

# POLITICOPLAYBOOKPM

BY JAKE SHERMAN, ANNA PALMER, GARRETT ROSS AND ELI OKUN

Presented by



**THE MESSAGE? ... VP MIKE PENCE** at the GOP convention site in Charlotte, N.C.: “We’re going to make America great again -- again.” Republicans officially nominated President **DONALD TRUMP** and **PENCE** for a second term today. **THE PRESIDENT** visited the site early this afternoon. “Think about your life just prior to the plague,” he told the crowd. [This week’s schedule and speakers](#)

**THIS MORNING WAS YET ANOTHER PIECE OF EVIDENCE** for the legion of political observers who believe some high-profile congressional hearings turn out to be a waste of time.

**MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE** spent the morning lecturing Postmaster General **LOUIS DEJOY** about the USPS -- oftentimes without asking a single question. When they asked questions, they sometimes sounded like this: Do you believe you need to follow the law? Is your backup plan to be pardoned like Roger Stone, Rep. **JIM COOPER** (D-Tenn.) asked? Why are the Democrats out to get you, Rep. **JIM JORDAN** (R-Ohio) queried? Why doesn’t this hearing about the USPS include debate about the PPP -- it’s a “waste of time,” Rep. **CHIP ROY** (R-Texas) said. In addition, the hearing was riddled with technical difficulties.

**REP. STEPHEN LYNCH** (D-Mass.) asked if **DEJOY** would replace removed sorting machines -- **DEJOY** said no, but they couldn’t get around to figuring out why, because **LYNCH** had used up all of his time.

**MEANWHILE**, millions of Americans are wondering if their prescription drugs are going to get delivered, if their mail-in votes will actually be counted and what elected officials are actually doing to make their lives better in the middle of a pandemic and economic recession.

-- **KYLE CHENEY: “Dems threaten to subpoena DeJoy over mail delay document”**: “Democrats accused Postmaster General Louis DeJoy on Monday of downplaying disruptions to mail delivery that began when he assumed his position in July, threatening to subpoena him for what they say is deliberate withholding of internal decision-making documents. ... DeJoy sharply rejected the accusations that he's taken inappropriate actions.” [POLITICO](#)

-- **DEJOY**: “First, I did not direct the removal of blue collection boxes or the removal of mail processing equipment. Second, I did not direct the cutback on hours at any of our post offices. Finally, I did not direct the elimination of any cutback in overtime. I did, however, suspend these practices, to remove any misperceptions about our commitment to delivering the nation’s election mail. Any further assertions by the media or elected officials is furthering a false narrative to the American people.”

**SIREN -- [“As Census Count Resumes, Doubts About Accuracy Continue to Grow.”](#)** by NYT’s Michael Wines: “[M]ore than one in three people hired as census takers have quit or failed to show up. ... And with 38 million households still uncounted, state and local officials are raising growing concerns that many poor and minority households will be left out of the count. ...

**“[A]nother issue has upended it**: an order last month to finish the count a month early, guaranteeing that population figures will be delivered to the White House while President Trump is still in office. ... [T]he census is racing toward a finale largely out of sight. But many

experts are increasingly convinced that a public reckoning over a deeply flawed count may be unavoidable. ...

**“[N]o metric for a flawed census exists.** Congress, which has legal authority over the census, could make that judgment, and a lawsuit could seek to. Either would put the census in uncharted waters.”

**BREAKING ... REUTERS: “NY attorney general files lawsuit against Trump Organization: court records”:** “The complaint against the Trump Organization and the other defendants was filed with a New York state court in Manhattan, the court records show. A copy of the complaint was not immediately available, and its subject matter could not immediately be determined. A letter filed with the court indicates that Eric Trump, one of the president’s sons, is among the defendants.” [Reuters](#)

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A message from Walmart:

**FROM THE FRONTLINE** – Walmart invests \$428 million more in associates with another special cash bonus, totaling \$1.1 billion in bonuses for associates this year. [Learn more.](#)

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**THE ERA OF THE TELL-ALL ... YASHAR ALI: [“Scoop: Melania Trump’s Comments About Trump Family Were Taped”](#):**

“Stephanie Winston Wolkoff ... plans on sharing the First Lady’s comments about her family in her forthcoming book ‘Melania and Me: The Rise and Fall of My Friendship with The First Lady’ which will be published by Simon & Schuster’s Gallery Books on September 1.”

**-- ALSO OUT IN THE NEXT FEW WEEKS:** Michael Cohen’s book [“Disloyal,”](#) Brian Stelter’s book [“Hoax”](#) about Fox News, Bob Woodward’s newest -- [“Rage”](#) -- and Mike Schmidt’s [“Donald Trump v. The United States of America.”](#)

**Good Monday afternoon.**

**AP/BERLIN:** “The German hospital treating Russian dissident Alexei Navalny says tests indicate that he was poisoned.”

**FOLLOW THE MONEY -- “‘Mind-bogglingly irresponsible’: meet the Republican donors helping QAnon reach Congress,”** by The Guardian’s Julia Carrie Wong: “[Marjorie Taylor Greene’s] filings reveal donations from: groups connected to White House chief of staff Mark Meadows and his wife, the chairman of the board of prominent conservative think tank the Heritage Foundation, the attorney who represented ‘Covington Kid’ Nicholas Sandmann in defamation suits against the Washington Post and CNN, and multiple Republican mega-donors.

**“Meadows was given the opportunity** to disavow or denounce QAnon in multiple television interviews on Sunday, but he demurred, claiming not to know what it was. ... The Your Voice Counts Pac affiliated with Meadows first donated \$2,000 to Greene’s campaign in March. Greene received further support from the Meadows family when the RightWomen Pac, whose executive director is Debbie Meadows, Mark’s wife, endorsed Greene and spent \$17,500 to oppose [John] Cowan in the runoff.” [Guardian](#)

**TIKTOK LATEST -- [“TikTok suing Trump administration in attempt to stave off ban.”](#)** by Steven Overly

**HEADS UP -- “Hong Kong Reports First Coronavirus Re-Infection in Technology Worker,”** by Bloomberg’s Jinshan Hong: “A man was infected with the coronavirus after recovering from an initial bout in April in what scientists said was the first case showing that re-infection may occur within a few months.

**“The 33-year-old’s second SARS-CoV-2 infection** was detected via airport screening on his return to Hong Kong from Europe this month.

Researchers at the University of Hong Kong used genomic sequence analysis to prove that he had been infected by two different strains. The information technology worker didn't develop any symptoms from his second infection, which might indicate 'subsequent infections may be milder,' the researchers said." [Bloomberg](#)

**SOME GOOD NEWS -- ["New Covid-19 Cases in U.S. Fall to Lowest Level in More Than Two Months."](#)** by WSJ's Adam Martin:

"The number of new coronavirus infections in the U.S. declined from a day before, reaching its lowest level in more than two months and notching a ninth straight day with fewer than 50,000 new cases.

**"The nation reported 34,567 new cases on Sunday,** according to data compiled by Johns Hopkins University. That is down from 44,572 on Saturday and the lowest since June 22, when the U.S. reported 30,536 new cases.

**"Total infections in the U.S. have now passed 5.7 million,** nearly a quarter of the world's roughly 23.42 million, according to Johns Hopkins data. More than 808,000 people world-wide have died, including more than 176,000 in the U.S."

**HUNT FOR A VACCINE -- "China says it began public use of covid-19 vaccine a month ago, bypassing clinical trials,"** by WaPo's Eva Dou: "China is claiming the dubious honor of the first nation to roll out an experimental coronavirus vaccine for public use, saying it began inoculating high-risk groups in late July. For those keeping score, that would put Beijing's civilian rollout three weeks earlier than Russia's, with neither vaccine having yet passed standard clinical trials." [WaPo](#)

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**HMM ... THE DAILY BEAST: “Trump Admin Puts COVID-Wracked Meat Processor on Food Safety Panel,”** by William Bredderman: “The Brazilian meat conglomerate that presided over an alleged ‘work while sick’ culture at a plant in Colorado and deadly COVID-19 cluster at a facility in Nebraska during the early months of the pandemic will now be advising the federal government on health policies.” [Daily Beast](#)

**BEYOND THE BELTWAY -- “New Orleans Braces for Evictions as Renters Fall Behind, Belongings Pile Up on Streets,”** by WSJ’s Will Parker: “Louisiana’s ban on evictions during the coronavirus pandemic expired in June and the grace period for a separate federal eviction moratorium expires Aug. 24. ...

**“Chucked-out belongings are now spotted** on some New Orleans street corners. Baby cribs and child car seats, the remnants from forced-out families, sit stacked in piles in 90-degree heat.” [WSJ](#)

**MUCK READS -- “Thousands allowed to bypass environmental rules in pandemic,”** by AP’s Ellen Knickmeyer, Cathy Bussewitz, John Flesher, Matthew Brown and Michael Casey: “Thousands of oil and gas operations, government facilities and other sites won permission to stop monitoring for hazardous emissions or otherwise bypass rules intended to protect health and the environment because of the coronavirus outbreak, The Associated Press has found.

**“The result: approval for less environmental monitoring at some** Texas refineries and at an army depot dismantling warheads armed with nerve gas in Kentucky, manure piling up and the mass disposal of livestock carcasses at farms in Iowa and Minnesota, and other risks to communities as governments eased enforcement over smokestacks, medical waste shipments, sewage plants, oilfields and chemical plants. ... AP’s two-month review found that waivers were granted in more than 3,000 cases, representing the overwhelming majority of requests citing the outbreak.” [AP](#)

-- **“Jim Bakker gets PPP loans during legal fight on fraud claims,”** by AP’s Sally Stapleton: “When the U.S. government extended pandemic hardship loans to thousands of religious institutions, Jim Bakker and Morningside USA, his ministry in Blue Eye, Missouri, were among the most high-profile recipients. On April 28, the pastor received approval for an amount between \$650,000 and \$1.7 million in Paycheck Protection Program funds.

**“Weeks before, the New York and Missouri attorneys general,** as well as the Federal Drug Administration and Federal Trade Commission, filed complaints alleging Bakker engaged in deceptive practices by touting purported health benefits of a silver product on The Jim Bakker Show — including a suggestion it could be used to treat or prevent COVID-19 infection, something the FDA says is false.” [AP](#)

**LOOK WHAT’S BACK -- “Trump revives Bush v. Gore in his crusade against mail-in voting,”** by CNN’s Joan Biskupic: “[The case’s] legal principle has long been regarded as a proverbial ticket good for one ride only. The Supreme Court itself has not cited the case in any ruling since then. ... If the Trump campaign’s new legal approach succeeds, it could lead to the mass discarding of votes in November ...

**“Trump campaign lawyers believe** the case has new salience. They rely on Bush v. Gore in new lawsuits against mail-in voting in Nevada and New Jersey, most prominently in the Nevada case. They assert that states lack uniform procedures for balloting by mail in violation of constitutional equal protection.” [CNN](#)

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**PREGAME THE PRIME-TIME RNC LINEUP WITH FOUR SQUARE :**

This isn't quite how we predicted the GOP convention would look back in January, but here we are. Time to make the most of it! Join Four Square host Eugene Daniels and top political journalists Tim Alberta, Laura Barrón-López and Ryan Lizza throughout convention week for a breakdown of the day's most significant political developments and the buzz surrounding the convention. [Watch it live here.](#)

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**TOOSI EXCLUSI -- [“State Department memo warned Senate-approved officials against appearing at partisan events”](#):**

“Secretary of State Mike Pompeo’s decision to share a message with the Republican National Convention this week is a break from all sorts of norms and precedents designed to keep America’s chief diplomat out of the partisan fray.

**“It may also be violating State Department policy** he himself approved, according to an email sent by his deputy.”

-- **“Pompeo Urges Arab States to Follow U.A.E. in Striking Deals With Israel,”** by WSJ’s Felicia Schwartz in Tel Aviv: “Secretary of State Mike Pompeo urged Arab countries to join the United Arab Emirates in forging formal ties with Israel, as part of a U.S. diplomatic push to align old enemies in the Middle East against a common rival in Iran. ...

**“The chief diplomat’s five-day visit to the region,** with scheduled stops in the U.A.E., Bahrain and Sudan, is the start of a push to

encourage other countries to join the U.A.E. Jared Kushner, President Trump’s senior adviser, will travel to Israel, the U.A.E., Oman, Saudi Arabia and Bahrain next week as part of the effort. U.S. officials said they hope to announce at least one more deal between Israel and an Arab country—possibly Bahrain, Oman or Sudan—in the coming weeks.” [WSJ](#)

**BATTLE FOR THE HOUSE -- “Virus Response Fueling G.O.P. Bid to Retake New Mexico Seat,”** by NYT’s Simon Romero in Las Cruces, N.M.: “The incumbent, Rep. Xochitl Torres Small, is now among the most vulnerable Democrats in Congress in a race that is drawing attention from leaders of both parties, and potentially huge amounts of spending, as Republicans eye an opening to blunt Democratic momentum in this part of the West.

**“Yvette Herrell, the Republican seeking to oust** Ms. Torres Small, is stoking anger over a slump in the oil industry and measures taken by Democrats in New Mexico to fight the coronavirus pandemic. Shifting blame from President Trump for the pandemic’s economic fallout, Ms. Herrell has grown so critical of New Mexico’s virus mitigation policies that it sometimes seems as if she is running as much against the state’s Democratic governor as Ms. Torres Small.” [NYT](#)

**ICYMI -- [“Kenosha police shoot man; video of incident appears to show officer firing several shots into his back at close range.”](#)** by the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel’s Meg Jones

**TA-NEHISI COATES in VANITY FAIR: [“The Life Breonna Taylor Lived, in the Words of Her Mother](#) :** In a series of interviews, the author spoke to Tamika Palmer to paint a picture of a full, loving life taken too soon.”

**CASH DASH -- “Kamala Harris’ allies in the business world kick off fundraising blitz for Biden campaign,”** by CNBC’s Brian

Schwartz: “Sen. Kamala Harris’ formidable fundraising machine is kicking into high gear now that she is on the ticket ... Harris’ associates in the business world have been getting calls from new donors, according to people familiar with direct knowledge of the matter. ...

“**Alicia Goldstein, a senior managing director** at real estate investment firm HFZ Capital Group, and Deborah Harmon, the chief executive officer of Artemis Real Estate Partners, are helping organize a virtual event on Friday featuring Harris ... Tickets start at \$1,000 and go up to \$200,000, with the virtual gathering expected to reel in millions ... Mike Kempner, the CEO of public relations giant MWWPR, and Jon Henes, a partner at corporate restructuring firm Kirkland & Ellis, who was Harris’ national finance chairman when she ran for president, are also set to co-host an upcoming event that will feature Harris.” [CNBC](#)

**AFTERNOON READ -- “[Donald Trump Jr. Is Ready. But for What, Exactly?](#)”** by Jason Zengerle in the NYT Magazine: “Of all the president’s children, he has the strongest connection to the politics, voters and online disinformation ecosystem that put his father in the White House. What will he do with it?”

**ENGAGED -- Nika Nour**, executive director of the International Game Developers Association Foundation, and **Matt Blackwood** got engaged on a hiking trail in Weston, Mo. They met online about 4.5 years ago. [Pic](#) ... [Another pic](#)

**WELCOME TO THE WORLD -- Ginny Siller**, director of government affairs at the Animal Health Institute, and **Matt Siller**, director of security and stabilization at Tetra Tech, welcomed Adelyn Quinn Siller on Aug. 13. [Pic](#) ... [Another pic](#)

**BONUS BIRTHDAY:** DSCC finance assistant Blakely Wall (h/t Caitlin Oprysko)

