

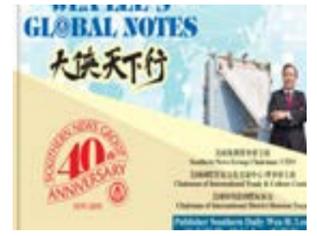


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Mr. Lee's Commentary and Dairy



Inside C2

Southern DAILY

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How a 'blue shift' in U.S. mail ballots might set off Election Week chaos



FILE PHOTO: U.S. President Donald Trump holds a campaign rally at Smith Reynolds Regional Airport in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, U.S., September 8, 2020. REUTERS/Jonathan Ernst

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - President Donald Trump acknowledged in February he knew how deadly and contagious the novel coronavirus was but did not convey that information to the American people because he did not want to create a panic, according to interviews for a new book.

The recorded interviews, obtained by CNN and based on a new book titled "Rage" by journalist Bob Woodward, came out just weeks before the Nov. 3 presidential election and as Trump's efforts to battle COVID-19 have come under intense criticism as being too little too late.

The Republican president, who has been hammered by Democratic opponent Joe Biden over the slow U.S. government response to the coronavirus, played down the virus for months as it took hold and spread quickly across the country.

RELATED COVERAGE

Trump did not intentionally mislead Americans about the coronavirus: White House
"I wanted to always play it down," Trump told Woodward on March 19, days after he declared a national emergency. "I still like playing it down, because I don't want to create a panic."

In that conversation, Trump also told Woodward that some "startling facts" had just come out about the virus' targets: "It's not just old, older. Young people too, plenty of young

people."

The White House on Wednesday denied Trump intentionally misled Americans about the virus, which has killed more than 190,000 people in the United States so far, with new cases spiking in the Midwest.

"The president never downplayed the virus," White House press secretary Kayleigh McEnany told reporters at a news briefing shortly after reports about the book emerged.

"The president expressed calm," McEnany said. "He was taking early action."

According to the interviews, CNN and The Washington Post reported, Trump knew the virus was especially deadly in early February.

"It goes through the air," Trump said in a recording of a Feb. 7 interview with Woodward. "That's always tougher than the touch. You don't have to touch things. Right? But the air, you just breathe the air and that's how it's passed.

"And so that's a very tricky one. That's a very delicate one. It's also more deadly than even your strenuous flus."

A week after that interview, Trump said at a White House briefing that the number of coronavirus cases in the U.S. "with-in a couple days is going to be down close to zero."

Trump's withholding information was "beyond despicable," Biden told reporters on Wednesday.

"It was a life-and-death betrayal of the American people," Biden said.

FILE PHOTO: U.S. President Donald Trump holds a campaign rally at Smith Reynolds Regional Airport in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, U.S., September 8, 2020. REUTERS/Jonathan Ernst
Woodward conducted 18 interviews with Trump for the book, due to be released Sept 15.

Other revelations in the book include Trump's disparaging remarks about U.S. military leaders. He drew criticism this week following reports that he denigrated fallen military personnel and veterans.

In Woodward's book, an aide to former Defense Secretary James Mattis heard Trump say in a meeting, "my f---ing generals are a bunch of pussies" because they cared more about alliances than trade deals. Mattis asked the aide to document the comment in an email, CNN reported.

Regarding the Black Lives Matter movement, Woodward asked Trump his views on the concept of white privilege and whether he feels isolated by that privilege from the plight of Black Americans.

"No. You really drank the Kool-Aid, didn't you? Just listen to you," Trump replied, according to media reports on the book. "Wow. No, I don't feel that at all."

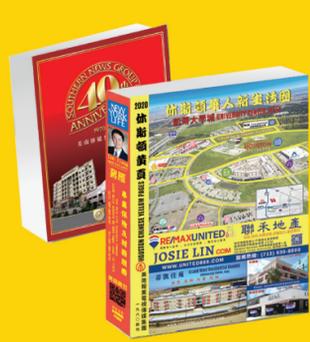
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WEA LEE'S GLOBAL NOTES

09/09/2020

CORONAVIRUS DIARY

Safety Is The Best Political Slogan

In the last six months, because police brutality has created so much social unrest and incited demonstrations all over the United States, especially in Portland and Seattle, many people went to the streets and burned police stations and interrupted local businesses and attacked the security personnel.

The President wanted to use more U.S. military force to calm down the rioting, but the Secretary of Defense refused to do it.

For a lot of ordinary citizens and small businesses, a peaceful environment with security and safety is really needed to do business.



A bill creating a task force to study how reparations could be implemented statewide has passed in the California Assembly. If this bill becomes law, that will have a big influence on American politics.

The President is using the social safety issue to try and gain support from those

voters who have become very tired of all the community unrest.

Democratic challenger Vice President Biden really needs to face this problem. The 2020 election is coming in less than two months. Our future depends on a leader who can help us with today's problems and lead us into the future.



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Advertisement for Southern Daily Wea H. Lee featuring a photo of the publisher and the text 'Publisher Southern Daily Wea H. Lee'.

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BUSINESS

Wear Mask!

Fauci Says A Coronavirus Vaccine Is 'Unlikely' By U.S. Election



Dr. Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute for Allergy and Infectious Diseases, arrives to testify before the House Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Crisis hearing in Washington, D.C., July 31, 2020. Kevin Dietsch | Pool | Reuters

KEY POINTS

The CDC has asked states to ready facilities to distribute a coronavirus vaccine by Nov. 1

Dr. Anthony Fauci said at a health conference that it's more likely a vaccine will be ready by "the end of the year."

Drug companies Moderna and Pfizer are racing to complete patient enrollment for their late-stage vaccine trials by the end of September.

Compiled And Edited By John T. Robbins, Southern Daily Editor

White House coronavirus advisor Dr. Anthony Fauci said Tuesday a coronavirus vaccine probably won't be ready by the U.S. presidential election even as the Centers for Disease and Prevention asks states to ready distribution facilities by Nov. 1. At a health conference, Fauci said it's more likely a vaccine will be ready by "the end of the year" as drug companies Moderna and Pfizer race to complete patient enrollment for their late-stage vaccine trials by the end of September.

"It's unlikely we'll have a definitive answer" by the Nov. 3 election, the director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases said at the Research! America 2020 National Health Research Forum. The comments are also at odds with President Donald Trump, who suggested at a press conference Monday

that a vaccine could be ready for distribution by Election Day.

"We could have a vaccine soon, maybe even before a very special day. You know what day I'm talking about," Trump told reporters.



Infectious disease experts and scientists have said they worry the vaccine approval process in the U.S. could be polluted by politics, not sci-

ence. The CDC has asked governors and health departments to prepare to distribute a vaccine as soon as Nov. 1, just two days before the election. Dr. Stephen Hahn, commissioner of the Food and Drug Administration, has also said the agency is prepared to bypass the full federal approval process in order to make a vaccine available as soon as possible.

Earlier Tuesday, nine drugmakers released a public letter pledging to "uphold the integrity of the scientific process" as they work toward potential global regulatory filings and approvals of the first Covid-19 vaccines.

"We saw it critical to come out and reiterate our commitment," Pfizer CEO Albert Bourla told NBC's "TODAY" on Tuesday. "We will develop our product, develop our vaccine using the highest ethical standards." On Thursday, Health and Human Services Secretary Alex Azar also tried to alleviate concerns about the review process, insisting the government's Nov. 1 deadline for states is not linked to the presidential election.

"It has nothing to do with elections. This has to do with delivering safe, effective vaccines to the American people as quickly as possible and saving people's lives," Azar said on "CBS This Morning." "Whether it's Oct. 15, whether it's Nov. 1, whether it's Nov 15, it's all about saving lives but meeting the FDA standards of safety and efficacy."

Related

9 vaccine makers sign safety pledge in race for Covid-19 vaccine

Multiple potential vaccines in critical phase three trial 03:26



Nine vaccine makers say they have signed a joint pledge to uphold "high ethical standards," suggesting they won't seek premature government approval for any Covid-19 vaccines they develop.

"We, the undersigned biopharmaceutical companies, want to make clear our on-going commitment to developing and testing poten-

tial vaccines for COVID-19 in accordance with high ethical standards and sound scientific principles," the pledge, released Tuesday, reads.

The companies that signed the pledge include AstraZeneca, BioNTech, Moderna, Pfizer, Novavax, Sanofi, GlaxoSmithKline, Johnson & Johnson and Merck.

President Trump has repeatedly pushed for a quick vaccine timeline -- even referencing Election Day in November.

"[It's] going to be done in a very short period of time -- could even have it during the month of October," the President said at a press briefing on Monday. "We'll have the vaccine soon, maybe before a special date. You know what date I'm talking about."

On August 6, Trump said he was "optimistic" a vaccine would be ready by November 3. This has caused widespread worry that the federal government might rush a vaccine to market before it has been adequately tested.

Dr. Moncef Slaoui, who is leading the Trump administration's Operation Warp Speed initiative, told NPR a vaccine ready for public distribution in November is "extremely unlikely."



The FDA has said it would authorize a coronavirus vaccine so long as it is safe and at least 50% effective. The flu vaccine, by comparison, generally reduces the risk of getting influenza by 40% to 60% compared with people who aren't inoculated, according to the CDC. Hahn said the FDA wouldn't authorize a vaccine that's not safe, even if it is fairly effective. Fauci said Tuesday the trial results will also be reviewed by the Data and Safety Monitoring Board, an independent group of medical experts who observe patient safety and treatment data. He added he "wouldn't be surprised" if the U.S. had more than one vaccine. In the meantime, he said, the U.S. coronavirus response still needs to improve. He called the coronavirus outbreak

in the U.S. a "mixed bag" as new cases fall in the southern region of the country and cases surge in states such as Montana, the Dakotas, Michigan, Minnesota and Iowa.

"When you look at the country as a whole, we need to be doing much better than we're doing," he told PBS' Judy Woodruff at the conference.

Related

Pharmacists In All States Can Vaccinate Kids

(HealthDay News) -- Children can now be vaccinated by pharmacists in all 50 states as the U.S. government seeks to prevent a decline in routine vaccinations during the coronavirus pandemic. While 28 states already allowed pharmacists to vaccinate children, the directive announced Wednesday by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) will temporarily override restrictions in 22 states starting this fall, the Associated Press reported. The directive was issued by HHS head Alex Azar using emergency powers he has during the U.S. coronavirus epidemic, which was declared a public health emergency.

"Especially as we approach the school season, it is critical that children have easy access to the pediatric vaccinations to enable them to get back to school as schools reopen," Azar said, the AP reported.



Childhood vaccinations from doctors' offices fell sharply in late March and early April, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

However, a May survey of pediatricians found that most offices were open and could give recommended childhood shots, and more than half could accept new patients if needed, the AP reported. The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) quickly took issue with the new HHS ruling. (Courtesy WebMD.com and HealthDay Reporter)

Editor's Choice



Farmers hold wooden sticks as they take part in a protest against the decision of the Mexican government to divert water from La Boquilla dam to the U.S., as part of a 1944 bilateral water treaty between the two countries, in Camargo, in Chihuahua



President Trump gestures during a campaign event at Smith Reynolds Regional Airport in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. REUTERS/Jonathan Ernst



Annie Drake steps into the school bus in Vernon Bridge, Prince Edward Island, Canada. REUTERS/John Morris



Residents make their way through a flooded street after last week's heavy rains in Keur Massar, Senegal. REUTERS/Zohra Bensema



Cate Blanchett bumps elbow with director Ann Hui at the Venice Film Festival. REUTERS/Guglielmo Mangiapane



A police officer talks to the member of the Animal Rebellion group dressed in a costume as they march during an Extinction Rebellion protest in London. REUTERS/Toby Melville



A climate activist wearing a face mask takes part in a protest outside the Shell building in London, Britain. REUTERS/Dylan Martinez



Supporters, one wearing a shirt with President Trump's face, react as Trump speaks during a campaign event at Smith Reynolds Regional Airport in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. REUTERS/Jonathan Ernst

A Third Of Americans Might Refuse A Covid-19 Vaccine



President Trump tours the National Institutes of Health's Vaccine Research Center in Bethesda, Maryland, on March 3. Brendan Smialowski/AFP via Getty Images

Compiled And Edited By John T. Robbins, Southern Daily Editor

When the Covid-19 pandemic became a full-fledged crisis in March, public health experts gave a prescription for riding it out: Flatten the curve with social distancing, lockdowns, contact tracing, etc., and then wait for a vaccine. The hope was, and still is, that a mass vaccination campaign can restore the world to normal. For many reasons, the success of a vaccination campaign is not guaranteed. The vaccine has to be effective, and there needs to be enough of it to put a dent in transmission. Another challenge perhaps overlooked: "What if we get a safe and effective vaccine and people choose not to get it?" says Matt Motta, a political scientist at Oklahoma State University. Pervasive vaccine refusal looks like a real possibility. Motta's research on a hypothetical Covid-19 vaccine, as well as polling from Gallup (and others) this summer, reveals that between a quarter and a third of the American public say they would be unwilling to be vaccinated against Covid-19. (These surveys generally ask about a hypothetical FDA-approved vaccine and not about one approved under an emergency use authorization before clinical trials have ended.) The surveys actually might be underselling the problem. "When we look at seasonal influenza vaccination rates, for example, surveys always overestimate the number of people who get it," Motta says. It's easier to say you're going to get a vaccine to a pollster than it is to actually go get one.

Why researchers are worried about chronic stress and Covid-19 The hesitation showing up in these polls is not about a skepticism of all vaccines (although there is some of that, for sure). It's skepticism about this potential vaccine, created in record time, via the Trump administration's Operation Warp Speed. Overall, 83 percent of Americans



agree that if a vaccine is approved too quickly, they would worry about its safety. **FDA Commissioner Stephen Hahn speaks during a White House press conference on August 23, 2020. Authorities announced an emergency approval of blood plasma from recovered coronavirus patients as a treatment against the disease. Saul Loeb/AFP via Getty Images** There's so much about the US response to the pandemic that has been botched. We failed on testing early and then failed to scale it up. We failed on contact tracing, on reopening many of

our communities safely. But we haven't screwed up a vaccine campaign yet. There's still time to get it right. It requires not just developing a safe vaccine, approved without the taint of a political rush job, but also conducting a vast social science research effort to better understand people's anxieties about the vaccine, and then help move them toward acceptance. **US public health may be undermined by the US government itself** Billions have been spent on developing the Covid-19 vaccines. But lacking in the development process is a key ingredient: the public's trust. There's a tension here: The White House itself is diminishing the credibility of its own Food and Drug Administration. On the one hand, public health researchers and experts want to figure out how to convince people who are vaccine hesitant to accept it to put the brakes on the pandemic. On the other, the Trump administration is muddying the waters with actions that lead to — at best — the appearance of a politically compromised FDA, the US agency tasked with approving a vaccine for widespread public use. There's reasonable confusion: Is operation Warp Speed designed to save the American public or ensure Trump's reelection?



President Trump, Dr. Anthony Fauci, and Health and Human Services Secretary Alex Azar speak to reporters after visiting a vaccine research center on March 3, 2020. Drew Angerer/Getty Images In August, FDA Commissioner Stephen Hahn cited misleading statistics about the efficacy of using blood plasma to treat severe Covid-19. And now, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has told hospitals to be prepared to distribute a vaccine by November 1 (close to Election Day). As Vox's Umair Irfan reports, it's still unlikely that a vaccine will be authorized for use by then. But even the appearance of political interference could lead to lasting damage to a vaccination campaign. Sketchiness is creeping into these key public health agencies: CNN reports that sudden changes to CDC Covid-19 testing guidelines (which experts strongly oppose) came from "the top down." Even Republicans are worried about political influence

on the vaccine process. Seventy-two percent of Republicans and 82 percent of Democrats worry the vaccine approval process is being driven more by politics than science, according to a recent Stat and Harris poll. Vaccine hesitancy is not uniform. Black communities — some of the hardest hit by Covid-19 — are particularly hesitant. If a vaccine is approved, it will likely be voluntary for people to get. Right now, the polling and research finds that some communities will be more willing to volunteer than others. Of particular concern is the increased level of hesitancy in Black communities — for many reasons — which have already been disproportionately impacted by the pandemic. Higher vaccine refusal in these communities could lead to continued disproportionate Covid-19 suffering. (That is, if these communities have access to the vaccine in the first place.) In a May to June survey, Motta and co-authors estimated Black Americans may be about 40 percent more likely to refuse a vaccine than white Americans (their demographically representative survey found 43 percent of Black Americans plan to refuse a vaccine versus around 29 percent of the American public at large). In July, Gallup found 67 percent of white Americans said they'd get an FDA-approved Covid-19 vaccine; 59 percent of nonwhite Americans said the same. "I THINK A LOT OF PEOPLE FEEL LIKE THEY'RE GOING TO BE EXPERIMENTED ON" Again, there are indications that this hesitancy isn't just about vaccines in general but that there's added uncertainty about the Covid-19 vaccines in development. "Black community and other minority communities vaccinate their kids for measles, mumps, rubella," says Justin Stoler, who studies health disparities at the University of Miami. "There are disparities there, but not disparities like we're seeing with Covid willingness." It's not just Black communities that may be less willing to vaccinate. Women also report greater hesitancy about a vaccine (they are 70 percent more likely to refuse a vaccine than men, according to Motta's research), as do political conservatives and people living in rural areas. Plus, there's the longstanding anti-vaccination movement, which will likely seek to undermine Covid-19 vaccination efforts. The challenge is that each of these communities may require a different strategy, have different underlying anxieties and fears, and require a slightly different intervention to placate their fears. **We need more vaccine social science research** How do we get ahead of this hesitancy problem? Experts I spoke to say there needs to be widespread, on-the-ground anthropological research in communities to

find out what their vaccine concerns are and to test educational campaigns to address those concerns. "We are, and should be, investing an enormous amount of resources in the research and development of a vaccine," Crouse Quinn says. "We've invested very few, almost no resources, in the social and behavioral science research that will help us understand in real time how the public will respond to a vaccine."



"There's an assumption that if we can develop the vaccine technology, that if we build it, people will come, and we'll get vaccinated," she says. "And it's not true. The social component is as complicated if not even more complicated than developing the vaccine technology." (Such a suite of on-the-ground social science research has been effective in increasing willingness to vaccinate for Ebola in African countries.) Motta and his collaborators are independently doing some of this research (which has not yet been published), trying to figure out what sorts of messages might move people toward vaccine acceptance. "We don't have a lot of research on how to communicate during a pandemic," he says. But preliminarily, "we find that if you talk about the personal health risks of Covid, that's something that seems to resonate." Messages about how a vaccine could help the economy don't work, and messages about how the vaccine could help save others are less effective than messages about personal risk. Most importantly, we know what doesn't work: shaming, and, as Motta says, "telling people 'you're wrong and here's why.'" There could be a lot of different strategies that work. A successful Covid-19 vaccine campaign is not lost yet. But the clock is ticking. "We are in a window of time right now where this can actually be addressed, and be addressed well," Brunson says. A botched vaccine campaign could undermine public health in the United States. But a good campaign, she stresses, could lift it up, and "increase faith in public health and belief in vaccination. That would really put us as a country, across the board, on a better path." (Courtesy vox.com)

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