



STRAIGHT TALK FROM BOB NELSON ON THE STATE OF FRESNO UNIFIED

August 8, 2019 | Bill McEwen

Bob Nelson begins his third year as superintendent of Fresno Unified radiating his trademark optimism but with eyes wide open and hands gripping a full plate of big challenges. "This is the single greatest thing that's ever happened to me," the superintendent says about leading California's third-largest

"This is the single greatest thing that's ever happened to me. And it's unabashedly the most difficult thing I've ever dealt with in my life." — Bob Nelson

it's unabashedly the most difficult thing I've ever dealt with in my life." I sat down with Nelson to discuss the state of Fres-

no Unified and where the district and its 74.000 students are headed for the 2019-20 school year. His answers have been edited for clarity and continuity.

(Watch the video to see his answers to more questions.)

What do you know now about the superintendent's job that you didn't know before?

That the only thing I can control is my own resiliency. With a district this size, you can't anticipate everything that's going to go sideways or where things are going to go. So your orientation has to be I'm going to wake up tomorrow, and I'm going to keep plugging away.

You mentioned Fresno Unified's size. Should it be split into two or three districts?

We're actually kind of in the middle (among the nation's large urban districts). New York City is a million kids. Clark County (Nevada) has 320,000. In Florida, generally, your entire county is your district. So, there are bigger models and there are

smaller models. There is value in size because the economy of scale provides a lot of benefits. But it also creates a bureaucracy which, as you know, can be ungainly and hard to manage. I really don't spend a lot of time thinking about (splitting the district). I want us to be better in the size that we are. That's really a question better asked of the electorate. People have explored it in times past. If they wanted to go a completely different direction, that would kind of decide it for me. It's really about communities deciding what they want.

Trustee Terry Slatic says you can graduate from Fresno Unified with a 1.0 GPA. True?

It's the same question you asked in high school. Can I pass this class with a D? Yes, you can. Can you pass the system with all D's? Potentially, you could. But that's not what we want for any kid. We would never hold that up as a bar to get over. And we're doing things differently now so that we can really drill down on the specific needs of the kid. If you're behind grade level, we're finding out why and matching the instruction to make things better.

What are you doing to improve classroom discipline?

Of all the major urban (districts) statewide, we suspend more kids than anybody else. It's not an area of success for us. Our implementation of restorative practices was a mess in some spots and, in some other places, it was very good. You need an atonement portion for the wrong that was committed as well as a restorative portion. It's about setting up a structure so that (bad behavior) is not going on forever and you understand the impact of what you've done. In some cases, we just made the restoration the accountability structure and that's not...

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August 8, 2019 | Nancy Price

The Fresno Unified School Board voted 6-0 to censure trustee Terry Slatic, a rare public condemnation of a fellow elected official, and to strip him of leadership functions until he successfully completes an anger management course. The vote was met by thunderous applause from the packed audience, many carrying signs urging Slatic to resign or face recall. But Slatic, who represents the Bullard High area, said after the meeting that the anger management requirement is illegal, and he predicted that a judge will issue a stay. Slatic said he expects his attorney will file a motion for a temporary restraining order by the end of this week.

The board's action was a sanction, not a censure, and disenfranchises the voters of northwest Fresno, he said. "Only a judge in the state of California can make you go to anger management training," he said. "This is not a judicial body, and they're also not freakin' Ph.D. psychologists." Trustee Carol Mills asked attorney Shawn VanWagenen if he had worked

with the ad hoc committee to draft the censure resolution. She asked him if he had drafted other, similarly worded resolutions, and whether the censures were upheld. VanWagenen, who works for the Lozano Smith law firm, said that he had drafted others but they were much less "aggressive" than Fresno Unified's.

VanWagenen confirmed that there was no legal authority or bylaw permitting the board to order anger management, nor any law that prohibited it. Mills also questioned whether the resolution might violate Slatic's constitutional right to attend any public function. VanWagenen said the intent was to prevent him from speaking on behalf of the board instead of as an individual board member at such events. As Mills continued to question VanWagenen, she was interrupted suddenly by fellow trustee Veva Islas, who called for a vote on the resolution. When Mills said she was trying to probe for more information by asking questions, Trustee Keisha Thomas interjected...

NEW CLOVIS TOP COP: '1 HAVE GREATEST JOB IN THE **NATION'**

August 6, 2019 | David Taub

First, Curt Fleming's wife, Jackie, and their 9-year-old son, Aiden, pinned on his badge. Then, by raising his right hand and swearing an oath to protect and serve, Fleming took his place as the Clovis chief of police at a ceremony Monday at police headquarters. It's a promotion for Fleming, who most recently served as a captain in the department.

"I have the greatest job in the nation," he told his colleagues, family, and other well-wishers. Fleming said he doesn't plan to make any major changes to the department. "Clovis is already a great department. Really, just small tweaks here and there," Fleming said. "I will do everything I can to maintain the culture of our department, the service we provide to our citizens." Fleming, a Bullard High School and Fresno State graduate, started his law enforcement career with the Fresno Police Department in 1999. He took a job with Clovis in 2006 and received promotions to corporal (2012), sergeant (2013)...

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OPPONENTS FORCE NEW ANIMAL SHELTER TO A DIFFERENT SPO

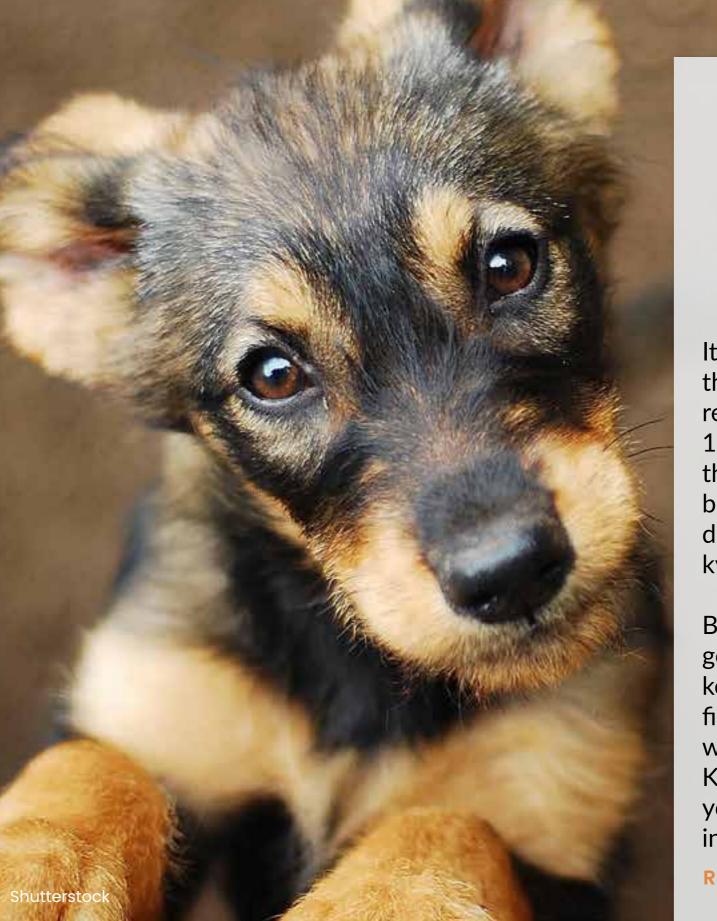
August 6, 2019 | David Taub

It's well above 110 degrees inside the small gym a stone's throw from the Clinton overpass in west-central Fresno on a recent Saturday afternoon. "Boom-boom, boom-boom," grunts 19-year-old Marc Castro when his rapidly firing gloves strike the mitts of his dad and trainer, Tony Castro. Like many young boxers across America, the soon-to-be Fresno State junior dreams of representing the USA at the 2020 Olympics in Tokyo. Yes, it's a big dream.

But Castro has broken it down into a series of increasingly bigger goals over the past four years. Sacrifice, dedication and keeping eyes forward are his mantras. "There are a lot of sacrifices you have to make, my parents and myself. Not going out with friends, not staying out late, or missing birthday parties. Knowing that you have to train," Castro says. "It's a sacrifice you're willing to make for a better future and a goal you're trying to achieve." For example, when he won flew to Russia in...

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4 SUE TO BLOCK CALIFORNIA TAX RETURN LAW AIMED AT TRUMP

August 6, 2019 | AP News

"This is a nonpartisan

concern about the state

running roughshod and

Constitution on its own."

- Judicial Watch Presi-

dent Tom Fitton

SACRAMENTO — Four California voters have sued to block a new state law aimed at forcing Republican President Donald Trump to release his income tax returns. Democratic Gov. Gavin Newsom signed a law last week that requires presidential candidates to file five years of their income tax returns with the California secretary of state. Candidates who don't comply will not appear on

the March 3 presidential primary ballot.

Related Story: Newsom attempting to amend the Signs Tax-Returns Law **Aimed at Trump**

The conservative group Judicial Watch announced Monday it had filed a lawsuit last week to challenge the law. The four plaintiffs are two Republicans, one Democrat and one independent. "This is a nonpartisan concern about the state running roughshod and attempting to amend the Constitution on its own," Judicial Watch President Tom Fitton said. The Constitution requires three things of presidents: They have to be born in the U.S., must be at least 35, and must have lived in the country for at least 14 years. Attorneys for Judicial Watch argue California's law effectively alters the Constitution by adding a new requirement for tax returns, something they say state governments don't have the authority to do.

Rationale Could Lead States to Demand Other Things

California's law says voters need to know details about presidential candidates' finances to "better estimate the risks of any given Presidential candidate engaging in corruption." But Judicial Watch argues that rationale could lead states to demand things like medical and mental health records and eventually things like Amazon purchases, Google search histories and Facebook friends. The organization also argues that by limiting the law to primary elections, it does not apply to inde-

pendent candidates. Judicial Watch also says the law violates voters' constitutional rights to associate with presidential candidates and the voters who support them, rights it says are guaranteed under the First and 14th amendments.

The lawsuit names Secretary of State Alex Padilla as the defendant because his office is in charge of enforcing the law. Representatives for Padilla and Newsom declined to comment on Monday, saying they have not been officially notified of the lawsuit. Speaking with reporters outside of an unrelated event at the governor's office, California Attorney General Xavier Becerra said: "We'll be ready to do what we need to do defend California's laws."

Nixon Released Tax Returns While Being Audited

When he signed the law last week, Newsom released statements from three lawyers, including the dean of the University of California, Berkeley law school, saying the law is constitutional. Newsom contends Congress has changed aspects of the presidency previously, including limiting presidents to two terms after President Franklin Roosevelt was elected to four terms, and passing anti-nepotism laws after President John F. Kennedy appointed his brother, Robert, U.S. attorney general. "If the federal government is not going to act, California needs to act. We've always done that,"

Newsom said in a video posted to his Twitter account. Citizens have had to pay federal income taxes since 1913, but it wasn't until 1973

"If the federal government is not going to act, California needs to act. We've always done that." — Gov. Gavin Newsom

when a U.S. president made his personal tax returns public. Republican Richard Nixon released his tax returns publicly while he was being audited by the IRS. Ever since, U.S. presidents have released at least a summary of their personal income taxes. That...

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CALIFORNIA AMMO CHECK LAW BLOCKED 100 SALES IN FIRST

August 6, 2019 | AP News

SACRAMENTO — California's new ammunition background check law in its first month stopped more than 100 people from buying bullets illegally, officials said late Monday as they struggled to deter more of the mass shootings that have roiled California and other states over the last week.

"Countless other prohibited persons were likely deterred from even trying to purchase ammunition that they cannot lawfully possess," Attorney General Xavier Becerra said in a court filing. He disclosed the early results in response to a gun owners' rights group attempt to block the law that took effect July 1.

A federal judge is expected to decide later this month whether to halt the law as a violation of the Second Amendment right to bear arms and other federal laws. Th filing came as...

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TOURIST FALLS TO DEATH IN YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK

August 6, 2019 | AP News

A Romanian tourist has died in a fall below famed Bridalveil Fall in Yosemite National Park. Authorities say 21-year-old Lucian Miu was scrambling on wet rocks below Bridalveil on July 31 when he fell about 20 feet. He died at a hospital.

Related Story: Ahwahnee Hotel to Return: Yosemite Settles Trademark Fight

The Fresno Bee says two other people suffered injuries in separate falls recently in the park. One had hiked to a viewing platform below Bridalveil Fall on July 29 and then slipped while climbing up a boulder field toward a pool at the base. The other slipped off a boulder at Lower Yosemite Fall and fell into a creek Aug. 1, becoming trapped underwater between rocks before managing to escape.

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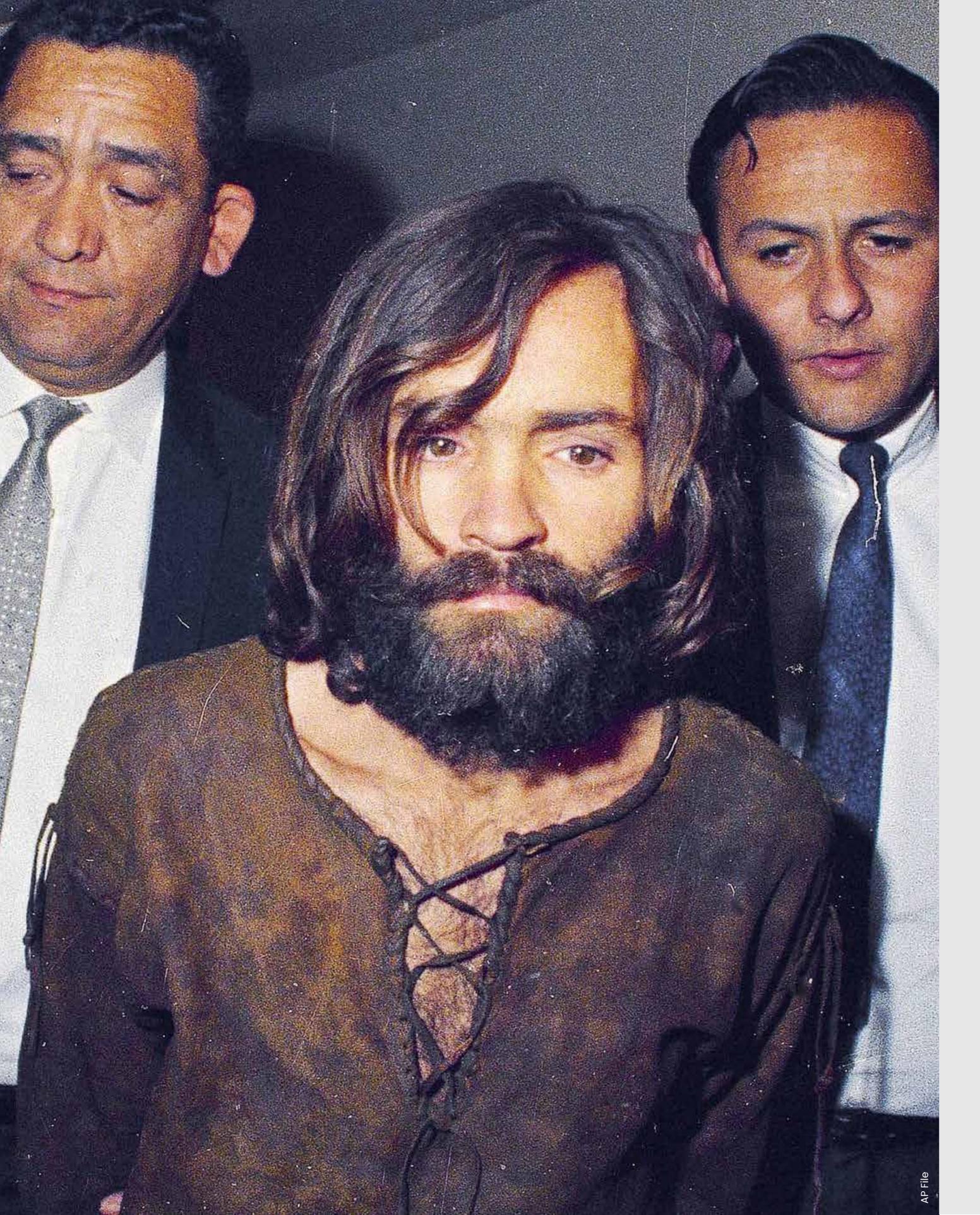
LOS ANGELES — A man "full of anger" stabbed, slashed and robbed his way across two Southern California cities in a bloody rampage that killed four people and wounded two others who were apparently targeted at random, authorities said.

The 33-year-old man from the city of Garden Grove robbed more than half a dozen businesses and killed two men at his own apartment complex during the two-hour wave of violence Wednesday, police said. He was arrested as he walked out of a convenience store in the neighboring city Santa Ana, dropping a knife and a gun he had taken from a securi-

ty guard he had just killed. Authorities did not immediately identify the suspect. The violence appeared to be random and the only known motives seem to be "robbery, hate, homicide," Garden Grove police Lt. Carl Whitney told reporters.

"We know this guy was full of anger and he harmed a lot of people tonight," Whitney said Wednesday. The attacker and four of the victims were described as Hispanic, while two victims were described as Caucasian, police said in a statement. Initially, all had been described as Hispanic. The two people who were wounded were listed in stable condition Wednesday night and were expected to survive. Surveillance...

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KEY FIGURES IN MANSON CASE: CULT DISCIPLES, RICH AND FAMOUS

August 6, 2019 | AP News

LOS ANGELES — It was 50 years ago this week that Charles Manson dispatched a group of disaffected

Charles Manson was a petty criminal who had been in and out of jail since childhood when he reinvented himself in the late 1960s as a guru-philosopher who targeted teenage runaways and other lost souls, particularly attractive young women he used and bartered to others for sex.

young followers on a twonight killing rampage that
terrorized Los Angeles.
Members of the so-called
Manson "family" arrived
at the Hollywood Hills
home of Sharon Tate
on Aug. 8, 1969, where
they stabbed, beat and
shot to death the young
actress and her friends
— celebrity hairstylist

Jay Sebring, coffee heiress Abigail Folger and aspiring screenwriter Wojciech Frykowski. As they made their way to the house, they encountered a teenager, Steven Parent, who had been visiting an acquaintance at the estate's guesthouse, and shot him to death. The next night, Manson led a handful of followers to the home of wealthy grocer Leno LaBianca and his wife, Rosemary. Manson tied up the couple and left the others to kill them. Manson and his followers killed two others — musician Gary Hinman and Hollywood stuntman Donald "Shorty" Shea — in separate, unrelated attacks

A look at the key players in a case that remains etched in the American consciousness:

The Killers

Charles Manson was a petty criminal who had been in and out of jail since childhood when he reinvented himself in the late 1960s as a guru-philosopher who targeted teenage runaways and other lost souls, particularly attractive young women he used and bartered to others for sex. He sent them out to butcher L.A.'s rich and famous in what prosecutors said was a bid to trigger a race war — an idea they say he got from a twisted reading of the Beatles' song "Helter Skelter." Decades

after his conviction, Manson would continue to taunt prosecutors, parole agents and others, sometimes denying any role in the killings and other times boasting of them, as when he told a 2012 parole hearing: "I have put five people in the grave. I am a very dangerous man." He died in 2017 after spending nearly 50 years in prison. He was 83.

Susan Atkins, convicted of the Tate, LaBianca and Hinman murders, was a teenage runaway working as a topless dancer in a San Francisco bar when she met Manson in 1967. The Tate-La Bianca murders went unsolved for months until Atkins, in jail on unrelated charges, boasted to a cellmate of her involvement. At trial, she testified she was "stoned on acid" and didn't know how many times she stabbed Tate as the actress begged for her life. Atkins, who became a born-again Christian in prison and denounced Manson, tearfully recounted that confrontation during a parole hearing years later. She died in prison of cancer in 2009. She as 61.

Leslie Van Houten, a former high school cheerleader and homecoming princess, saw her life spiral out of control at 14 following her parents' divorce. She turned to drugs and became pregnant but said her mother forced her to abort the fetus and bury it in the family's backyard. Van Houten met Manson at an old movie ranch on the outskirts of Los Angeles where he had established his so-called "family" of followers. She didn't take part in the Tate killings but accompanied Manson and others to the LaBianca home the next night. She held down Rosemary LaBianca with a pillowcase over her head as others stabbed LaBianca dozens of times. Then, ordered by Manson follower Charles "Tex" Watson to "do something," she said she picked up a knife and stabbed the woman more than a dozen times. Van Houten, 69, has earned bachelor's and master's degrees in counseling while in prison and leads several prison programs to help rehabilitate fellow inmates. She has been...

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DEMOCRATS' INTERNAL BATTLE OVER HEALTH CARE GOES BACK DECADES

August 5, 2019 | AP News

WASHINGTON — Seventy years ago, before Medicare existed to inspire "Medicare for All," a Democratic president wrestled with a challenge strikingly similar to what the party's White House hopefuls face today on the issue of health care.

Harry Truman, then in his fourth year of pressing for a national health insurance system, parried criticism of his approach in terms a single-payer health care advocate might use in 2019. The plainspoken Missourian wrote in a 1949 message to Congress that his proposal "will not require doctors to become employees of the government" and that "patients will remain free to choose their own doctors."

Truman's pitch fell short, and Democrats vying to take on President Donald Trump next year are still debating how to give Americans better health care without shattering a...

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PUFFINS FILL UP NESTING ISLANDS THIS YEAR DESPITE CHALLENGES

August 5, 2019 | AP News

PORTLAND, Maine — One of the most beloved birds in Maine is having one of its most productive seasons for mating pairs in years on remote islands off the state's coast.

Atlantic puffins, with their colorful beaks and waddling walks, are one of New England's best recognized seabirds. Maine is the only state in the U.S. where the birds breed, and they do so on hard-to-reach places like Seal Island National Wildlife Refuge in the Gulf of Maine, a body of water that touches New England and Canada.

The birds are well on their way to setting a record for the number of breeding pairs, said National Audubon Society scientist Stephen Kress, who has studied the birds for years. Kress said nearly 750 pairs nested on Seal Island and Eastern Egg Rock in 2018, and this year's number will likely be higher. The birds are thriving due to multiple factors, including...

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August 7, 2019 | AP News

EL PASO, Texas — Aiming to play the traditional role of healer during national tragedy, President Donald Trump paid visits Wednesday to two cities reeling from mass shootings that left 31 dead and dozens more wounded. But his divisive words preceded him, large protests greeted him and biting political attacks soon followed.

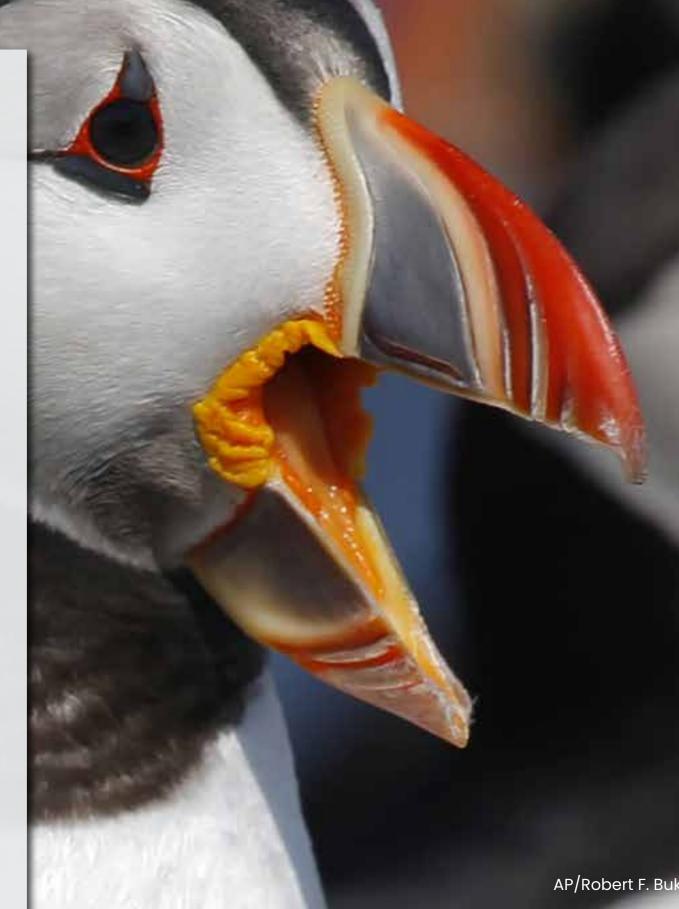
The president and first lady Melania Trump flew to El Paso late in the day after visiting the Dayton hospital where many of the victims of Sunday's attack in that city were treated. The president was kept out of view of the reporters traveling

with him, but White House Press Secretary Stephanie Grisham said the couple met with hospital staff and first responders and spent time with wounded survivors and their families.

Trump told them he was "with them," she said. "Everybody received him very warmly. Everybody was very, very excited to see him." But outside Miami Valley Hospital, at least 200 protesters gathered, blaming Trump's incendiary rhetoric for inflaming political and racial tensions in the country and demanding action on gun control. Some said Trump was not

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PROTESTERS CHANTA





US STOCK INDEXES SLIDE AS CHINA'S CURRENCY HITS 11-YEAR LOW

August 5, 2019 | AP News

NEW YORK — U.S. stocks nosedived in morning trading on Wall Street Monday as China's currency fell sharply and stoked fears that the trade war between the world's two largest economies would continue escalating. China let its currency, the yuan, sink to an 11-year low against the dollar and under the politically sensitive level of seven per dollar. A weaker Chinese currency can help boost that country's exports while hurting foreign competition.

Related Story: China Threatens Retaliation for Trump's Planned Tariff Hike

The U.S. has long complained about the weakness of

"The Great China Trade
Deal evaporated before
our eyes last week and investors should stop hoping it back into existence."
— Christopher Smart,
head of the Barings Investments Institute

China's currency and the move could be construed as a way for China to turn the yuan into a weapon in the midst of a trade war. The S&P 500 index tumbled 2% as of 11:10 a.m. Eastern time and The Dow Jones Industrial Average

slid 526 points, or 2%, to 25,963. It was down as much as 612 earlier. The Nasdaq composite fell 2.6%. European and Asian markets were also sharply lower.

Technology Stocks Took the Worst Hit

Wall Street is coming off of its worst week of the year after President Donald Trump threatened more tariffs on Chinese goods just as both nations are trying to negotiate an end to the damaging trade war. "The Great China Trade Deal evaporated before our eyes last week and investors should stop hoping it back into existence," Christopher Smart, head of the Barings Investments Institute, wrote in a report. Technology stocks took the worst hit in the early going as many of those companies stand to suffer more than other sectors if the trade war between the U.S. and China continues to escalate. Ap-

ple fell 3.9% and Microsoft fell 2.5%. Apple has a significant supply chain in China and both companies get solid portions of revenue from that country. Investors fled to less risky holdings. Bond prices spiked and pushed yields on the benchmark 10-year Treasury down to 1.77% from 1.85% late Friday. The yield on the 2-year

note dropped to 1.61%, down from 1.71%.
Both were large moves.
Lower bond yields hurt banks because they push interest rates on loans lower. Financial stocks had some of the steepest declines.

Every sector in the S&P 500 fell, though utilities only had modest losses. The sector is considered a safer investment in times of economic uncertainty and a slowdown in growth.

Every Sector in the S&P 500 Fell

Wynn Resorts slumped 5.6% on heavy volume. The casino operator gets the majority of its revenue from the Chinese gambling haven of Macau and is particularly sensitive to developments in the U.S.-China trade dispute. Every sector in the S&P 500 fell, though utilities only had modest losses. The sector is considered a safer investment in times of economic uncertainty and a slowdown in growth. "The real impact of the current friction is the confusion it creates for businesses that must reassess their supply chains and investment decisions amid uncertainty about where tariffs may fall," Smart said.

Companies are in the final stretch of the latest round of quarterly earnings reports and the results haven't been as bad as initially feared. Profit for companies in the S&P 500 is now expected to contract by roughly 1%. That's significantly better than the more than 3% contraction initially expected before results started to be released. More than three quarters of the S&P 500 have reported financial results. Meat producer Tyson Foods rose 8.3% after beating profit forecasts for the...

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LONDON — In Brussels and London, one question is growing louder: Can Boris Johnson be stopped? Britain's prime minister says the U.K. is leaving the European Union in less than 90 days, either with a divorce deal, or — it seems increasingly likely — without one.

With Britain and the bloc each accusing the other of torpedoing an agreement, pro-EU British lawmakers are gearing up for a last-ditch effort to prevent a no-deal Brexit. But it's not clear whether Parliament can halt a prime minister who insists the U.K. will leave on Oct. 31 "come what may." "In theory it can," British constitutional expert Vernon Bogdanor told the BBC. "In practice it is very, very difficult." By law, Britain will leave the EU on Oct. 31 when the official countdown period set by EU treaty expires. The original deadline of March 29 was extended twice as British politicians wrangled over departure terms and repeatedly rejected then-Prime Minister Theresa May's divorce deal with the bloc.

Johnson says he will "strain every sinew" to get a new and has made demands the bloc is almost certain to reject. Britain insists the EU must reopen the withdrawal agreement and remove an Irish border provision that is opposed by...

improved deal. But he has held no talks with EU leaders, and

KIM SAYS NORTH KOREAN **LAUNCHES A WARNING TO US, SOUTH KOREA**

August 7, 2019 | AP News

SEOUL, South Korea – North Korea said Wednesday leader Kim Jong Un supervised a live-fire demonstration of newly developed, short-range ballistic missiles intended to send a warning to the United States and South Korea over their joint military exercises.

The official Korean Central News Agency said two missiles launched from a western airfield flew across the country and over the area surrounding the capital, Pyongyang, before accurately hitting an island target off its eastern coast.

Its four rounds of weapons demonstrations in two weeks come during a stalemate in nuclear negotiations and after President Donald Trump repeatedly dismissed the significance of the tests, even though the weapons show North Korea's ability to strike at U.S. allies South Korea and Japan and its military bases there. Experts say Trump's...

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TALIBAN SUICIDE BLAST

KABUL, Afghanistan — A Taliban car bomb aimed at Afghan

security forces ripped through a busy Kabul neighborhood

on Wednesday, killing 14 people and wounding 145 — most

of them women, children and other civilians — shortly after

on negotiating an end to Afghanistan's nearly 18-year war.

attacks in Kabul this year, and it again raised fears among

Afghans about what will happen once the estimated 20,000

U.S. and NATO troops in their country go home. The explo-

sives-packed car detonated at a security checkpoint outside

western Kabul, police spokesman Firdaus Faramarz said. The

Taliban said they had targeted a recruitment center for secu-

rity forces. Ninety-two of the wounded were civilians, Depu-

ty Interior Minister Khoshal Sadat told reporters. Four police

officers were among those killed, he said. The attack took...

police headquarters in a minority Shiite neighborhood in

the extremist group and the United States reported progress

The bombing during morning rush hour was one of the worst

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IN KABUL KILLS 14

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