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| Jihad ReportJul 11, 2020 -Jul 17, 2020 |
| Attacks | **30** |
| Killed | **130** |
| Injured | **180** |
| Suicide Blasts | **1** |
| Countries | **9** |

**CDC Gets Blocked**

The Trump administration is attempting to block billions of dollars for contact tracing, additional testing and other coronavirus mitigation efforts that would potentially be included in Congress's next coronavirus relief package, officials involved in the negotiations [told The Washington Post.](https://www.washingtonpost.com/us-policy/2020/07/18/white-house-testing-budget-cdc-coronavirus/)

According to the Post's sources, the administration is also trying to block billions in funding for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) that GOP senators want to give the agency as it continues to battle COVID-19 on the front lines.

The administration also wanted to take out billions of dollars that would go to the Pentagon and State Department to allow them to better combat the pandemic both domestically and internationally, the Post reports.

While the talks were fluid, the officials said, the administration’s stance perturbed some GOP senators, who want the money to stay in the bill.

Senate Majority Leader [Mitch McConnell](https://thehill.com/people/mitch-mcconnell) (R-Ky.) signaled this week that Senate Republicans' version of a new COVID-19 relief package could be unveiled this coming week, as both the Senate and the House return to session.

While House Democrats passed a relief package at the end of May, McConnell has made it clear that the bill would go nowhere in the Republican-controlled Senate.

It doesn’t appear that the House Democrats and Senate Republicans are anywhere close to having an agreed upon package, and any friction between GOP senators and the White House would only widen the quagmire.

The next potential coronavirus relief bill comes as the U.S. is struggling to fight off a resurgence of COVID-19.

On Friday, the country reported nearly 76,000 new cases of the virus, a record, and added another 70,831 on Saturday, according to data [compiled by The New York Times](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/coronavirus-us-cases.html).

All but a handful of states have implemented mask requirements for its residents while in public.

**CDC Data Wipe Under Way**

Previously public data has already disappeared from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s website after the Trump administration quietly shifted control of the information to the Department of Health and Human Services.

Since the pandemic began, the CDC regularly published data on availability of hospital beds and intensive care units across the country. But Ryan Panchadsaram, who helps run a data-tracking site called [Covid Exit Strategy](https://www.covidexitstrategy.org/), said that when he tried to collect the data from the CDC on Tuesday, it had disappeared.

“We were surprised because the modules that we normally go to were empty. The data wasn’t available and not there,” he said. “There was no warning.”

CDC Director Dr. Robert Redfield told reporters on a conference call Wednesday that states were told to stop sending hospital information to the National Healthcare Safety Network site, the CDC’s system for gathering data, beginning Wednesday. Instead, all data will now be reported through HHS’ reporting portal, officials said, adding that the decision was made to streamline data reporting and to provide HHS officials with real-time data.

Public health specialists and former health officials acknowledged that the CDC’s data reporting infrastructure was limited, and said it needs to be overhauled to meet the demands of the Covid-19 pandemic. However, [they expressed concern in interviews with CNBC](https://www.cnbc.com/2020/07/15/trump-administration-changes-its-process-for-collecting-and-reporting-us-coronavirus-hospital-data.html) that the change could lead to less transparent data.

When reached for comment Thursday by CNBC, HHS spokesman Michael Caputo said in a statement that the CDC was directed to make the data available again. In the future, he said, HHS will provide “more powerful insights.”

“Yes, HHS is committed to being transparent with the American public about the information it is collecting on the coronavirus,” he said. “Therefore, HHS has directed CDC to re-establish the coronavirus dashboards it withdrew from the public on Wednesday.”

Representatives of the CDC did not immediately respond to CNBC’s request for comment. Later in the day, the CDC restored the site’s previous dashboards with data through Tuesday, saying: “This file will not be updated after July 14, 2020 and includes data from April 1 to July 14.”

The [CDC’s web page](https://www.cdc.gov/nhsn/covid19/report-patient-impact.html#anchor_1594393649) for data on available hospital and ICU beds has added a note that reads: “Data displayed on this page was submitted directly to CDC’s National Healthcare Safety Network (NHSN) and does not include data submitted to other entities contracted by or within the federal government.”

“We don’t have this critical indicator anymore,” Panchadsaram said. “The intent of just switching the data streams towards HHS, that’s fine. But you got to keep the data that you’re sharing publicly still available and up to date.”

Panchadsaram said he and his team, which includes researchers from the Duke-Margolis Center for Health Policy and from Resolve to Save Lives, a public health initiative led by former CDC director Dr. Tom Frieden, have been tracking the data since April.

Panchadsaram thinks of the project as something of a “progress bar” as they grade different states on the overall progress they’ve made in fighting Covid-19. Available hospital beds and ICU capacity is a key indicator they use to assess state performance, he added.

“It’s disappointing. It happened a lot quicker than expected,” he said. “The picture that we’re presenting to the world is incomplete.”

Other coronavirus researchers and public health specialists expressed concern because the policy change was announced so suddenly in the midst of a public health crisis that appears to be worsening.

Dr. Jennifer Nuzzo, an epidemiologist at Johns Hopkins University, which runs one of the most popular third-party coronavirus data dashboards, said the policy change won’t impact the Hopkins site because they’ve managed to source their data directly from states. She added, however, that the policy change raises questions about the transparency of the data and the role of the CDC in the ongoing U.S. response.

“What worries me is that we seem to be pushing rather suddenly in the midst of what feels like a very urgent time in terms of surging cases that we’re seeing across the country,” she told CNBC. “The question is, what are we going to lose in this transition, and in particular at a moment where we really don’t want to lose any ability to understand what’s happening in hospitals.”

Nuzzo expressed concern that the administration didn’t appear to fully plan out how the transition in data reporting would work and didn’t give hospitals or researchers a warning about the change or how it might affect them.

“I think it’s reasonable to worry that it could lead to erosion of capacities at a moment where we very much can’t afford to lose any abilities at this point,” she added. “I don’t fully understand how it’s going to work. That in and of itself is problematic.”

Dr. Jen Kates, senior vice president and director of global health and HIV policy at the Kaiser Family Foundation, echoed Nuzzo’s concerns about the speed with which the decision has become policy. She added that the Trump administration has politicized the public health crisis for months, so the policy change raises concerns about the integrity of the data as well.

“It’s been such a critical source of information for everyone, for states, for researchers, for reporters, for the public to try to understand what’s happening,” she said. “The last thing you want is for data to be politicized. It just raises that concern. Will data being at HHS create a more politicized use of it, or maybe not. But again, it’s a concern that’s been raised.”

President [Donald Trump](https://www.cnbc.com/donald-trump/) and his administration have come under fire during the pandemic from critics who say the White House is undermining the country’s public health professionals. Last week, Trump criticized the CDC’s guidelines on reopening schools as too tough and expensive, and Vice President Mike Pence said the agency would issue additional recommendations.

“There’s been concerns raised about when CDC has the leeway to offer its advice as a public health agency, really based on the evidence and the data, and there’s been several examples where we’re not clear that that’s been the case,” Kates said. “I think that is a concern that many have; is there any political significance to this change?”

**The Federal Marshal Effect**

Federal law enforcement officials have reportedly started to whisk suspected rioters off the streets of Portland in unmarked cars as the Trump administration begins to make good on its promise to “quell” the violence in the city.

“Federal law enforcement officers have been using unmarked vehicles to drive around downtown Portland and detain protesters since at least July 14,” Oregon Public Broadcasting [reported](https://www.opb.org/news/article/federal-law-enforcement-unmarked-vehicles-portland-protesters/) Thursday. “Personal accounts and multiple videos posted online show the officers driving up to people, detaining individuals with no explanation of why they are being arrested, and driving off.”

“The tactic appears to be another escalation in federal force deployed on Portland city streets, as federal officials and President Donald Trump have said they plan to ‘quell’ nightly protests outside the federal courthouse and Multnomah County Justice Center that have lasted for more than six weeks,” OPB added. “Federal officers have charged at least 13 people with crimes related to the protests so far, while others have been arrested and released.”

Left-wing media has reported critically on the law enforcement actions by federal agents.

The Washington Post documented one man who was arrested and the process that he went through, which resulted in his brief detainment and release.

“He was detained and searched,” The Post said. “One man asked him if he had any weapons; he did not. They drove him to the federal courthouse and placed him in a holding cell.”

“Two officers eventually returned to read his Miranda rights and ask if he would waive those rights to answer a few questions; he did not,” The Post added. “And almost as suddenly as they had grabbed him off the street, the men let him go.”

The move comes as the Democrat-controlled city has experienced 47 straight days of unruly mobs rioting.

“The city of Portland has been under siege for 47 straight days by a violent mob while local political leaders refuse to restore order to protect their city,” [Acting DHS Secretary Chad Wolf](https://www.dailywire.com/news/dhs-chief-democrat-leaders-told-us-to-leave-when-we-offered-to-secure-portland-were-not-leaving) said in a statement this week. “Each night, lawless anarchists destroy and desecrate property, including the federal courthouse, and attack the brave law enforcement officers protecting it.”

“A federal courthouse is a symbol of justice – to attack it is to attack America,” Wolf continued. “Instead of addressing violent criminals in their communities, local and state leaders are instead focusing on placing blame on law enforcement and requesting fewer officers in their community. This failed response has only emboldened the violent mob as it escalates violence day after day.”

“This siege can end if state and local officials decide to take appropriate action instead of refusing to enforce the law,” Wolf concluded. “DHS will not abdicate its solemn duty to protect federal facilities and those within them. Again, I reiterate the Department’s offer to assist local and state leaders to bring an end to the violence perpetuated by anarchists.”

The Department of Homeland Security released an extensive list of the violence that has been caused by the leftist rioters in Portland in recent days:

**05/29/2020**

* Violent anarchists broke a front window at the Hatfield Courthouse.
* Violent anarchists graffitied the Hatfield Courthouse.
* Overall, the cost of damages on federal property done by the violent mob this first night was estimated at $5,000.

**05/30/2020**

* Violent anarchists graffitied the BPA Building.
* Violent anarchists graffitied the Hatfield Courthouse.
* Violent anarchists graffitied the Edith Green-Wenell Wyatt Building.
* Violent anarchists graffitied the Terry Schrunk Plaza.
* Violent anarchists graffitied the 911 Federal Building.
* Violent anarchists graffitied the Pioneer Courthouse.
* Violent anarchists graffitied the Gus J. Solomon Courthouse.

**06/01/2020**

* Violent anarchists graffitied the Hatfield Courthouse.
* Violent anarchists graffitied Terry Schrunk Plaza.
* Violent anarchists graffitied The Pioneer Courthouse.
* Violent anarchists graffitied The Gus J Solomon Courthouse.

**06/02/2020**

* Violent anarchists graffitied the U.S. Custom House.

**06/06/2020**

* Violent anarchists destroyed fencing surrounding federal property.

**06/07/2020**

* Violent anarchists damaged and breached the fence around the Hatfield Courthouse.
* Portland Police were forced to deploy crowd control spray to disperse a crowd that was throwing animal seed at officers.

**06/08/2020**

* Violent anarchists broke a window at the Hatfield Courthouse while pelting the building with objects.
* Violent anarchists cut a hole in the fence surrounding Hatfield Courthouse.

**06/10/2020**

* Violent anarchists removed the entire fence around Hatfield Courthouse and graffitied its front columns.
* Violent anarchists attempted to remove wooden barriers from a window on the Hatfield Courthouse.

**06/11/2020**

* Violent anarchists dismantled a section of the fence protecting the Edith Green-Wenell Wyatt Federal Building.

**06/13/2020**

* Violent anarchists destroyed the card reader at the Hatfield Courthouse by ripping it off its mount.
* Violent anarchists destroyed the fence at the Hatfield Courthouse.
* Violent anarchists threw metal pipes at the Hatfield Courthouse, causing Portland Police to issue a disbursal warning for unlawful assembly.

**06/17/2020**

* Violent anarchists graffitied the Hatfield Courthouse.

**06/20/2020**

* Among a group of over400 protesters marching in front of the Pioneer Courthouse, violent anarchists attempted to cause eye damage to officers with commercial grade lasers.
* Violent anarchists graffitied the Gus J. Solomon Courthouse.

**06/25/2020**

* Violent anarchists vandalized an FPS camera at the Hatfield Courthouse.
* Violent anarchists breached the fence of the Justice Center, adjacent to the courthouse.

**06/30/2020**

* Violent anarchists ripped down plywood covering the windows at the Edith Green-Wenell Wyatt Building, before breaking the windows.

**7/01/2020**

* Violent anarchists graffitied new plywood covering the windows at the Hatfield Courthouse and ripped down plywood on the other side of the building.
* A group of over 200 violent anarchists blocked access to the building and proceeded to launch aerial fireworks at federal property.

**07/02/2020**

* Violent anarchists broke a front window to the Hatfield Courthouse and attempted to enter the building.
* Violent anarchists refused orders to vacate the Hatfield Courthouse area, and instead launched fireworks and threw objects at officers, while attempting to cause eye damage with lasers. One explosive firework was shot into the courthouse.
* FPS law enforcement officers were forced to utilized crowd control measures for safety.

**07/03/2020**

* After ongoing riots around the Hatfield Courthouse, crowds were dispersed only to make a return later into the night.
* Violent Anarchists broke the front window of the Hatfield U.S. Courthouse and shot fireworks into the building.
* Violent anarchists firebombed the building. Federal law enforcement extinguished the fire.

**07/04/2020**

* Around 1,000 violent anarchists spray painted, threw rocks, and shot fireworks (including mortar style fireworks) at the Hatfield Courthouse. They also destroyed a security camera at the facility.
	+ A CBP team supporting FPS at the courthouse arrested suspects from the graffiti and camera vandalism incidents.
	+ The mob continued to throw rocks and paint-filled balloons, while attempting to breach the doors.
	+ Teams were forced to utilize crowd control measures for safety.
* Multiple individuals were seen carrying rifles, including the driver of a vehicle who attempted to strike a Portland Police Bureau officer with his car in front of the Hatfield Courthouse.

**07/05/2020**

* A hostile crowd of about 250 violent anarchists returned to the vicinity of Hatfield Courthouse to vandalize and attack numerous facilities and police, while failing to comply with dispersal order.
* Violent anarchists surrounded and blocked law enforcement from the area as extremists proceeded to attack police with thrown projectiles and large mortar style fireworks.
* Two Portland Police Bureau officers were injured by the crowd (possible concussion).
* Portland Police Bureau took five into custody for directing lasers against aircraft.
* Violent anarchists set fires in front of Hatfield Courthouse and Chapman park.
* At the entrance of Hatfield Courthouse, Violent Anarchists fired large fireworks and threw other dangerous objects toward the entrance and the personnel protecting it.
* The mob was pushed completely out of the area of Hatfield Courthouse; FPS made two arrests during push.
* Portland Police made multiple arrests and found a loaded weapon on one subject.
* Two more violent anarchists were arrested, and one was found to be carrying what appears to be a pipe bomb.
* Violent anarchists assaulted construction crews by targeting them with fireworks while they repaired Hatfield Building.
* A joint team had to be deployed to create buffer between violent anarchists and construction crew to protect construction workers.

**07/06/2020**

* Violent anarchists attempted to cause vision damage to personnel with lasers. Five arrests were made for assaulting law enforcement.

**07/07/2020**

* Violent anarchists held a “Night of Rage,” in which a 400-500-person protest devolved into riots, assaulting law enforcement officers and federal property.
* Approximately 200 violent anarchists began pursuing law enforcement officers to disrupt enforcement actions, assaulting them with rocks and bottles.
* Around 150 violent anarchists in front of the Justice Center began attacking personnel with lasers and peppered the area with fireworks.
* Three violent anarchists were arrested for attacking law enforcement.

**07/08/2020**

* Approximately 200 violent anarchists attacked DHS law enforcement officers while apprehending a subject who was wanted for property damage.
* One arrest was made after three law enforcement officers were injured.
* Law enforcement officers’ personal information was publicly exposed, including FPS, ICE, and CBP personnel.
* Violent anarchists continued to attack officers with lasers.

**07/09/2020**

* Violent anarchists attacked DHS law enforcement officers while apprehending a subject who was wanted for property damage.
* A violent anarchist graffitied the Hatfield courthouse.
* An unidentified subject fired several shots from a gun into the air from the rear seat of a passing white SUV.

**07/10/2020**

* Crowds of approximately 300 violent anarchists vandalized federal property and cameras with spray paint, blocked roadways, and assaulted law enforcement officers.
* Three were arrested for Assault on a Federal Officer.
* Violent anarchists attempted to ambush Portland Police Department PD during their shift change, but a DHS team was deployed and able to prevent any attacks.

**07/11/2020**

* DHS law enforcement officers supported local police to help a violent anarchist who overdosed.
* Four violent anarchists were arrested, including one who attempted to assault an officer with a hammer.
* Violent anarchists sieged the barricade of the courthouse and tried to damage it with a large hammer.
* A law enforcement officer was assaulted with blows from a hammer. Violent anarchists fought officers while they were arresting those responsible.

**07/12/2020**

* Six violent anarchists were detained and cited.
* A mob of 300 refused to comply with directions not to trespass on federal property.
* Another mob of 200 individuals armed with sledgehammers, tasers and/or stun guns, gathered in Chapman Park across from the Hatfield Courthouse.
* Violent anarchists launched fireworks, threw fecal matter and large objects, and pointed lasers at federal law enforcement officers.
* Violent anarchists deployed a plywood blockade while graffitiing the Edith Green-Wenell Wyatt Federal Building, before firing wrist rockets at the facility.
* When an arrest team was deployed to apprehend a rioter who encroached on a police barrier and refused to leave, they were assaulted by violent anarchists.
* A rioter trespassed on the steps of the Hatfield Courthouse and was confronted by federal law enforcement Officers, then swallowed a large amount of narcotics. Law enforcement called medical services after the individual started to convulse.
* Despite more orders to stay off of federal property and to cease unlawful activity, FPS was forced to push back violent anarchists. The Portland Police Bureau declared the mob an unlawful assembly.

**07/13/2020**

* Violent anarchists released personal information of federal law enforcement officers to the public, publishing names of those in Portland.
* Violent anarchists continued to assault law enforcement officers with lasers, slingshots and fireworks. Others were armed with sledge hammers, tasers, and stun guns, and dragged flaming debris into the scene.

**07/14/2020**

* Violent anarchists set a container of liquid on fire at the Terry Schrunk Plaza.
* Violent anarchists jumped a fence and attempted to breach the Edith Green Federal Building.
* Violent anarchists assaulted federal law enforcement officers with cans and other hard objects while they attempted to unblock the entrance of the Edith Green Federal Building.

**07/15/2020**

* Violent anarchists doxed members of federal law enforcement.
* Violent anarchists attempted to damage the Hatfield Courthouse by throwing objects at it and spray painting it. Numerous fireworks were also lit.
* Violent anarchists trespassed on federal property and destroyed a card reader at the Justice Center.

**NYT Sued for Fake News**

The New York Times is being sued for $10 million for reporting during the COVID-19 pandemic that students at Liberty University were victims after university officials decided to reopen campus after a break.

Paul Bedard's "Washington Secrets" column in the Washington Examiner reported that in a 100-page suit filed in Virginia’s Lynchburg Circuit Court, the university charged that New York Times reporter Elizabeth Williamson and photographer Julia Rendleman ignored "No Trespassing" signs to tour the campus when it was trying to keep away outsiders who might be infected with the coronavirus.

Liberty claims the Times falsely charged that students returning from spring break became infected with the coronavirus because the university remained open. In fact, no student, staffer, or faculty member on campus became infected, Bedard reported.

The complaint says: "None of this was true. There was never an on-campus student diagnosed with COVID-19. The only actual 'viral' element of this narrative that existed was the intense 'viral' internet attention it generated for the New York Times' website and for those paying to advertise on that website."

The university was launched 49 years ago by Jerry Falwell and now is run by his son, Jerry Falwell Jr.

"It is the second embarrassment for the New York Times in two days. On Tuesday, prominent opinion writer Bari Weiss quit and ripped the paper in a public letter saying that the paper’s coverage is driven by 'clicks' and Twitter," Bedard reported.

Falwell said, "It’s just not right for the mainstream media to lie about and target conservative Christian organizations just because of their faith and because of their political beliefs, and we’re going to make an example out of them."

The university previously sought charges against the reporter and photographer for trespassing. Although the case was dropped, the photographer said, "I do, however, need Jerry Falwell Jr.’s permission to ever return to Liberty University."

Jerry Falwell Jr. of Liberty University on Saturday, May 13, 2017, Lynchburg, Virginia. (Official White House Photo by Shealah Craighead)

The original story carried different headlines, including "A University Reopened, and Students Got Sick," and had multiple errors, the filing says. While the story claimed the university reopened after break, it actually allowed about 1,500 of the 15,000 students who were foreign or didn't want to return home to stay on campus, under virus protections including social distancing.

The story also quoted an off-campus physician, who said students were ill. But the cases were not due to the coronavirus. The state conducted health inspections and found everything at the school in order.

Even so, the Times claimed: "So Mr. Falwell — a staunch ally of President Trump and an influential voice in the evangelical world — reopened the university last week, igniting a firestorm. As of Friday, Dr. Eppes said, nearly a dozen Liberty students were sick with symptoms that suggested Covid-19, the disease caused by the virus. Three were referred to local hospital centers for testing. An additional eight were told to self-isolate."

**The Sneakiest Virus of All**

Argentinian health officials are scrambling to understand how nearly every crew member of a ship which spent 35 days at sea were found to have contracted [coronavirus](http://www.independent.co.uk/topic/coronavirus) upon returning to land.

All 61 sailors aboard the trawler, Echizen Maru, tested negative for the virus upon departure from [Buenos Aires](http://www.independent.co.uk/topic/BuenosAires) in late May.

They were then flown to the [Ushuaia](http://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ushuaia), a typical jumping-off point for Antarctic voyages nicknamed “the end of the world”, where they were quarantined in a hotel for two weeks before setting sail.

After weeks at sea, some crew members started to display symptoms typical to [Covid-19](http://www.independent.co.uk/topic/covid-19), and the ship returned to port.

All but four aboard the ship tested positive upon their return, local health authorities in the Tierra del Fuego province said on Monday. Two have been hospitalised in Ushuaia Regional Hospital, one of whom is receiving oxygen.

Now officials are struggling to piece together how the disease reached the isolated ship.

“It’s hard to establish how this crew was infected, considering that for 35 days, they had no contact with dry land,” Alejandra Alfaro, the director of primary health care in Tierra del Fuego, told Agence France-Presse. “Supplies were only brought in from the port of Ushuaia.”

“[The virus] entered somewhere. We have to think that it was human contact or contact with merchandise, products, supplies,” Ms Alfaro told local media on Monday.

“We know that for 35 days, no one, or any new input, got on the ship. Obviously something happened, perhaps there has been some degree of contagion inside the boat that was not registered.”

Ms Alfaro added that the outbreak may have been exacerbated by the fishermen’s hardiness and acclimatisation to rough conditions, in that they may have spent significant time in discomfort without recognising or acknowledging symptoms.

It is also possible that the two-week quarantine period was insufficient, with several studies having suggested that in rare cases – roughly one in every 100 – the incubation period can extend beyond 14 days.

But given the length of time before symptoms were reported onboard, the hospital’s head of infectious diseases, Leandro Ballatore, told AFP he believed this is a “case that escapes all description in publications, because an incubation period this long has not been described anywhere”.

In a statement, the local health minister Judit Di Giglio said that, by Wednesday, officials would have the results of tests, “which will allow us to know how many antibodies the patients have to know if the infection has been newer or older”.

Argentina has so far identified more than 100,000 cases of coronavirus, with an official death toll nearing 2,000

**Projection Rejection**

To the shock of many NY Democrats, a Republican won a congressional seat by a large margin. Chris Jacobs beat Nate McMurray for the NY-27 congressional special election by 69%-30%. That huge difference was enough for Jacobs to declare victory.

But Democrat McMurray is refusing to admit defeat, demanding that absentee ballots be counted:

*Although absentee ballots won’t begin to be calculated for another week at the earliest, Republican Chris Jacobs declared victory over Democrat Nate McMurray in the NY-27 congressional special election…*

*McMurray released a statement shortly after midnight saying that he would not be conceding until the absentee ballots were counted.*

 According to Jacobs, it would be “mathematically impossible” for the results of the election to change with absentee ballots. Yet the Democrat is refusing to concede, despite suffering a monumental loss.

Our Take:

Some suggest this is an omen of things to come. Democrats might refuse to concede in November, without a recount or use of mail-in ballots—even ballots that come in past the deadline.

President Trump has warned that mail-in ballots might be used to commit voter fraud in the election.

What is most telling is the large margin this Republican won by. It wasn’t a “squeaker” by any measure. This might be a bigger sign of things to come, as Americans across the country are growing mistrustful and resentful toward the Democratic Party.

Democrats forced heavy lockdown restrictions on law-abiding citizens (while releasing criminals from jail). They also sat back and let rioters burn their cities. This election might be a referendum on how Democrats run the country when given power.

McMurray’s unwillingness to concede, in the face of a clear Republican victory, suggests the Democrat is unwilling to accept the results of a fair and open election. He seems to be doing exactly what Democrats are worried Trump might do.

Instead of acknowledging his loss, he appears to be clawing at straws. He will not concede without kicking and screaming.

This comes as no surprise. Hillary Clinton accused Donald Trump of not accepting the results of the 2016 election if he should lose. But it was Clinton who refused to admit defeat on Election Night—opting to concede a day later.

McMurray is continuing the left’s tradition of balking at democracy when it doesn’t work out as they planned.

**The End of Federal Elections**

We’re told a second wave of coronavirus infections is coming. As businesses open back up and states relax lockdown orders, the number of new cases is ticking up in a handful of states. We’ve heard [warnings in recent days](https://nypost.com/2020/06/14/cdc-warns-of-second-coronavirus-wave-as-state-lift-lockdown/) from the Centers for Disease Control and various public health experts and elected officials that a new series of lockdowns might be necessary.

What these experts and officials don’t seem to realize is that Americans will never comply with their lockdown orders again. They have burned their credibility to the ground, and they no longer have the moral authority to tell us what to do.

Simply put, the people in charge have shown themselves to be rank hypocrites who care more about politics than science. For months, we were told that large gatherings were deadly because of the coronavirus, but when protests broke out in late May, large gatherings were suddenly okay.

The exact day the experts lost their credibility was June 4, when more than 1,000 public health workers [signed a letter](https://www.cnn.com/2020/06/05/health/health-care-open-letter-protests-coronavirus-trnd/index.html) claiming the protests were “vital to the national public health and to the threatened health specifically of black people in the United States.” The woke corporate press scrambled to assure us this wasn’t hypocritical at all, and that “health is about more than simply remaining free of coronavirus infection,” as a pair of epidemiologists [put it in The Atlantic](https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2020/06/public-health-experts-are-not-hypocrites/612853/).

That’s a curious argument to make after forced business closures and lockdown orders destroyed tens of millions of American jobs, ruined countless businesses and livelihoods, and caused a sharp [uptick in suicides](https://thefederalist.com/2020/05/22/california-doctor-calls-for-end-to-lockdowns-over-rising-suicides/), drug overdoses, and domestic abuse. Never mind the [compelling research](https://thefederalist.com/2020/06/16/research-finds-lockdowns-are-far-worse-for-health-and-lives-than-coronavirus/) showing that lockdowns are overall much worse for public health than the coronavirus.

But if public health experts cared about more than just steering clear of the coronavirus at any cost, you wouldn’t have known it based on their pandemic policies—that is, until the George Floyd protests and Black Lives Matter (BLM) rallies came along. Here at last was something more important than stopping the virus.

And it wasn’t just public health experts. Elected officials were all too willing to use their power to promote ideology at the expense of public health—and then turn around and punish disfavored groups in the name of public health.

Witness the appalling double standard of men like New York City Mayor Bill DeBlasio. On Monday, city workers welded shut the gates of a Brooklyn playground frequented by members of the Hasidic Jewish community in Williamsburg. They claimed it was necessary to stop the spread of the coronavirus. But this happened one day after the city allowed a massive “Black Trans Lives Matter” rally in Brooklyn’s Grand Army Plaza that attracted thousands of protesters packed together in close quarters.

Officially, large gatherings are still banned in New York as part of the city’s pandemic response. So are playgrounds, including the one whose gates were welded shut Monday, because the city “found a lack of regard for social distancing” at the parks, according to a de Blasio spokeswoman.

There are two only possible conclusions here. Either de Blasio somehow believes that catching COVID-19 isn’t a risk if you’re at a BLM rally, or he doesn’t actually care about preventing the spread of the virus and wants to use the pandemic to exercise arbitrary power over New Yorkers, punishing those who defy him and indulging those who share his political views.

Either way, no one should take anything de Blasio says about the pandemic seriously, and no New Yorker should ever again obey a lockdown order issued from his office.

## Their Hypocrisy Knows No Bounds

The same story is playing out all over the country. Mayors who did nothing to prevent mass protests in recent weeks—and in some cases joined protesters, in violation of their own lockdown orders—have maintained draconian restrictions on other types of gatherings, stricktly limiting the number of people who can congregate in restaurants, shops, gyms, and houses of worship.

In Washington, D.C., which has seen days on end of massive BLM protests, some [numbering in the hundreds of thousands](https://www.politico.com/news/2020/06/06/george-floyd-blm-protest-washington-304635), Mayor Muriel Bowser on Wednesday announced the city would begin “phase 2” of its reopening next week. For restaurants, that means no more than 50 percent capacity, tables six feet apart, and all diners must be seated at the tables.

Same thing in Los Angeles, where thousands converged on Hollywood Boulevard Sunday for a Black Trans Lives Matter rally. [Video footage of the event](https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=61&v=jeeaXqj_V78&feature=emb_logo) showed attendees packed tightly together on the street, with no possibility of social distancing. According to news reports, there were no police present at the rally, and the city made no effort to stop it or limit attendance.

But like D.C. and other cities, Los Angeles still has strict pandemic policies for businesses, churches, and just about everything else. For houses of worship, the city has issued [elaborate guidelines](http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/media/coronavirus/docs/protocols/Reopening_PlacesofWorship.pdf) for reopening, including a limit to the total number of people, clergy, and parishioners combined, who can attend a service: 25 percent of building capacity or 100 people, whichever is lower.

Why these restrictions should apply to churches but not to massive political protests, the city does not say. It’s all [very confusing](https://twitter.com/TheView/status/1272945910620794880).

## BLM Rallies Are Safe, Trump Rallies Are Not?

The starkest contradiction of all might be the reactions to President Trump’s rally planned for Saturday in Tulsa, Oklahoma. Local health officials are warning it could become a disastrous “super spreader” event—a term media outlets like The New York Times have been eager to repeat under [headlines warning](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/16/us/politics/trump-coronavirus-rally.html), “Trump’s rally in Tulsa Could Spread Virus,” using language they would never use to describe any of the large-scale protests, rallies, and riots nationwide.

Some media pundits make no apologies for this obvious double standard. Tuesday on ABC’s “The View,” Joy Behar claimed [Trump doesn’t care about his supporters’ health and safety](https://www.foxnews.com/media/view-clash-covid-protests-trump-rally) because he’s willing to hold a rally amid the pandemic, and that his rally is more risky than the protests because it’ll be indoors, whereas the protests are mostly outdoors. Okay, Joy.

Public officials in Tulsa have also adopted this double standard. The mayor and a cadre of other officials have publicly implored Trump not to go ahead with the rally, citing concerns about COVID-19. But these same officials dared not say a word against recent BLM rallies held in the city and suburbs, including a large one that got out of control and [spilled onto a busy highway](https://www.tulsapeople.com/the-voice/scenes-from-sundays-black-lives-matter-rally-and-protests/collection_03e2e156-a41a-11ea-a0a5-ab6bab37ee38.html), where several protesters were injured.

The double standard is everywhere and undeniable, and the message is clear: the experts and the people in charge only care about the pandemic when it’s politically convenient. They’re guided by the science, they tell us, but only if the science doesn’t get in the way of their virtue-signaling about Black Lives Matter.

They care about public health, but only up to a point. They care much more about being woke. And if you want to go to a big rally, it’s only safe if it’s the right kind of rally.

Enough of this. Americans should never listen to these people again.

**Gun Control Report**

A legally armed Indiana man is credited with saving lives when he shot and killed a 22-year-old gunman who had fatally shot a cemetery worker and was about to kill another.

The man who halted the shooting, who asked not to be indentified, was stopped at a traffic light in Brownsburg, Indiana, when a bullet from the attacker, Christopher Hayes, went through his window, injuring him. As Hayes put a gun to the head of the second cemetery worker, the armed citizen shot and killed Hayes, WISH-TV in Indianapolis reported.

"This tragic event could have been much more disastrous. So, victim three not only saved victim two's life, but he saved potentially the lives of many others," said Police Capt. Jennifer Barrett.

"Victim three did exactly what anybody would have wanted him to do at that scene that day."

WISH reported police met with Hayes' family and discovered the 22-year-old black man had a history of mental health problems.

Homicides are rare in Brownsburg, WISH noted, and the apparently unprovoked violence received considerable attention on social media. Police said there were numerous posts jumping to the conclusion that the shooting was racially motivated. The police spokeswoman, Barrett, said the investigation is leading police to believe "a mental health component" was behind the incident.

She said the Hayes family "has expressed is that they want there to be a mental health awareness component to this."

"They're, of course, devastated. But they're also devastated for the other victim."

WIBC in Indianapolis reported the man who killed Hayes is not facing any charges, according to his lawyer, Guy Relford. Relford said Hayes went on a psychotic rampage, but it is still unclear what motivated the attack.

"One of those bullets actually went through my client's vehicle window. He was actually injured with shrapnel, my client was," he said.

After Hayes killed Robertson, the attacker chased the cemetery worker and put a pistol to his head, said Relford.

"My client looked at that and realized there was one thing he could do and that was take action to save an innocent life," said Relford. "The scenario was fairly clear to him in that one person was chasing another and the other was saying, no no no, please don’t shoot me!"

He said his client took aim and shot Hayes once.

"The gunman stood up and was looking around and still had the gun in his hand, appeared to clearly intend to continue the attack at which point my client fired another two or three shots and the gunman went down," the lawyer said.

Relford said his client was justified and does not face any charges.

The lawyer said police quickly "determined my client acted completely lawfully and he was justified under Indiana law."

Relford said he helped write and get passed a 2019 Indiana law that protects people who are justified in shooting someone from frivolous lawsuits.

**Oxygen Therapy**

In hyperbaric oxygen therapy (HBOT), a person enters a special chamber to breathe in pure oxygen in air pressure levels one-and-a-half to three times higher than average

The first documented use of came before the discovery of oxygen, when, in 1662, British clergyman named Henshaw used a system of organ bellows to change the atmospheric pressure in a sealed chamber called a domicilium. Even though he had no scientific basis for his theories, Henshaw believed that acute conditions would benefit from increased air pressure, while chronic conditions would respond better to decreased air pressure. Since it was first used about a century ago in the US as medical treatment to fill the blood with enough oxygen to repair tissues and restore normal body function,

HBOT has been recognized as having the potential to speed the healing of carbon monoxide and cyanide poisoning victims, including miners and firefighters; perform decompression on divers who returned to the surface of the water too fast or too late; and to treat gangrene, stubborn wounds and infections in which tissues are starved for oxygen and “flesh-eating disease” (necrotizing soft tissue infection) and diabetic wounds that do not heal properly.

There is a growing body of evidence on the regenerative effects of HBOT by improving tissue oxygenation while targeting both oxygen and pressure sensitive genes, resulting in restored and enhanced tissue metabolism. In addition, these targeted genes induce stem cell proliferation, reduce inflammation and stimulate the generation of new blood vessels and tissue repair mechanisms.

Wound injuries damage the body’s blood vessels, which release fluid that leaks into the tissues and causes swelling, depriving the damaged cells of oxygen and killing the tissue. HBOT brings oxygen-rich plasma to tissue starved for oxygen, minimizing the swelling while flooding the tissues with oxygen. The chamber’s elevated pressure raises the amount of oxygen in the blood.

Now, Israelis have discovered a potentially preventive use of HBOT – to significantly enhance the cognitive performance of healthy older adults. Research just published in the journal Aging by scientists at the Sagol Center for Hyperbaric Medicine and Researchers at Shamir (Assaf Harofeh) Medical Center in Tzrifin (near Rishon Lezion), together with Tel Aviv University’s Sackler School of Medicine and its Sagol School of Neuroscience are the first to show this HBOT benefit.

More than half of adults over age 60 who live in their communities worry about eventually suffering from declining cognitive abilities. The current study’s aim was to evaluate hyperbaric oxygen therapy (HBOT) effect on cognitive functions in healthy aging adults. Besides common pathological declines such as in Alzheimer’s dementia and mild cognitive impairments, cognitive aging is part of the normal aging process, the researchers wrote. Processing speed, conceptual reasoning, memory and problem-solving activities are the main domains that dwindle gradually over time

The peer-reviewed article was entitled “Cognitive enhancement of healthy older adults using hyperbaric oxygen: a randomized controlled trial.”

They announced that, for the first time in humans, HBOT can significantly enhance the cognitive performance of healthy older adults – improving their attention, information processing speed, executive function and global cognitive function, all of which typically decline with age. In addition, they found a significant correlation between the cognitive changes and improved cerebral blood flow in specific brain locations.

Prof Shai Efrati, who heads the Sagol Center for Hyperbaric Medicine and Research and directs research and development at Shamir Medical Center as well as teaching at Sackler and Dr. Amir Hadanny of the Sagol Center for Hyperbaric Medicine and Research designed the study based on a unique HBOT protocol developed over the past decade.

The randomized controlled clinical trial included 63 healthy adults who underwent either HBOT or a control period for three months. The study aimed at producing improvement in general cognitive function measured by a standardized comprehensive battery of computerized cognitive assessments before and after the intervention or control. Cerebral blood flow was evaluated by a novel magnetic resonance imaging technique for brain perfusion.

“Age-related cognitive and functional decline has become a significant concern in the Western world,” said Efrati. “Major research efforts around the world are focused on improving the cognitive performance of the so-called ‘normal’ aging population. In our study, for the first time in humans, we have found an effective and safe medical intervention that can address this unwanted consequence of our age-related deterioration.”

“Over years of research, we have developed an advanced understanding of HBOT’s ability to restore brain function,” added Hadanny. “In the past, we have demonstrated HBOT’s potential to improve/treat brain injuries such as stroke, traumatic brain injury and anoxic brain injury (due to sustained lack of oxygen supply) by increasing brain blood flow and metabolism. This landmark research could have a far-reaching impact on the way we view the aging process and the ability to treat its symptoms.”

“The occlusion [blockage] of small blood vessels similar to the occlusions that may develop in the pipes of an ‘aging’ home is a dominant element in the human aging process. This led us to speculate that HBOT may affect brain performance of the aging population,” Efrati explained. “We found that HBOT induced a significant increase in brain blood flow, which correlated with cognitive improvement, confirming our theory. One can conjecture that similar beneficial effect of HBOT can be induced in other organs of the aging body. These will be investigated in our upcoming research.”

**The Census Orders**

President Donald Trump is expected to soon issue an executive order that would ban undocumented immigrants from being included in the 2020 census count of every person living in the United States, a source familiar with the matter said on Friday.

The source, speaking on condition of anonymity, had no details of the order.

The timing of the order was unclear. It was possible it could be issued as early as Friday, the source said.

The government's census count helps in determining where taxpayer money is spent for building public facilities like schools, hospitals and fire departments, as well as calculating states' apportionment in the U.S. House of Representatives.

The Trump administration has long sought to use the census as a vehicle to identify, and possibly limit the political power of, undocumented immigrants. In 2018, the administration said it would ask respondents to the 2020 census whether they were citizens, a move ultimately nixed by the U.S. Supreme Court.

At the time, immigration advocates argued the question would frighten Hispanics and immigrants into abstaining from the census, potentially costing their communities political representation and federal aid dollars that are doled out based on population.

Republicans close to Trump also wanted citizenship data so that conservative U.S. states could more easily exclude non-citizens when they redraw voting maps in the next round of redistricting, according to documents uncovered https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-census-redistricting-insight/republicans-want-census-data-on-citizenship-for-redistricting-idUSKCN1RK18D during litigation on the citizenship question.

Trump's power to limit the counting of immigrants is questionable. Longstanding Supreme Court precedent has interpreted the U.S. Constitution as requiring that U.S. House districts be based on total population. State-level legislative districts don't necessarily have to include non-citizens, but they are drawn by states, not the federal government.

A move by Trump to unilaterally change the rules would likely be met with litigation, said Jeffrey Wice, an attorney, census expert and Democratic redistricting adviser.

**CCP Completes GPS System**

After more than 20 years of effort, China completed its satellite navigation system last Tuesday when the last of BeiDou’s 35 satellites reached geostationary orbit.

China's domestically developed BeiDou Navigation Satellite System, designed to rival the U.S.-owned Global Positioning System (GPS), is now offering worldwide coverage, allowing global users to access its high-accuracy positioning, navigation and timing services, which are vital to the modern economy.

China’s state media claims the system, formally initiated in 1994, is now being used by more than half of the world's countries, and that its navigation products have been exported to more than 120 countries.

[](https://im-media.voltron.voanews.com/Drupal/01live-166/styles/sourced/s3/2019-04/165D821A-67BE-40FC-B275-A50358172B77.jpg?itok=-m9QRakq)

FILE - A GPS station is seen in the Inyo Mountains of California. (Shawn Lawrence/UNAVCO)

Like GPS, the services are offered free of charge using public protocols. But technical experts say the differences between the two systems have profound security implications.

**Security risks**

All other global navigation satellite systems — GPS, GLONASS (Russia) and Galileo (EU) — mainly act as beacons, beaming out signals picked up by billions of devices using them to determine their precise position on Earth.

BeiDou is a two-way communication system, allowing it to identify the locations of receivers. BeiDou-compatible devices can transmit data back to the satellites, even in text messages of up to 1,200 Chinese characters.

"In layman's terms, you can not only know where you are through BeiDou but also tell others where you are through the system," China's state broadcaster CCTV said last month.

Such a capability has raised serious security concerns. "All cellular devices, as I understand their function, can be tracked because they continually communicate with towers or satellites," Dr. Larry Wortzel, a commissioner of the U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission (USCC), told VOA.

"So just as here in the U.S., there are concerns that police or federal agencies can track people by their cellphones. That can happen. The same is true of a cellphone relying on BeiDou, Glonass and Galileo. The question is: Who are you concerned about being tracked by?"

[](https://im-media.voltron.voanews.com/Drupal/01live-166/styles/sourced/s3/2020-07/2020-06-23T033706Z_2145748909_RC2REH91F2VB_RTRMADP_3_SPACE-EXPLORATION-CHINA-SATELLITE.JPG?itok=SLugnSg8)

FILE - A Long March-3B rocket carrying the Beidou-3 satellite, the last satellite of China's Beidou Navigation Satellite System, takes off from Xichang Satellite Launch Center in Sichuan province, China, June 23, 2020.

Legislation passed in Taiwan in 2016 also noted that two-way communication capabilities could be used in cyberattacks. It recommended that government employees should avoid using smartphones that rely on BeiDou for their phone navigation system.

In a public report, Taiwan's Ministry of Science and Technology said that Taiwanese using mobile phones made in the mainland might be providing Beijing with information via embedded malware. "Because the Chinese BeiDou satellite positioning system has two-way information sending and receiving function and malicious programs could be hidden in the navigation chip of the mobile phone, operating system or apps, the use of BeiDou-enabled smartphones could face security risks," the report stated.

The ministry recommended that national defense agencies monitor signals transmitted by BeiDou and warn of any anomalies as soon as possible.

A [study](https://www.uscc.gov/sites/default/files/Research/Staff%20Report_China%27s%20Alternative%20to%20GPS%20and%20Implications%20for%20the%20United%20States.pdf)by the USCC in 2017 also found that the system could become a portal for more attacks:  "BeiDou could pose a security risk by allowing China’s government to track users of the system by deploying malware transmitted through either its navigation signal or messaging function (via a satellite communication channel), once the technology is in widespread use." But the report also said industry professionals so far said they were not aware of ways to transmit malware through a navigation signal feasibly.

Depending on where the phone is made and what microchips are in the phone, "the malware might be embedded in the chips,"  Wortzel told VOA. "That is why the U.S. is concerned about Huawei devices and systems as well as Lenovo computers." Wortzel added that the comments represented his own opinion, not USCC's.

**Rivaling US GPS**

The U.S. has long been the world leader in satellite-based positioning with its Global Positioning System.

In 1996, during the Taiwan Strait Crisis, China fired three missiles to locations on the Taiwan Strait as a warning. While the first missile hit its intended target, the People’s Liberation Army (PLA) lost track of the other two. China claims that the U.S. had cut off the GPS signal to the Pacific that China relied upon for missile tracking. The event prompted Beijing to build its global navigation and positioning satellite system.

[](https://im-media.voltron.voanews.com/Drupal/01live-166/styles/sourced/s3/2020-07/2020-06-15T000000Z_1396263251_RC2N9H9VE3LH_RTRMADP_3_SPACE-EXPLORATION-CHINA-SATELLITE.JPG?itok=D4BMbO8K)

Staff members walk at Xichang Satellite Launch Center, the day before the Beidou-3 satellite, the last satellite of China's Beidou Navigation Satellite System, was set to launch, in Sichuan province, China, June 15, 2020.

Almost 25 years later, BeiDou is now trying to rival GPS's dominant positions. It has overtaken its U.S. rival in size. At the end of June, there were 35 BeiDou satellites in operation, compared with 31 for GPS.

"It brings full autonomy to China in matters of position and navigation services for ground, sea and air transportation means on a global scale," said Dr. Emmanuel Meneut in a recent report published by a French think tank, the Institute of International Relations.

According to a report released last month by a Chinese research firm Qianxun SI, BeiDou's satellites were observed more frequently than GPS satellites in most parts of the world. The state media Xinhua reported last Friday that BeiDou now has 500 million subscribers for its high-precision positioning services.

As an integral part of everyday life, GPS is nearly ubiquitous in the modern economy. The system is also an indispensable asset to U.S. forces at home and deployed around the globe. It provides a substantial military advantage and has been integrated into virtually every facet of military operations. Being overtaken by BeiDou could have potentially enormous implications for both high-tech industry and national security.

To promote greater use of the technology, China has sought to incentivize other countries with loans and free services. Beijing signed a roughly 2 billion yuan ($297 million) agreement with Thailand in 2013, making the country the first overseas client of BeiDou. According to a report released last month by a Shanghai-based market research firm, SWS Research, by the end of 2020, at least 1,000 base stations will be built in the 10 ASEAN countries.

"Widespread integration of BeiDou across the Belt and Road [a global development strategy adopted by the Chinese government in 2013] will ostensibly end a member nation’s reliance on the American military-run GPS network," Heath Sloane, a scholar at the Yenching Academy of Peking University, wrote in The Diplomat in April. "Torn between rival networks, the world may soon be bifurcated into GPS or BeiDou camps."

[](https://im-media.voltron.voanews.com/Drupal/01live-166/styles/sourced/s3/ap-images/2019/07/_0.jpg?itok=XOoDj7fr)

FILE - A GPS navigation device is held by a U.S. soldier in Kuwait, in this image taken from video.

The American military says it uses Russian and European backup systems for GPS, but not BeiDou.

General James Holmes, the head of the U.S. Air Force Air Combat Command, told a conference in Washington in March that pilots of the elite U-2 spy plane wear watches that receive satellite navigation coordinates from alternate systems when GPS is jammed.

While China's 5G networking technology has long been considered a security threat, BeiDou receives little criticism from the U.S. Moreover, the system received much-needed help from Washington in 2017.  As Beijing was rapidly developing the system, it faced a problem that only the U.S. could solve: No frequency bands were available.

Under the “first come, first served” principle, GPS had occupied most of the spectrum that a global positioning system needs, since the U.S. was the first nation to start broadcasting in those frequencies.

China had to obtain permission from Washington before using this limited resource. After three years of negotiations, the two countries [agreed in December 2017](https://www.gps.gov/policy/cooperation/china/2017-joint-statement/) to allow BeiDou's civil signals to be interoperable with GPS. As a result, the three frequency bands that BeiDou satellites use to transmit navigation signals are located adjacent to or even inside GPS frequency bands.

**'Biggest' aerospace project**

Officially started in 1994, BeiDou is consistently referenced as "the biggest" aerospace program that China ever undertaken. For the past 2½ years alone, there have been more than 300,000 scientists and engineers from more than 400 research institutions and corporations involved in the program. Along with 5G, BeiDou is called by Beijing "The Two Pillars of a Great Power.”

Yang Changfeng, a chief designer of BeiDou, told China’s state broadcaster CCTV last month that China was now “moving from being a major nation in space to becoming a true space power.”

"The rise of the Chinese GPS BeiDou system is not simply one more positioning service in competition with the U.S. One is a strategic challenge," Meneut said.

A spate of GPS disruptions at Tel Aviv's Ben Gurion Airport has confirmed what several prominent tech analysts have long feared: that Western nations, and the U.S. in particular, are unusually vulnerable to foreign meddling with location-based technology.

Most location-based software programs, such as the U.S.'s Global Positioning System (GPS), the European Union's Galileo, China's BeiDou and Russia's Glonass, depend on the Global Navigation Satellite System (GNSS), the vast network of international satellites orbiting the Earth.

The technology plays an integral part in our everyday lives, affecting such things as personal phone use, car navigation, international shipping, air travel, power grids, financial markets, and law enforcement and emergency response services. It's also vital to military operations.

So it is no surprise that authorities were alarmed last week when several aircraft flying near Ben Gurion reported disruption to their satellite navigation systems. Officials said they thought the disruptions were caused by signals emanating from Syria, where Russian forces are involved in that nation's long-running civil war.

Russian diplomats ridiculed the claim, but it was not the first time their country has been singled out. A report issued in March by the Washington-based Center for Advanced Defense Studies (C4ADS) charged that Russia has been hacking non-Russian navigation systems on an extraordinary scale.

Since February 2016, C4ADS analysts reported, Russian intelligence had meddled with GPS equipment aboard 1,311 civilian ships. The report said 9,883 hacking incidents were reported or detected by maritime vessels or aircraft in 2017, with most of the incidents involving planes and ships near the Black Sea, Russia and Syria.

Beyond pinpointing geographic coordinates, GNSS is also used for precision timing, a feature that can also be hacked and manipulated. Various cybersecurity and automotive trade journals reported in March that an unknown entity hacked the GPS systems in a range of high-end cars featured at the annual Geneva Motor Show, programming the cars to report a location of Buckingham, England, in the year 2036.

**How it works**

GPS spoofing is an attack in which a radio transmitter located near the target is used to send out false GPS signals. Using tools that are cheap and easily accessible online, the attacker can transmit inaccurate coordinates or no data at all.

Russia has been known to protectively scramble radio signal devices near sensitive state facilities or along routes traveled by VIPs. For example, multiple ships reported phony geographic coordinates in the Kerch Strait on the day that Russian President Vladimir Putin drove a truck across a newly completed bridge to Russian-annexed Crimea.

But some analysts say the scale of recent disruptions indicates that Russia is taking its coordinates-spoofing game to another level, methodically calculating the damage it can inflict on unprotected systems in case of conflict.

[](https://im-media.voltron.voanews.com/Drupal/01live-166/styles/sourced/s3/ap-images/2019/07/0f1ebc2d4fbdad1082f778c1c233c467.jpg?itok=97vfcogO)

FILE - A Ukrainian sailor, right, is escorted by a Russian FSB officer to a courtroom in Simferopol, Crimea, Nov. 27, 2018. Russians captured Ukrainian seamen and their vessels two days earlier as they were about to transit the Kerch Strait.

"A ship that has falsified information navigating through the Kerch Strait, for instance, would be at a much greater risk of colliding with another ship or of potentially violating some sort of territorial water regime," said Thomas Ewing, C4ADS chief analyst, referring to a Nov. 25 incident in which Russia seized three Ukrainian navy vessels near the Kerch Strait and detained their crews.

Ewing also said evidence of spoofed coordinates had been recorded by U.S. forces in Syria, suggesting that Russia may be hacking satellite networks as part of its electronic warfare campaigns. There have also been reports of Russian spoofing of GPS signals during the Russian military training exercise Zapad in 2017 and NATO's Trident Juncture in 2018.

"Our report details a number of Russian assets that are designed to interfere with GNSS as part of a general electronic warfare capability," Ewing told VOA.

Some analysts have questioned [why Russian intelligence would meddle with commercial airliners servicing Tel Aviv](https://breakingdefense.com/2019/06/if-russia-is-spoofing-israeli-gps-then-why-iran-f-35/), the most populous city in a country with which the Kremlin seeks friendly relations.

Others, however, say formal attribution to a malign state actor is beside the point.

"The basic danger is that when your positioning, navigation or timing information is falsified, you could make a decision based on information that doesn't correspond to reality," said Ewing, explaining that spoofed coordinates could easily spark an international dispute.

Dana Goward, president of the U.S. Resilient Navigation and Timing Foundation, said the U.S. remains particularly vulnerable.

Because American engineers designed GPS to be used by everyone, its signal characteristics are routinely published and easily accessible. That makes them easier to imitate than signals relayed by mainly ground-based positioning systems in China and Russia.

**America's ‘gift to the world’**

"I think that European countries and the United States are especially vulnerable because Russia, China, Saudi Arabia and South Korea have alternate navigation systems that transmit from the ground," Goward told VOA's Ukrainian service. He said those systems "have very high power and are very difficult to disrupt. So those countries are not nearly as dependent upon satellite navigation as Europe and the United States."

Asked about the erroneous coordinates reported by vessels in the Kerch Strait and along the Syrian coast, Goward said he thought Russia was using the vulnerabilities of the technology to demonstrate its power.

[](https://im-media.voltron.voanews.com/Drupal/01live-166/styles/sourced/s3/2019-04/165D821A-67BE-40FC-B275-A50358172B77.jpg?itok=-m9QRakq)

FILE - A GPS station is seen in the Inyo Mountains of California. (S. Lawrence/UNAVCO)

"America likes to think of GPS as its gift to the world," he said. "But by doing this, Russia is saying to the whole world that 'we can take that away from you with a flip of a switch, so America's gift is not so great.' So they're certainly using it as an instrument of strategic state power as well."

To protect itself, Goward said, the United States should increase its protection of GPS frequencies, use only high-quality receivers that can resist jamming and spoofing, and augment the GPSS with a ground-based system that would be harder to disrupt.

The incident in Ben Gurion again attracted attention to the need to create a fully functional backup system for GPS, Goward said. "It is fortunate that aviation has a terrestrial electronic navigation system it can rely upon when GPS is not available," Goward said. He praised the 2001 U.S. Department of Transportation decision not to give up the terrestrial system completely in favor of the GPS-based one.

U.S. policy has called for maintaining an effective backup system since 2004, but experts say its full implementation is still in the works both in the United States and Europe.

According to the [*Military Times*](https://www.businessinsider.com/us-army-jam-resistant-gps-europe-amid-russia-hacking-spoofing-2019-6) newspaper, the U.S. Army's 2nd Cavalry Regiment in Germany will field test jam-resistant positioning, navigation and timing gear in September, including a Selective Availability Anti-Spoofing Module in some vehicles.