. Gas crashed and never recovered because of the

abundance extracted with sideways drilling and hydraulic fracturing. Gas is burned to generate electricity and heat homes and to make plastic, steel and fertilizer. A substantial and sustained increase in price would be felt from households to heavy industry.

Stocks have already gotten a lift from \$5 gas. Energy has been the best performing sector in the S&P 500 stock index in September and one of only two that are up this month.

Monetary-policy makers often exclude energy prices when they gauge inflation because the

prices move around so much. Even so, rising natural-gas prices are another factor for investors trying to tease out whether higher materials costs will fade or are here to stay.

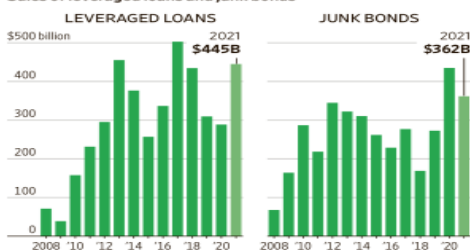
The U.S. Energy Information Administration is slated Thursday to give a fresh estimate of the volume of natural gas in storage, which it last estimated to be 16.5% less than a year ago. Now is the time of year when drillers fill storage tanks and caverns to get through winter, when demand is greatest and households are most

Please turn to page A2

Market for Junk Debt Rallies

The market for low-rated companies' debt is having its best year yet, as investors search for any extra yield. Analysts expect bond and loan sales to each set full-year records. **B1**

Sales of leveraged loans and junk bonds



Source: LCD

Note: 2021 data is as of September 14

Now Arriving: 300 Airplane Geeks At a Fast-Food Spot by LAX

Aviation buffs have an overdue reunion to watch the 747s and A380s go by

By ALISON SIDER

LOS ANGELES—The global coronavirus pandemic has made for a tough year and a half for the aviation-obsessed amateurs and industry insiders who geek out at airplane get-togethers and travel around the world.

Air travel slowed to a near halt in the early months of the pandemic. Celebratory inaugurations of new routes and new

planes were canceled. Even this year, many airline gatherings have been postponed, scaled down or held virtually.

One is no longer grounded. On Saturday, aviation geeks flocked to a strip of trampled grass outside the In-N-Out Burger near Los Angeles International Airport. Some 300 showed up for this year's Cranky Dorkfest, according to Brett Snyder, the author of the

Please turn to page A10

After Escaping Afghanistan, A Family Starts Over in the U.S.

Those able to leave face new jobs, new customs, new languages

By JESSICA DONATI

ROCHESTER, N.Y.—After fleeing Afghanistan, Muhammad and his six children landed in their new hometown on the day the capital city of Kabul fell to the Taliban. The family's fortuitous escape marked the start of another difficult journey.

Muhammad had spent his first night in America in the emergency room of a Virginia hospital, struggling to breathe. He was overcome with worry about his wife, Aliya, who was stopped from boarding their flight from Kabul because of a visa problem. With only minutes to set their course, she and Muhammad agreed to separate. He would take the children to the U.S. alone.

Leaving his wife to the chaos of the Kabul

airport was hard for Muhammad, who asked that only his family's first names be used. He learned he had suffered a panic attack. Over the next weeks, more would follow.

The abrupt separation of families is among the many challenges facing tens of thousands of Afghans as they settle in the U.S. and other parts of the world. So are new languages and customs, and the tasks of finding work, schools, transportation and housing.

"Life in America is very good. There is security. My children can have an education without fear," said Muhammad, the family's sole English speaker.

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◆ Afghan schools open, but not for most girls... **A9**

Tesla's Upgrade Plan Rankles Safety Agency

By REBECCA ELLIOTT

Tesla Inc. is readying a major upgrade of its driver-assistance software but the top federal crash investigator says the move might be premature.

Chief Executive Elon Musk said last week that drivers would soon be able to request an enhanced version of what Tesla calls its "Full Self-Driving Capability." The upgrade is expected to add a feature intended to help vehicles navigate cities, expanding the suite of driver-assistance tools that had been de-

signed mainly for highways. Despite its name, Full Self-Driving doesn't make cars fully autonomous, and Tesla instructs drivers to remain alert, with their hands on the wheel.

Jennifer Homendy, the new head of the National Transportation Safety Board, said Tesla shouldn't roll out the city-driving tool before addressing what the agency views as safety deficiencies in the company's technology. The NTSB, which investigates crashes and issues safety recommendations

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INSIDE



PERSONAL JOURNAL
'The Crown' led Netflix to its first Emmy for outstanding drama series. **A12**



U.S. Border Patrol agents tried to stop Haitian migrants in the Rio Grande from entering a camp near Del Rio, Texas, on Sunday.

Haiti Objects As U.S. Sends Migrants Back

By HAROLD ISAAC
and CATHERINE PORTER

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti — The first Haitians deported from a makeshift camp in Texas landed in their home country Sunday amid sweltering heat, anger and confusion, as Haitian officials beseeched the United States to stop the flights because the country is in crisis and cannot handle thousands of homeless deportees.

"We are here to say welcome, they can come back and stay in Haiti — but they are very agitated," said the head of Haiti's national migration office, Jean Negot Bonheur Delva. "They don't accept the forced return."

Mr. Bonheur Delva said the authorities expected that about 14,000 Haitians will be expelled from the United States over the coming three weeks.

An encampment of about that size has formed in the Texas border town of Del Rio in recent days as Haitian and other migrants crossed over the Rio Grande from Mexico. The Biden administration has said it is moving swiftly to deport them under a Trump-era pandemic order.

On Sunday alone, officials in Haiti were preparing for three flights of migrants to arrive in Port-au-Prince, the capital. After that, they expect six flights a day for three weeks, split between Port-au-Prince and the coastal city of Cap-Haïtien.

Beyond that, little was certain. "The Haitian state is not really able to receive these deportees," Mr. Bonheur Delva said.

The Haitian appeal for a suspension of deportations appeared likely to increase the pressure on the Biden administration, which is grappling with the highest level of border crossings in decades.

Continued on Page A12

Senator Has Fossil Fuel Links, and a Potent Pen

By CORAL DAVENPORT

WASHINGTON — Joe Manchin, the powerful West Virginia Democrat who chairs the Senate energy panel and earned half a million dollars last year from coal production, is preparing to remake President Biden's climate legislation in a way that tosses a lifeline to the fossil fuel industry — despite urgent calls from scientists that countries need to quickly pivot away from coal, gas and oil to avoid a climate catastrophe.

Mr. Manchin has already emerged as the crucial up-or-down vote in a sharply divided Senate when it comes to Mr. Biden's push to pass a \$3.5 trillion budget bill that could reshape the

Manchin Backs Clean Energy but Can Alter Biden's Plans

nation's social welfare network. But Mr. Manchin also wants the bill to include an aggressive climate policy that would compel utilities to stop burning fossil fuels and switch to wind, solar or nuclear energy, sources that do not emit the greenhouse gases that are heating the planet.

As chairman of the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, Mr. Manchin holds the pen and the gavel of the congressional panel, with the authority to

shape Mr. Biden's ambitions.

But Mr. Manchin is also closely associated with the fossil fuel industry. His beloved West Virginia is second in coal and seventh in natural gas production among the 50 states. In the current election cycle, Mr. Manchin has received more campaign donations from the oil, coal and gas industries than any other senator, according to data compiled by OpenSecrets, a research organization that tracks political spending.

He profits personally from polluting industries: He owns stock valued at between \$1 million and \$5 million in Energen Systems Inc., a coal brokerage firm which he founded in 1988. He gave control of the firm to his son, Joseph, after he was elected West Virginia sec-

Continued on Page A13

A Revolving Door Keeps Tax Policy on Clients' Side

Lawyers' Brief but Lucrative Round Trips From Accounting Firms to Treasury

By JESSE DRUCKER and DANNY HAKIM

For six years, Audrey Ellis and Adam Feuerstein worked together at PwC, the giant accounting firm, helping the world's biggest companies avoid taxes.

In mid-2018, one of Mr. Feuerstein's clients, an influential association of real estate companies, was trying to persuade government officials that its members should qualify for a new federal tax break. Mr. Feuerstein knew who to turn to for help. Ms. Ellis had recently joined the Treasury Department, and she was drafting the rules for this deduction.

That summer, Ms. Ellis met with Mr. Feuerstein and his client's lobbyists. The next week, the Treasury granted their wish — a decision potentially worth billions of dollars to PwC's clients.

About a year later, Ms. Ellis returned to PwC, where she was immediately promoted to partner. She and Mr. Feuerstein now work together advising large companies on how to exploit wrinkles in the tax regulations that Ms. Ellis helped write.

Ms. Ellis's case — detailed in public records and by people with direct knowledge of her work at the Treasury and at PwC — is no outlier.

The largest U.S. accounting firms have perfected a remarkably effective behind-the-scenes system to promote their interests in Washington. Their tax lawyers take senior jobs at the Treasury Department, where they write policies that are frequently favor-

able to their former corporate clients, often with the expectation that they will return to their old employers. The firms welcome them back with loftier titles and higher pay, according to public records reviewed by The New York Times and interviews with current and former government and industry officials.

From their government posts, many of the industry veterans approved loopholes long exploited by their former firms, gave tax breaks to former clients and rolled back efforts to rein in tax shelters — with enormous impact.

After lobbying by PwC, a former PwC partner in the Trump Treasury Department helped write regulations that allowed large multinational companies to avoid tens of billions of dollars in taxes; he then returned to PwC. A senior executive at another major accounting firm, RSM, took a top job at Treasury, where his office expanded a tax break in ways sought by RSM; he then returned to the firm.

Even some former industry veterans said they viewed the rapid back-and-forth arrangements as a big part of the reason that tax policy had become so skewed in favor of the wealthy, at the expense of just about everyone else. President Biden and congressional Democrats are now seeking to overhaul parts of the tax code that overwhelmingly benefit the richest Americans.

Continued on Page A15

Using Virus Test As Way to Keep Pupils in School

By EMILY ANTHES

When the schools in Marietta, Ga., opened their doors on Aug. 3, the highly contagious Delta variant was sweeping across the South, and children were not being spared.

By Aug. 20, 51 students in the city's small school district had tested positive for the coronavirus. Nearly 1,000 others had been flagged as close contacts and had to quarantine at home for seven to 10 days.

"That's a lot of school, especially for children that are recovering from 18 months in a pandemic where they missed a lot of school or had to transition to virtual," said Grant Rivera, the superintendent of Marietta City Schools.

Last week, the district changed tack. Students who are identified as close contacts can now continue attending school as long as they have no symptoms and test negative for the virus every day for seven days.

An increasing number of school districts are turning to testing to keep more children in the classroom and avoid disrupting the work lives of their parents. The resource-intensive approach — sometimes known as "test to stay" or modified quarantine — allows students who have been exposed to the virus to stay in school as long as they take frequent Covid tests, which are typically provided by the school, and adhere to other precautions.

Experts agree that children who are infected with the virus should isolate at home, but the question of what to do about their classmates poses a dilemma.

Allowing children who have been exposed to the virus to remain in school does pose a potential transmission risk, and the

Continued on Page A16



A Merkel namesake, left.

Sea of Angelas Gives Thanks To Chancellor

By KATRIN BENNHOLD

WÜLFRAH, Germany — Hilaria Maai gave birth three days after arriving in Germany.

She had fled the bombs that destroyed her home in Syria and crossed the black waters of the Mediterranean on a rickety boat with her three young children. In Greece, a doctor urged her to stay put, but she pressed on, through Macedonia, Serbia, Hungary and Austria. Only after she had crossed the border into Bavaria did she relax and almost immediately go into labor.

"It's a girl," the doctor said when he handed her the newborn bundle.

There was no question in Ms. Maai's mind what her daughter's name would be. "We are calling her Angela," she told her husband, who had fled six months earlier and was reunited with his family two days before little Angela's birth on Feb. 1, 2016.

"Angela Merkel saved our lives," Ms. Maai said in a recent interview in her new hometown, Wülfra, in northwestern Germany. "She gave us a roof over our heads, and she gave a future to our children. We love her like a mother."

Chancellor Angela Merkel is Continued on Page A8

Democrats Look to Abortion Fight to Motivate Suburban Women

By TRIP GABRIEL

VIRGINIA BEACH — Kenzie Smith is "not big into politics," she said, and while she votes faithfully in presidential elections, for Democrats, she is less interested in off-year races, such as those seven weeks away in Virginia for governor and the legislature.

But the recent news that the Supreme Court had allowed Texas to ban most abortions after about six

weeks of pregnancy, with no exceptions for rape or incest, grabbed her attention.

The fear that such a restrictive law, which she called "insane," could come to Virginia if Republicans take power has sharpened her desire to turn out on Election Day. "If there are laws like what's going on in Texas coming here, I'd absolutely be motivated to go to the polls over that," said Ms. Smith, 33, a marketing consultant.

Rattling a Virginia Race and Looming in 2022

The Supreme Court's decision on Sept. 1 to let Texas enact the country's most restrictive abortion law came as a grievous blow to abortion rights advocates, a long-sought victory for abortion opponents and, for Democrats, a

potential political opportunity.

As the party mobilizes for next year's midterms, its first big test on the issue will come in the Virginia elections this fall. Democrats are hoping to win a tight governor's race and keep control of the legislature in a state that has moved rapidly to the left. Former Gov. Terry McAuliffe, a Democrat who is running for his old office, has repeatedly promised to be a

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NATIONAL A10-17

The Soldiers Still at War

American troops continue to serve combat tours in harm's way. Meet the soldiers headed for duty in Iraq. PAGE A10

Body Is Found in Wyoming

The authorities said they had found human remains consistent with a description of Gabrielle Petito. PAGE A11

INTERNATIONAL A4-8

Loss of Smell, Loss of Career?

French perfumers, sommeliers and winemakers with Covid-19 infections are sometimes deprived of a crucial tool: their high-performing noses. PAGE A4

Love and Fear in Cairo's Lifts

The city's geriatric elevators are beautiful marvels for some. Others see them as frustrating and frightening. PAGE A7

OBITUARIES D7-8

Artist Who Reimagined Mary

Yolanda López, 78, recast the Virgin of Guadalupe as a young, strong, brown woman in running shoes. PAGE D8



SPORTS D1-6

The Heart of the White Sox

Since 2014, Jose Abreu has provided consistent power at bat and quiet leadership in the clubhouse. PAGE D5

Some Other Ways to Watch

The brothers Peyton and Eli Manning have joined the fast-growing trend of alternate telecasts. PAGE D1

BUSINESS B1-8

Big Boxes Sit Empty

The number of chain retailers in New York cratered in the pandemic, and they're slow to return. Some chains that have historically stayed away are now taking advantage. PAGE B1

Evergrande's Worker Threat

The struggling Chinese property giant, which owes \$300 billion, gave employees a choice in April: Lend us cash or lose your bonus. The company has stopped paying back the loans. PAGE B1

OPINION A18-19

Charles M. Blow

PAGE A19



ARTS C1-8

A Nonvirtual Emmys

"Ted Lasso" and "The Crown" recorded early wins at the mostly in-person show. Jason Sudeikis, above, won for his role in "Ted Lasso." PAGE C1



COLUMN ONE

How 'Z' became a witch pioneer

Zsuzsanna Budapest, who created feminist, Goddess-centered religion in 1970s, says she's not done yet.

BY DEBORAH NETBURN
REPORTING FROM
SANTA CRUZ

In a small stucco house in a retirement community near Santa Cruz, an 81-year-old witch is writing a television series.

She calls it "Baba Boogie and the Berkeley Bros." The premise goes like this: Baba Boogie is a reluctant immortal — old and tired. All her friends have passed on, but she herself cannot die until she finds a new generation of women to receive her superpowers.

When a quartet of grumpy peace activists from Berkeley winds up in jail, Baba Boogie comes to their aid and finds the perfect group to teach her secrets. Fun, adventure and magic ensue.

Fiction, yes, but it's easy to see parallels between Baba Boogie and the screenwriter, Zsuzsanna Budapest. For 50 years, Budapest dedicated much of her life to creating and disseminating Dianic Wicca, a feminist, Goddess-centered spirituality she originated in Los Angeles in the 1970s.

She founded the all-women Susan B. Anthony Coven No. 1 and was arrested for reading tarot cards in Venice when divination was still illegal across most of California.

She publicly hexed murderers and rapists, wrote 13 books on ritual and witchcraft and founded the long-

[See Budapest, A12]

THE EMMYS



"TED LASSO" star Jason Sudeikis and Jean Smart of "Hacks" greet each other after their wins Sunday night in downtown Los Angeles. At 70, Smart is the oldest woman to win the award for comedy actress.

Too predictable, too white

Familiarity and caution prevail over the risky and innovative. No performers of color win an award.

LORRAINE ALI
TELEVISION CRITIC

At the 73rd Emmy Awards, favored front-runners "The Crown" and "Ted Lasso" dominated drama and comedy categories, but the big winners Sunday night were clear: familiarity and caution.

Television Academy voters didn't take many chances when it came to their top-of-the-ballot choices. Perennial favorite "The Crown" went into Sunday with 24 nominations, and Season 4 of Netflix's series about the royal Windsors swept the major drama categories, including a lead actress win for Olivia Colman, who plays Queen Elizabeth II. Supporting actress Gillian Anderson also won for her excellent portrayal of Margaret

DRAMA SERIES

"The Crown"

COMEDY SERIES

"Ted Lasso"

LEAD ACTRESS, DRAMA

Olivia Colman, "The Crown"

LEAD ACTOR, DRAMA

Josh O'Connor, "The Crown"

MORE COVERAGE

Winners, fashion and a much anticipated IRL ceremony. CALENDAR E1

Thatcher.

In another non-shocking twist, AppleTV+'s nice-guy comedy "Ted Lasso," starring Jason Sudeikis as a disarming American football coach running a British soccer team, took home prizes for comedy series, lead actor (Sudeikis), supporting actor (Brett Goldstein) and supporting actress (Hannah Waddingham).

The lack of surprises and the academy's aversion to more risky choices meant that the Emmys took a step back when it came to racial diversity. No performers of color won in any of the comedy, drama or limited series categories despite some of the strongest contenders in years. And it was nearly two hours into the show when the first person of color stepped onstage to receive a prize. RuPaul made Emmy history for the

[See Emmys, A7]

Infant syphilis cases surge

Experts fear pandemic exacerbated trend of babies in L.A. being infected in the womb.

BY EMILY ALPERT REYES

The woman said she was racked with pain and disbelief on the hospital bed, her belly slick with ultrasound gel, when a hospital worker delivered the news: There was a baby inside her.

It was a boy. Six months along. And his heart wasn't beating.

For months, the 30-year-old woman had waved off her swelling belly and ankles. Pregnancy seemed impossible because she had struggled to conceive in the past.

Besides, she said, "you put all the bad thoughts on the back burner when you're high."

It wasn't until days later, as she grieved her unexpected baby at home in Los Angeles County, that a nurse called to tell her what happened, she said. She calls it "the S," an illness she is still embarrassed to name.

More and more babies in L.A. County have been infected with syphilis in the womb, which can lead to stillbirth, neurological problems, blindness, bone abnormalities and other complications.

Nine years ago, only six cases were reported across L.A. County, according to a Department of Public Health report. Last year, that number reached 13.

The numbers were already surging before the arrival of COVID-19, but public health officials fear the pandemic exacerbated the problem, closing clinics that screen people for syphilis and other sexually transmitted

[See Syphilis, A7]

U.S. begins the removal of Haitian migrants

Border Patrol copes with growing camp in Texas. Those arriving are undeterred despite their likely expulsion.

BY MOLLY
HENNESSY-FISKE

DEL RIO, Texas — A week after Haitian migrant Junior Desterville, 30, and his family had made it all the way from Chile to the burgeoning migrant camp here on the U.S. banks of the Rio Grande, the shaggy-haired mechanic set back out to the Mexican side early Sunday to buy food for his hungry wife and 4-year-old daughter, Nayalla.

By noon, Desterville, dressed in a blue T-shirt and black shorts, had waded back north through the chest-high water to return



A BORDER PATROL agent on horseback tries to stop a Haitian migrant from entering a camp along the banks of the Rio Grande on Sunday in Del Rio, Texas.

successfully from Ciudad Acuña as Mexican police and Texas state troopers sought to block ongoing river crossings by hundreds of incoming migrants.

Making his way past a crowd of hundreds and up dirt trails along the riverbank that reeked of human waste, he found his wife, Stephanie, in one of the scores of huts that migrants have built from the carrizo cane lining the waters. They have slept on the dirt inside the hut since making their way to this hot, chaotic camp of an estimated 14,000 migrants after a three-month slog, mainly by bus, through Chile, Central America and Mexico.

Desterville said he can't imagine returning to Haiti.

"We don't have a president or security," he said, referring to the recent assassination of President Jovenel Moise and devastating

[See Haitians, A4]

Democrats have their 'Dreamers' proposal blocked

Pathway to citizenship can't be passed with reconciliation process, parliamentarian says.

BY JENNIFER HABERKORN

WASHINGTON — A key Senate advisor on Sunday said existing rules will not allow Democrats to include in their social safety net bill a pathway to citizenship for up to 8 million immigrants — a significant setback for the party, President Biden and the group known as Dreamers, immigrants who were brought to the U.S. as children.

Democrats are next expected to pitch a backup plan that would provide a similar pathway to citizenship but would probably not cover as many people, according to sources familiar with the talks. But the ruling released Sunday is an ominous sign for its chances, as it recounted several reasons a massive expansion of citizenship cannot be included in the bill.

Because of the special fast-track procedure Democrats are using to pass their \$3.5-trillion bill, all parts

[See Citizenship, A12]

Protesting a Chinese giant's unpaid debts

BY ALICE SU

SHENZHEN, China — They came from all over the country, dragging cheap suitcases and clutching file folders filled with records, chanting in front of the glassy skyscraper: "Evergrande, pay up!"

They were the owners of small lighting and plumbing and construction materials

companies, suppliers for Evergrande, one of China's largest property developers — now staggering under more than \$300 billion in debt and facing potential collapse.

Dozens of protesters were gathering daily here in recent days at Evergrande headquarters. Most were contractors who'd accepted commercial papers — a sort of IOU — as payment for

projects, but now found Evergrande unable to pay when those IOUs came due.

"They say: 'We have no money. Do whatever you like,'" said Li Gexin, the manager of a janitorial company in Qingdao. It had 200 workers who'd cleaned Evergrande's sales offices for a year and were owed more than \$300,000 in commercial papers.

"If we don't get the mon-

ey, we can't eat," said Li, who'd driven for 24 hours to the Shenzhen headquarters. They needed that money to feed their families, send kids to school, buy medicine for elderly people and pay their own mortgages — to live, he said. Dozens of other suppliers gathered around, relating similar woes.

Legions of police bearing

[See China, A4]

Fire crews work to guard Sequoia National Park

General Sherman, one of the world's tallest trees, remains safe for now as the KNP Complex blaze grows.

CALIFORNIA B1
Weather
Lots of sunshine.
L.A. Basin: 85/65. B6



The Washington Post

Prices may vary in areas outside metropolitan Washington.

SU V1 V2 V3 V4



Nice, some sun 79/65 • Tomorrow: Clouds, sun, humid 79/69 B8

Democracy Dies in Darkness

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 2021 • B2

Deportees dropped into Haiti's turmoil

U.S. sends many back to a country they haven't called home for years

BY WIDLORE MERANCOURT AND ANTHONY FAIOLA

PORT-AU-PRINCE, HAITI — He crossed the Mexican border into Texas only two weeks ago, joyous at the prospect of building anew in the United States. Now part of the first wave of deportees rapidly ejected by the Biden administration amid a fresh surge at the border, Johnson Bordes, 23, stepped off a Boeing 737 on Sunday and into the Haitian capital, terrified by a city torn apart by violence in a homeland he could barely remember.

Like many deportees arriving on charter flights at the airport in Port-au-Prince, 15 minutes from neighborhoods controlled by brutal armed gangs, Bordes' family left Haiti in the great migration after the 2010 earthquake that killed more than 200,000 people. He was 12 when they left, first for the Dominican Republic, then on to Chile, where he was living with his mother and brother when the coronavirus pandemic hit. Encouraged by relatives in the United States, the family set out on a 4,500-mile trek to the U.S. border — never imagining the road would

SEE HAITI ON A13

Texas border: Migrants remain unfazed as deportations begin. A12

Rationing at hospitals may rise as covid rages

BY ARIANA EUNJUNG CHIA AND MERYL KORNFELD

Kristen Solana Walkinshaw, a physician on the coronavirus triage committee at Providence Alaska Medical Center in Anchorage, found her team last weekend making one of the most agonizing decisions of their careers. With the delta variant surging, the hospital was overwhelmed, and the doctor on call had paged the group for guidance.

Four patients needed continuous kidney dialysis, her colleague explained, but only two machines could be made available.

"How should I choose?" "This is the worst it's been for us," Solana Walkinshaw said, and "it's not over."

Rationing medical care, one of the most feared scenarios of the pandemic, is becoming a reality in a few parts of the United States as coronavirus infections remain at surge levels. On Thursday, Idaho officials announced the state was taking the extraordinary

SEE VIRUS ON A7

Drought and man-made impediments have placed California's wild Chinook at grave risk



MELINA MARA/THE WASHINGTON POST

A shrinking salmon run

BY SCOTT WILSON

HELLTOWN, CALIF. — The name doesn't seem to fit this quiet place set above a gentle swerve in Butte Creek, just an old span of bridge, some rusted-out mining equipment manufactured before this state was officially a state, and a seldom-used house.

But the harsh reality becomes

apparent quickly, a smell on a hot, thin wind.

It is the stench from piles of rotting Chinook salmon carcasses on the creek banks and from the upside-down bodies of others snagged, already dead, on the creek's pale rocks.

For centuries, spring-run Chinook salmon, among California's most iconic fish, would rest for weeks in these historically cold waters after

their brutal upstream journey. Then they would lay eggs and, finally, perish to complete one of nature's most improbable life cycles.

No longer. What once was a place where life began is now one of untimely death.

The creek is simply too warm, an astounding 10 degrees warmer than average in some parts of these

SEE SALMON ON A16

A Chinook salmon swims in Butte Creek in Chico, Calif. With decreased water levels and warmer temperatures, rivers and creeks have lower oxygen content, which weakens and kills the fish before they spawn. Piles of carcasses can be seen on the banks of Butte Creek.

Child-care worker exodus a red flag for economy

As many leave for higher pay and programs dwindle, parents find they can't return to job market

BY HEATHER LONG

South Shore Stars' early-childhood program in Weymouth, Mass., received zero applicants this summer for its preschool teacher positions. It was a big change from when Director Jennifer Curtis was superintendent of a local school district and routinely had 200 people apply for elementary school jobs.

The problem, Curtis said, is that day care workers typically make about \$12 an hour for a demanding job year-round. Public schools and other employers, which are also scrambling to hire workers, are poaching child-care staffers by offering thousands of dollars more a year and better benefits. A nearby Dunkin' starts pay at \$14 an hour.

People tell Curtis they'll come to South Shore Stars as a "last resort" if they can't find anything else.

Hiring and retaining good workers has been tough in the child-care industry for years, but it is escalating into a crisis. Pandemic-fueled staffing challenges threaten to hold back the recovery, as the staffing problems at day cares have a ripple effect across the economy. Without enough employees, day cares are turning away children, leaving parents — especially

SEE CHILD CARE ON A4



JEFF SWENSEN FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

The hiring situation in the child-care industry is dire, with a more than 10 percent decline in workers from pre-pandemic levels.

For Taliban fighters in Kabul, a big adjustment

BY SUSANNAH GEORGE

KABUL — Since celebrating the fall of Kabul a month ago, after years of waging a holy war to overthrow the U.S.-backed government, the 250 Taliban fighters under Abdulrahman Nifz's command have struggled to adjust to their new day job: the mundane task of securing a city.

"All of my men, they love jihad and fighting," he said. "So when they came to Kabul they didn't feel comfortable. There isn't any fighting here anymore."

Just months ago, the unit was staging attacks on government outposts and convoys. Now the fighters are standing at checkpoints, searching cars and inspecting vehicle registrations.

"Many of my fighters are worried that they missed their chance at martyrdom in the war," Nifz

SEE TALIBAN ON A14

IN THE NEWS



JORDAN STRAUSS/INVISION/ASSOCIATED PRESS

The Emmys "Ted Lasso," "The Crown," "Hacks" and "Mare of Easttown" brought home some big awards on a brisk night. C1
Mystics miss playoffs Washington fell just short of the postseason with a season-ending loss to the Minnesota Lynx, 83-77. D1

THE NATION

The brutal slaying of a woman and her dog in a park in Atlanta has reignited the city's debate over a pandemic-era rise in violent crime. A3
Authorities said they may have found the body of 22-year-old Gabby Petito in Wyoming after a search that had drawn national attention. A5

THE WORLD

In Darraa, the cradle of the Syrian revolution, renewed violence shows reconciliation is still elusive. A10
Russian President Vladimir Putin's party is

expected to maintain its grip over the lower house of parliament, election exit polls showed, amid complaints of widespread fraud. A11

THE ECONOMY

Texas is fighting back after a private company received federal approval to store nuclear waste in the state. A19

THE REGION

In Northern Virginia, Fairfax and Arlington counties and the city of Alexandria passed a five-cent tax on plastic bags. B1
A Loudoun County

judge said a woman testifying in her alleged abuser's trial appeared intoxicated on the stand and ordered her jailed for 10 days. B1

THE WEEK AHEAD

MONDAY President Biden visits Rehoboth Beach, Del., and New York.
Second gentleman Doug Emhoff holds an event in Milford, Mass.

TUESDAY President Biden addresses the 76th session of the United Nations General Assembly.
Housing starts for August are expected at an annual rate of 1.575 million.

WEDNESDAY

Fed Chair Jerome H. Powell holds a video news conference following the closed Federal Open Market Committee meeting.

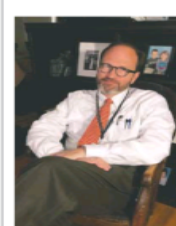
THURSDAY

Jobless claims for the week ended Sept. 18 are expected at 309,000.

FRIDAY

President Biden hosts a meeting with Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison, Japanese Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi.
Single-family home sales for August are expected at 708,000.

INSIDE



STYLE

The final straw After Jan. 6, a Capitol Hill reporter left his 30-year journalism career, both traumatized by the riot and frustrated by journalism's failures. C1

Worth the wait

Pianist Lang Lang and the NSO delight a comeback crowd at the Kennedy Center. C1

BUSINESS NEWS	A19
COMICS	C8
OPINION PAGES	A20
LOTTERIES	B3
OBITUARIES	B6
TELEVISION	C5
WORLD NEWS	A10

CONTENT © 2021 The Washington Post / Year 144, No. 280



Un volcán pone en vilo a las Islas Canarias

Hay miles de evacuados y alerta total por la erupción del Cumbre Vieja; movilizaron al Ejército y el presidente Pedro Sánchez viajó a la zona. **Página 4**



UN GOL EN CONTRA DESTRABÓ A RIVER, QUE SIGUE AL ACECHO

—deportes

En un partido muy cerrado, solo un tanto en el propio arco de Arsenal les permitió ganar a los millonarios para seguir a dos puntos de la cima. **Página 2**

EMMY: THE CROWN, TED LASSO Y MARE, ENTRE LOS GANADORES

—espectáculos

Hollywood en pleno se reunió en Los Ángeles para la entrega de los premios, en una ceremonia con la "nueva normalidad". **Página 2**

LA NACION

LUNES 20 DE SEPTIEMBRE DE 2021 | LANACION.COM.AR

Tras reunirse con Cristina, Kicillof cambió el gabinete

PROVINCIA. Sumó a los intendentes Martín Insaurralde, cercano a Máximo Kirchner, y Leonardo Nardini; desplazó de la Jefatura de Gabinete a Carlos Bianco, su mano derecha

Después de haber resistido los cambios durante una semana, el gobernador de la provincia de Buenos Aires, Axel Kicillof, anunció ayer una modificación de su equipo, que implica la salida del gabinete de Carlos Bianco, su mano derecha, y la designación como jefe de Gabinete de Martín Insaurralde, intendente de

Lomas de Zamora, de diálogo directo con Máximo Kirchner.

El anuncio llegó tras un viaje sorpresa de Kicillof a El Calafate, donde analizó los cambios con la vicepresidenta. El nuevo equipo se completa con el intendente de Malvinas Argentinas, Leonardo Nardini, como ministro de Infraestructura y Servicios Públicos, y

de la diputada Cristina Álvarez Rodríguez, como ministra de Gobierno. El anuncio se precipitó tras los cambios impuestos a Alberto Fernández en el gobierno nacional. **Página 6**

Se reavivan los planteos de los piqueteros oficialistas
Pedro Lacour. **Página 14**

Juran los nuevos ministros y buscan bajar la tensión

Página 11

Presión kirchnerista para hacer retoques al presupuesto

El kirchnerismo presiona para reformar el proyecto de presupuesto 2022, que acaba de presentar el ministro Martín Guzmán. El objetivo es ampliar las partidas para aumentar subsidios, salarios y jubilaciones. Mientras tanto, se definen las medidas económicas que el Gobierno anunciará mañana. **Páginas 8 y 10**

Messi y Pochettino, polémica y despalante en París

deportes— Faltaban 15 minutos y PSG empataba 1-1 con Lyon, en el Parque de los Príncipes, cuando el DT Mauricio Pochettino decidió reemplazar a Lionel Messi en su primer juego en París. El crack rosarino no disimuló su enojo ante los ojos del mundo.



Messi no entendió el cambio y se molestó con Pochettino; en el final, Icardi fue el héroe para el triunfo 2-1 de PSG sobre Lyon. FRANCIS MORI/AP

Se agrava la crisis por la sucesión de Manzur

TUCUMÁN. El gobernador de Tucumán, Juan Manzur, busca evitar que al jurar como jefe de Gabinete nacional asuma su vice, Osvaldo Jaldo, con el que está enfrentado. Jaldo resiste la presión y se agudiza en la provincia una crisis institucional. **Página 10**

EL PULSO DEL CONSUMO

Las urnas no hablaron, lloraron

Guillermo Oliveto
—PARA LA NACION—

Página 19



Juntos producimos mejor

Descubrí la nueva Tarjeta de Santander Agronegocios y accedé a los mejores convenios para la compra de insumos, hacienda y repuestos de maquinaria agrícola.

Conocé más en santander.com.ar/agro

CAPTURA COMERCIAL. OTORGAMIENTO SUJETO A EVALUACIÓN CREDITICIA. LOS ACCIONISTAS DE BANCO SANTANDER RÍO S.A. NO RESPONDEN EN EXCESO DE SU INTERVENCIÓN ACCIONARIA.

Santander
Agronegocios

Bolsonaro fala de ambiente e viagens com Boris Johnson

Jair Bolsonaro terá hoje o primeiro encontro bilateral com o primeiro-ministro do Reino Unido, Boris Johnson, durante sua viagem a Nova York para a Assembleia Geral da ONU. Eles devem tratar de meio ambiente e sustentabilidade, vacinas e apoio à entrada do Brasil na OCDE. Há expectativa de que falem da restrição de viagens ao país europeu. **Mundo A13**

Hospital tem alta de tentativa de suicídio de jovens

Cotidiano B2

Paulo Moll Rede hospitalar fragmentada aumenta custo

Folha Corrida B8

União pagou empresas ligadas a garimpo suspeito

O governo pagou R\$ 124 milhões a empresas que usam helicópteros suspeitos de garimpo em terra indígena. Do valor, 60,5% foram pagos na gestão Jair Bolsonaro. **Ambiente B1**

Doria concede parques a firma que já driblou aval

Construcap, vencedora do leilão do Horto Florestal e do Cantareira, tem como subsidiária a Urbia, que permitiu atrações à revelia da prefeitura da capital no Ibirapuera. **Cotidiano B4**

Total da população vacinada

	ao menos uma dose*	totalmente vacinada**
Brasil	68,3 %	37,6 %
MS	74,7%	52,5%
SP	80,3%	49,6%
RS	71,8%	43,9%

Total de doses aplicadas

	1ª	2ª	única
Brasil	141,6 mi	76,1 mi	4,2 mi
1ª SP	36,3 mi	22 mi	1,2 mi
2ª MG	14,3 mi	6,7 mi	482,5 mil
3ª RJ	11,3 mi	5,8 mi	345 mil

Números da pandemia

	Casos	Óbitos
Total	21,2 mi	590,8 mil
Méd. móvel	34,3 mil	558
Variação***	67,9%	-7,9%
Em 24 h	9,2 mil	239

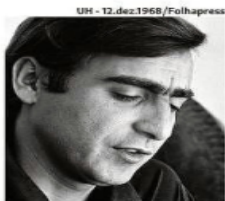
Estágios

	Acelerado
	Estável
	Desacelerado
	Reduzido

Brasil
Desacelerado

Dados das 20h de 19 set.
* Tomou dose única ou 1ª dose
** Tomou dose única ou 2ª dose
*** Em relação a 14 dias

ISSN 1413-5723 3 3 7 7 3
9 771414 572025



Luis Gustavo em 1968

Ilustrada C3

Morre Luis Gustavo, 87

O ator Luis Gustavo morreu ontem, em decorrência de um câncer no intestino, aos 87. Artista de longa carreira no teatro e na televisão, interpretou Beto Rockfeller, protagonista homônimo de novela da TV Tupi, e tio Vavá na série "Sai de Baixo", da Globo.

Alckmin e Haddad lideram disputa para Governo de SP

Ex-governador, que está deixando o PSDB, sai na frente, aponta Datafolha

O ex-governador Geraldo Alckmin, que está com saída anunciada do PSDB e deve se filiar ao PSD, encabeça a corrida eleitoral para governador de São Paulo em 2022, com 26% das intenções de voto, segundo pesquisa Datafolha. O ex-prefeito Fernando Haddad (PT) aparece em segundo, com 17%.

O ex-governador Márcio França (PSB) obteve 15% no levantamento e Guilherme Boulos (PSOL), 11%. A margem de erro é de dois pontos percentuais.

Em um segundo cenário pesquisado pelo Datafolha, sem Geraldo Alckmin, Haddad fica em primeiro lugar (23%), seguido de França (19%) e Boulos (13%).

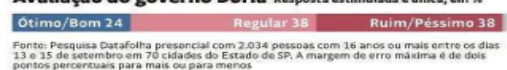
O atual vice-governador, Rodrigo Garcia (PSDB), apoiado por João Doria, fica em quinto lugar, com 5%. A pesquisa foi feita com maiores de 16 anos, entre 13 e 15 de setembro. **Poder A4**

O governo de João Doria (PSDB) é reprovado por 38% dos paulistas e bem avaliado por 24% Poder A6

Intenção de voto para governador de SP



Avaliação do governo Doria



Desiree Martin/AFP

VULCÃO ENTRA EM ERUPÇÃO NAS ILHAS CANÁRIAS, NA ESPANHA

Lava e fumaça são expelidas do vulcão Cumbre Vieja, na ilha espanhola de La Palma, o que levou à remoção de milhares de moradores **Mundo A14**

Esporte B6

Referência, Bruna Kajiya luta por maior presença feminina no kitesurfe

Ilustrada C3

Emmy 2021

Vitórias de 'The Crown', 'Ted Lasso' e 'Hacks' destacam batalha de streamings da premiação

Mpme A22

Aplicativos vendem produtos perto de vencer com desconto que chega a 80%

ENTREVISTA DA 2ª

Margaret Atwood

Como todo poder, o de acusar pode ser corrompido

Autora de "O Conto da Aia", a canadense Margaret Atwood discute críticas de viés racial a sua obra e compara a cultura do cancelamento ao totalitarismo. "O poder de acusar é um poder. E, como qualquer poder, pode ser corrompido." Afirma que as pessoas votam em figuras autoritárias quando sentem que há "caos" e depositam nesses líderes a esperança de que imponham a ordem. **A15**

EDITORIAIS A2

Mais uma gambiarra
Sobre aumento do IOF para bancar programa social.

Caos na fronteira
Acerca de venezuelanos desabrigados em Roraima.

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As transformações causadas pela pandemia no setor da saúde

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Saiba mais na página A11

La ventilación de los espacios cerrados es fundamental ante el Covid

Foco de rebrote: Casi 500.000 adultos siguen sin vacunarse

De 1.361.032 personas de 50 años y más, aún resta inmunizar a 483.579 consideradas vulnerables. Desde hoy aplican a los de 18 años con la intención de atraer a los mayores.

PÁGINA 2 a la 4

Se resiste a cumplir sentencia

Cortan otro bastardeo legal de Víctor Bogado en caso niñera de oro

PÁGINA 45

Ex fiscal significativamente corrupto

El clan Díaz Verón no suelta el poder, pese a dura acusación de EEUU

PÁGINA 6

Criatura de once años es la víctima

Atroz crimen: Hombre violaba a hijastra y fue raptada para abortar

PÁGINA 44

La ARP rechaza críticas a la agroproducción

PÁGINA 12

Expo Ganadera. En inauguración la Rural enfatizó que el campo es el motor de la economía.



A semanas de las elecciones para intendencias y concejalias Intervención de la Contraloría sobre figuras opositoras genera suspicacia

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Uso de recaudación en beneficio de ciudadanía es mínimo Municipalidad de Asunción es muy eficiente, pero para pagar salarios

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LE FIGARO

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PICASSO
LA DATION SURPRISE
DE SA FILLE MAYA AU MUSÉE
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AUX ANTALGIQUES **PAGE 13**



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À Rouen, la mairie
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Baverez
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**FIGARO OUI
FIGARO NON**

**Réponses à la question
de samedi :**
Êtes-vous favorable à la
levée du passe sanitaire ?

NON 45% OUI 55%

TOTAL DE VOTANTS : 274745

**Votez aujourd'hui
sur lefigaro.fr**
Crise des sous-marins :
la réponse française
est-elle à la hauteur
du camouflet
austral-américain ?

RMN-GRAND PALAIS (MUSÉE
NATIONAL PICASSO-PARIS) / RACHEL
PRAT/SUCCESSION PICASSO 2021-
SAMEER AL-DOUNI/AFIP

Les confidences de Fabrice Luchini à l'occasion de son retour sur scène



Après plus d'un an d'arrêt forcé à cause de la pandémie, le comédien reprend deux de ses spectacles aux Bouffes Parisiens, *Des écrivains parlent d'argent* et *Conversation autour des portraits et autoportraits*. Dans un entretien au *Figaro*, il évoque le confinement, la scène, les auteurs qui l'inspirent, la politique... **PAGE 24**

ERIC GARAULT / LE FIGARO MAGAZINE

Universités, grandes écoles : les défis de l'après-Covid

Le retour des étudiants en « 100 % présentiel » dans les amphithéâtres ne doit pas masquer les difficultés, scolaires et matérielles, auxquelles ils font face.

Une rentrée « normale », ou presque. C'est avec enthousiasme que les étudiants, dont une très large majorité est vaccinée, retrouvent les bancs des universités et des grandes écoles après deux

années perturbées par la crise sanitaire. Un retour en « 100 % présentiel », comme souhaité par la ministre de l'Enseignement supérieur, Frédérique Vidal, et non soumis au passe sanitaire, soi-

rées mises à part. Les établissements et leurs professeurs, soulagés, redoutent néanmoins les dégâts des cours à distance sur les apprentissages et craignent une forte baisse du niveau général.

→ **SUR LE PLATEAU DE SACLAY, RETOUR ENTHOUSIASTE À UNE VIE « NORMALE »**
→ **DEUX ANS DE COVID FONT CRAINDRE UNE BAISSSE DU NIVEAU DES ÉTUDIANTS** → **LAURENT CHAMPANEY :**
→ **NOS ÉLÈVES DÉVELOPPENT UN SYNDROME DE L'IMPOSTEUR** → **PAGES 2, 4 ET L'EDITORIAL**



Primaires des écologistes : entre Jadot et Rousseau, le second tour s'annonce serré

À l'issue du premier tour, le favori, Yannick Jadot, a terminé en tête avec 27,7 % des voix. Mais sa future rivale au second tour, Sandrine Rousseau, a déjoué les pronostics. L'ex-porte-parole du parti est parvenue à se

hisser à la deuxième position, avec 25,14 % des suffrages. Un score pas si éloigné de celui de l'eurodéputé. Des alliances vont se nouer et rien n'est joué pour le scrutin qui aura lieu du 25 au 28 septembre. **PAGE 6**

ÉDITORIAL par Laurence de Charette ldecharette@lefigaro.fr

Fausse notes et vraie rentrée

Voilà une rentrée pas comme les autres qui réjouit les étudiants et angoisse les professeurs... Après deux années de cours intermittents, les jeunes retrouvent ces jours-ci le chemin non virtuel de l'université pour des cours enfin délivrés « en présentiel ». Ce qui suscite leur entrain, ce n'est évidemment pas seulement les retrouvailles avec les amphithéâtres, mais aussi « la vie qui va avec » - ce grand bouillonnement qui s'impose aux jeunes adultes en devenir et exige d'eux la fréquentation de leurs semblables... De cette effervescence aussi naît l'âpreté intellectuelle nécessaire aux apprentissages. Les mois passés ont montré combien le savoir est une matière vivante qui s'appauvrit à travers les écrans et ne se transmet bien que lorsqu'il engage, comme le dit le philosophe Olivier Rey, « des personnes tout entières ».

Si les professeurs s'inquiètent, eux, c'est, précisément, parce qu'ils accusent maintenant réception des dégâts de ces deux années de crise qui ont livré de nombreux adolescents à la force d'attraction des canapés et des écrans. Un peu à la façon des banques centrales, l'Éducation nationale a ouvert son chéquier en

grand et distribué à crédit des bonnes notes, dites « bienveillantes », dont chacun sait qu'elles ne reflètent pas toute la réalité.

Reste désormais à rembourser la dette en atteignant - ou en approchant, un jour, en amont du processus de sélection qui finira par s'opérer tôt ou tard, à l'université ou sur le marché du travail - le niveau requis. Revaloriser les savoirs et restaurer le mérite, c'est là l'enjeu de cette rentrée exceptionnelle et cruciale à la fois. La tâche sera d'autant plus ardue que le grand théâtre d'ombres des notes et du niveau ne date, en réalité, pas du

Revaloriser les savoirs et restaurer le mérite

Covid : comme dans bien d'autres domaines, la pandémie a fait office de révélateur et de catalyseur de mouvements qui la précèdent. La généralisation du contrôle continu, précipitée par le virus, rend l'épreuve de vérité plus que jamais nécessaire. Il y a désormais urgence : ce monde qui s'accélère et se complexifie n'aurait que faire d'une nouvelle catégorie de victimes aux savoirs hésitants fabriquée par le renoncement des adultes ; il exige au contraire des cœurs vaillants et des esprits solides. ■

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The young people turning against capitalism

→ G2



How cinema fell in love with hit stage musicals



→ G2

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Emergency talks in bid to contain fallout from surge in gas prices

Hospitals could cancel operations and food supplies will be hit

Dan Sabbagh
Jillian Ambrose
Andrew Gregory

Kwasi Kwarteng, the business secretary, will hold an emergency meeting with gas industry chiefs this morning in an effort to contain the fallout

caused by soaring market prices on consumers and businesses.

The meeting follows a frantic weekend of meetings and phone calls, with the minister drawing up plans to deal with future bankruptcies among the 60-plus gas suppliers, so consumers are not suddenly forced on to far higher tariffs.

The smallest suppliers will be allowed to go under with their customers auctioned off to the company prepared to offer them the cheapest rate. But "medium sized" suppliers running into trouble will be placed

into administration so they can keep trading until a rescue plan is agreed.

Yesterday the chair of the NHS Confederation, which represents the 213 health trusts in England, warned the ensuing lack of carbon dioxide (CO₂) from the crisis could lead to operations being cancelled - exacerbating the huge hospital backlog.

The reduction in CO₂ availability could also have effects for the food and drink industry, with meat, poultry, beer and fizzy drinks all requiring the gas for a variety of purposes.

The boss of one small energy firm,

'I'm concerned about making sure there's CO₂ for the NHS'

Victor Adebowale
NHS Confederation chair

which has more than a quarter of a million customers, revealed that he feared his company would not make it into the spring - and warned of a "tsunami of more to come".

"I don't think we'll survive the winter if there's not a material change," said Peter McGirr, the chief executive at Green.

Five small operators have gone bust in the last five weeks, often because they have not hedged against the rise in market prices, leaving more than half a million customers in need of a new supplier. Industry sources expect another four may fold before the end of the month, leaving a further 1 million customers stranded.

It emerged last night that Bulb, the UK's sixth-largest

12 →

French cancel UK defence meeting

Dan Sabbagh
Julian Borger
Heather Stewart

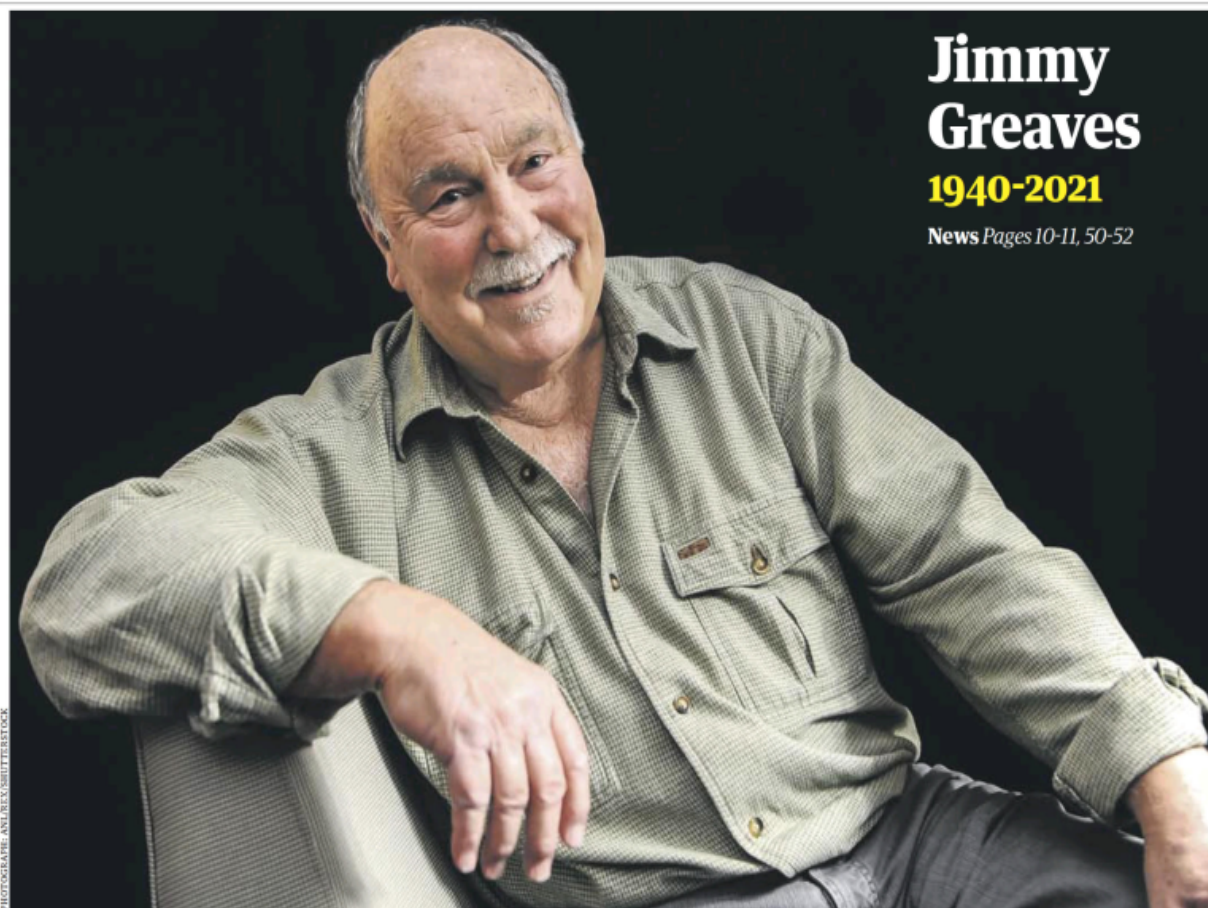
A Franco-British defence ministers' summit due to take place this week has been cancelled as Paris steps up its protests over the loss of a £48bn submarine contract with Australia and its secret replacement with UK and US nuclear technology.

Ben Wallace, the UK defence secretary, and his opposite number, Florence Parly, had been due to hold a bilateral meeting in London and address the two-day Franco-British Council. The events are the latest casualties of the diplomatic row.

The council was also due to be attended by defence chiefs from both countries, the two largest military powers in western Europe. The co-chair Peter Ricketts, a former UK national security adviser, confirmed the elite gathering had been "postponed to a later date".

As a result it is understood Parly's planned trip to London is deemed to be redundant.

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Jimmy Greaves
1940-2021

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▲ Jimmy Greaves in 2010. The prolific goalscorer was widely considered to be England's finest marksman and went on to become a popular TV pundit