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Democracy Dies in Darkness

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 2018 • \$2

Military fears use in political battles

Former generals criticize border deployment days before midterm elections

BY GREG JAFFE AND DAN LAMOTHE

President Trump's decision to send as many as 15,000 troops to the southern border has drawn sharp and unusual criticism from former military leaders, who have called the deployment "wasteful" and raised worries that the president might be using the military as a political tool to influence the midterm elections just days away.

"The military has all of a sudden been placed in a highly politicized environment regarding immigration," retired Lt. Gen. David Barno, who commanded U.S. forces in Afghanistan, said of the surge of troops to the border.

The blunt criticism of the mission to block what Trump contends is a threatening caravan of migrants encouraged by Democrats reflects the strain that his unusual presidency has put on one of America's most important norms: the tradition of an apolitical military.

Other presidents have deployed forces to the border. But the timing of this deployment and the questionable need for it, with the caravan at least a month away

TRUMP CONTINUED ON A4

Census citizenship question

The Supreme Court won't delay the trial over secretary's motives. **A5**

Health-care falsehoods

The GOP's claims on preexisting conditions belie past actions. **A5**

In caravans, migrants find safety, support in numbers

BY ANNA-CATHERINE BRIGIDA

SAN SALVADOR — As the sun rose on the Salvador del Mundo monument in San Salvador, dozens of would-be migrants with small backpacks and duffel bags trickled into the central plaza. They settled on benches and stairs to await instructions.

Within an hour, at least 100 had gathered. By 8 a.m., about 300 — all of them responding to the same WhatsApp group message about when and where to meet. From the far corner of the plaza, a voice called out: "Let's go!"

Within moments, all the migrants had stood up, gathered their belongings — clothes, family trinkets and stuffed animals for the children — and walked through the plaza, across the street and past a gas station.

It was their first steps in a potential 1,600-mile journey to the United States, with hopes of perhaps finding a job, or maybe reuniting with relatives and friends, or possibly seeking asylum to escape the street violence at home.

The group, which left San Salvador on Wednesday, became part of at least the fourth Central American caravan to form since

CARAVANS CONTINUED ON A10



GUI CHRIST FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

As immigrants flee and the country's health system collapses, disease is spreading over the borders into Brazil and Colombia

'VENEZUELA'S CRISIS HAS BECOME OUR OWN'

BY ANTHONY FAIOLA, MARINA LOPES AND RACHELLE KRYGIER

IN MANAUS, BRAZIL

Bernardino Albuquerque, 69, an infectious disease specialist and president of the Health Surveillance Foundation of Amazonas state, uses a map projected on and behind him to discuss how to fight measles cases in the Brazilian state.

On a steamy February morning, Bernardino Albuquerque — a doctor in charge of combating infectious diseases in Brazil's vast Amazonas state — received the text message he had been dreading for weeks.

We have two patients with symptoms.

That alert from Brazilian doctors near the Venezuelan frontier marked the start of an imported measles epidemic that is still ravaging the Brazilian Amazon. It was the first time in nearly two decades that the highly contagious virus had appeared in this tropical region, home to a growing number of Venezuelan migrants. The disease has also spread to Argentina, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru.

The economic and social crisis in Venezuela is increasingly spilling over its borders, with disease becoming the newest symbol of the disaster. Venezuela's health-care system has virtually broken down, allowing once-eradicated illnesses such as measles and diphtheria to reemerge in a population facing acute shortages of food and medicine.

Now, a historic outflow of migrants is helping spread infections to other countries.

"Venezuela's crisis has become our own," Arthur Virgilio Neto, the mayor of Manaus, Amazonas's capital, said.

Brazil's patient zero for measles was a 1-year-old Venezuelan child brought over the border in February. Eight months later, more than 10,000 patients have contracted suspected infections in Amazonas state alone, as the virus hopped across a local population that was

VENEZUELA CONTINUED ON A10

Hiring surges, wages on rise

GAINS GIVE GOP FUEL AHEAD OF ELECTIONS

Economists see a peak, warn of slowdown ahead

BY HEATHER LONG AND DANIELLE PAQUETTE

Hiring surged and wages grew more than they have in almost a decade, the government said Friday in a report seized on by Republicans just before the midterm elections as evidence their policies are delivering for American workers.

In a key economic snapshot before Tuesday's vote, the Labor Department's monthly jobs report showed that the typical worker's earnings rose by 3.1 percent in the past year — the biggest such leap since 2009.

Federal economists reported 250,000 new jobs in October, the 97th straight month of gains, and the unemployment rate remained at a nearly half-century low of 3.7 percent, underlining the strong fundamentals of the economy, despite stock market jitters.

Trump moved swiftly to claim credit for the figures, even though he called government jobs data "fake" many times during the 2016 presidential campaign.

"Wow! The U.S. added 250,000 Jobs in October — and this was despite the hurricanes. Unemployment at 3.7%. Wages UP!" he wrote on Twitter, telling reporters later in the day: "We had tremendous job numbers today. . . . That was shocking for a number of

JOBS CONTINUED ON A13

Strategy shift: The GOP is talking immigration, not tax cuts. **A12**

In grief and defiance, Terps' line holds

McNair's friends have honored fallen teammate during intense five months

BY EMILY GIAMBALVO

The bedroom door stays closed. Behind it, posters from the videogame store across the street are gone. So are the letters from family members that had been prominently displayed on the wall. All that remains is the apartment-owned furniture and an orange McDonogh School pennant stuck to the nightstand.

Johnny Jordan now lives with two fellow Maryland football players instead of three, and he looks at that door, the one that opened to Jordan McNair's room, each time he leaves the apartment. For Terrapins players, the weekly flow of football — practice, film, meetings, games — continues as usual, but reminders of their teammate have persisted since McNair died of heatstroke suffered at a team workout in May.

The Thursday morning tradition of Jordan shouting, "Guess what day it is?" with McNair responding, "It's Chipotle Thursday!" no longer exists. Neither do the weekly meals the two players shared. When a former player visited Maryland this season, offensive lineman Ellis McKennie wanted to tell McNair. Then McKennie, who also played with



PATRICK SEMANSKY/ASSOCIATED PRESS

Maryland offensive lineman Ellis McKennie has remembered Jordan McNair in various ways since his death in June, including waving a flag with the number of his longtime friend at games.

McNair at McDonogh, thought, "Oh, s---, he's not here." And as McKennie, Jordan and a handful of their Maryland teammates pray before each game, they now touch McNair's locker instead of his hands.

"We say, 'Johnny, how are you

doing today?'" said Jordan's mom, Rebecca. "And if he's having a bad day, he'll say, 'Well you know, I walk into that apartment every single day knowing that [McNair] is never coming back.' It hits him in the face, I think, every single

MARYLAND CONTINUED ON A14

Durkin decision: Crisis over U-Md. coach illustrated a power struggle. **B1**

White House appears in no hurry to judge Saudis

Elections, Hill recess ease pressure for action in Khashoggi killing

BY KAREN DEYOUNG

The Trump administration is waiting to see the results of a Saudi investigation into the killing of Jamal Khashoggi, according to U.S. officials, and appears in no hurry to decide whether or how to punish Saudi Arabia.

The only specific response suggested so far has come from Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, who said this week that the administration was "reviewing putting sanctions on the individuals . . . engaged in that murder."

"It'll take us probably a handful more weeks before we have enough evidence to actually put these sanctions in place," Pompeo said in a radio interview Thursday, "but I think we'll be able to get there." The Saudis have made 18 arrests of mostly security agents they say were involved in the killing of Khashoggi, a self-exiled Saudi

journalist critical of the ruling monarchy, during an Oct. 2 visit he made to the Saudi Consulate in Istanbul.

Lawmakers in both parties have expressed outrage at Khashoggi's violent death, and some have demanded harsh action ranging from suspension of U.S. arms sales and military cooperation to ending discussions over a U.S.-Saudi civil nuclear agreement. Some have called for the administration to use the Khashoggi case as leverage to force Saudi Arabia to end its brutal, U.S.-assisted war in Yemen, and to bring to a close its dispute with Persian Gulf neighbor Qatar, another U.S. ally.

"The last thing we want to do is continue on with a 'business as usual' response" toward Saudi Arabia, Sen. Lindsey O. Graham (R-S.C.) said last month, even before the kingdom had acknowledged that its own personnel carried out the killing of Khashoggi and arranged for the disappearance of his body.

SAUDIS CONTINUED ON A6

Erdogan presses Saudis
Turkey's leader: The kill order came from Riyadh's "highest levels." **A6**

IN SUNDAY'S POST



TRAVIS DOVE FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

« Heavy metal For Abby the Spoon Lady, sorrow, perseverance and an unlikely journey to viral fame. Her story is about the pain music can erase, and also the pain it can't. **Magazine**

River dance In its first season, U by Uniworld turns a slow float down the Seine in Paris into an active adventure. **Travel**



MARVIN JOSEPH/THE WASHINGTON POST

« The Diane Lane thing It is deep, and it is real, especially with women. At the height of a 40-year career, the actress is embracing new platforms in "House of Cards" and "The Romanoffs." **Arts & Style**

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INSIDE

Daylight saving time ends
At 2 a.m. Sunday, we gain an hour.

THE NATION
Powerful painkiller
The FDA approves a new opioid far more potent than fentanyl despite fears of more overdose deaths. **A3**

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Caravans to U.S. expected to become 'new method of irregular immigration'

CARAVANS FROM A1

mid-October, when one left San Pedro Sula in Honduras and headed north.

Caravans were once used sparingly to spotlight a particular problem. A group of Central American mothers, for example, has traveled through Mexico each year for 14 years searching for sons and daughters who disappeared on the migrant trail. The Mesoamerican Caravan for a Good Life has organized migrant caravans for years, including one in March that gained international attention.

But experts now predict that caravan-style treks could become a more frequent scene along the decades-old migration routes from the region.

President Trump has reacted with combative and unsubstantiated claims that the migrants — including many families and children — pose a threat that requires military mobilization at the southern border.

Still, the national attention has also brought awareness of the potential benefits of the caravans for migrants, such as increased safety along the route and shared resources. This could bring even

more such groups in the future, migrant activists say.

"We haven't previously seen caravans as an organizational strategy to get to the U.S. and cross the border," said Celia Medrano, chief program officer at Cristosal, a San Salvador-based organization that works with migrants. "This is going to be the new method of irregular immigration."

Traveling in groups is perceived as safer and cheaper for migrants, who often pay \$7,000 to \$10,000 to smugglers called coyotes to avoid the dangers of crossing Mexico.

Migrants do not pay to join a caravan, and many travel without much cash, to avoid being robbed. Rather than carry many provisions, members of the caravan often rely on the generosity of people along the way to feed them.

But the caravans also present tough logistic and political issues along the routes.

On Oct. 22, Trump threatened to cut off aid to Central American countries if they did not stop the flow of migrants, putting even more pressure on the governments to take a stand.

"The government institutions in all of the countries had become

accustomed to making invisible the phenomenon [of undocumented migrants], looking the other way knowing that thousands of people are crossing underground," Medrano said. "Now they can't deny it, they can't ignore it and they can't avoid confronting it, because it is right under their noses."

In Honduras, the caravan stoked already high political tensions between President Juan Orlando Hernández and opposition leaders who call his reelection fraudulent. Fliers promoting the Oct. 12 caravan openly criticized the Honduran government and blamed the current administration for creating the conditions from which migrants flee. Hernández has tried to lure migrants back to Honduras with the promise of employment.

Guatemala and Honduras temporarily closed their borders in October, even though a regional agreement allows citizens of Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador and Nicaragua to pass freely between borders with proper documentation. President Salvador Sánchez Cerén of El Salvador has

said he will not comply with the U.S. demand to stop migrants from leaving.

Yet while the Salvadoran government recognizes its citizens' right to leave, it also felt compelled to warn would-be migrants about what is often a harrowing process.

Police, immigration officials and child-protection institutions were dispatched to the plaza where migrants gathered to speak about the travel documents they would need and the dangers of the journey. The underlying message was clear: Don't go.

"We've talked to most of these Salvadoran citizens about the dangers of irregular migration to raise awareness," Evelyn Marroquin, director of the Directorate General of Migration and Foreigners, said in an official statement. "In the last minute they can reflect and give up this voyage that can be so grave for them and their families."

These campaigns are "too late" for migrants who already made the decision and understand the risks, Medrano said. The government would have more of an impact, she

said, if it worked to reduce the crime and corruption that drive so many migrants to leave.

The wave of caravans has been particularly challenging for the Mexican government, which has dedicated extensive resources to helping its northern neighbor prevent Central American migrants from reaching the U.S. border, by deporting them and making their journey more difficult.

The Mexican government has tried multiple strategies to stop the caravans — amassing police at the border, promising work permits and offering political asylum — but to no avail. There are still an estimated 4,200 migrants traveling through Mexico in the first of the most recent caravans.

Trying to stop it presents Mexico with a political dilemma. While the United States threatens political retribution for not blocking caravans, Mexican citizens appear to overwhelmingly support the migrants and their journey.

"They are caught between the concerns of the U.S. government, which they want to be responsive to, and Mexican public opinion, which they have to listen to," said Andrew Selee, president of the Migration Policy Institute, a

Washington-based think tank.

As more migrants band together, caravans are gaining legitimacy in the eyes of would-be migrants.

"If images keep being transmitted of people traveling together, and if those people make it further along, more people are going to see the groups as a safe way to travel and, hopefully, be able to reach the U.S. border and request asylum," said Maureen Meyer, the director for Mexico and migrant rights in the Washington Office on Latin America, a research organization.

The prospect that caravans could become more common hinges partially on what happens once the early groups reach the U.S.-Mexico border. Signs that their asylum applications are being rejected, for example, could deter future groups, Meyer said.

But as long as the caravans remain a safe and viable option for migrating, experts say they will continue.

"It's the new way," Medrano said, "of making visible what was before invisible."

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Joshua Partlow and Kevin Sieff in Mexico City contributed to this report.

▶ 'I can't turn back': See video at wapo.st/caravans.

As Venezuelans cross borders, so do outbreaks

VENEZUELA FROM A1

not sufficiently vaccinated. New cases are growing at the rate of 170 a week.

Seen as a manageable childhood illness in the United States, measles has taken a high toll in the crowded shantytowns and remote villages of the dense Amazon jungle. Amazonas state declared a health emergency in July, and hundreds of people have been hospitalized with complications including pneumonia.

So far, two adults and four infants have died.

"We hadn't had a single case of measles in 18 years; most of our doctors only knew it from text books," said Albuquerque, recalling the start of the measles outbreak. "We were prepared for routine problems. But this was extraordinary."

Nearby nations overwhelmed

Venezuela, an oil-rich nation of about 31 million, is in the midst of a societal collapse — the product of a five-year-long depression sparked by lower oil prices, failed socialist policies, government mismanagement and corruption. Aid agencies project nearly 2 million Venezuelans will abandon their nation this year, on top of 1.8 million who left over the past two years.

They are leaving a country where food is scarce and the public health system is withering, with little money for drugs, outreach campaigns, epidemiological surveillance or insecticides.

Decades ago, Venezuela was lauded as a global pioneer in combating malaria, eradicating the disease from vast sections of the nation. But malaria cases have tripled in three years to 406,289 in 2017. Brazilian authorities cite that surge, and the increase in migrant flows, for a 50 percent spike in malaria in Amazonas state last year, to 72,000 cases. Peruvian health authorities have reported a new outbreak in a transit region for migrants where no malaria cases had been recorded since 2012.

"We're facing a [malaria] epidemic in places that didn't have it anymore, that were clean of it," Albuquerque said. "They have not been doing effective malaria control in Venezuela, especially in the past few years."

In Colombia, at least eight cases of diphtheria — a bacterial infection that can block airways and cause death — were confirmed in 2018, that nation's first instances since 2005. All eight were recorded in border regions with a large flow of migrants from Venezuela, where a diphtheria outbreak has raged since 2016, according to the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), a U.N. body.

Hospitals in countries that border Venezuela, particularly Colombia and Brazil, are already overwhelmed by a surge of sick Venezuelans, seeking treatment for grave illnesses from cancer to HIV that their home nation is increasingly unable to treat.

The PAHO said in a statement that Venezuela's health-care system — including disease-prevention programs — had been continually deteriorating because of economic and political problems. "This has led to an increase in the number of outbreaks of infectious diseases, particularly of measles, diphtheria and malaria. The situation is being aggravated by population movements both



PHOTOS BY GUI CHRIST FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

Theo Silva, 4 months old, and his mother Talia Miranda, 21, are in isolation for measles at Delphina Rinaldi Abdel Aziz Hospital in Brazil.



From left, Lucimei Martins, 57; Nataly Queiroz, 20; and Alessandra da Silva, 43, of the Health Surveillance Foundation prepare vaccine doses at the Josué Claudinho de Sousa state school.



Sabrina Coelho, 18, and Edilene de Andrade, 16, got the measles vaccine for the first time at the school in Manaus, Brazil. After the delivery of 1 million vaccinations, the rate of new cases is falling.

within the country and to neighboring countries," it said.

Too little, too late

No illness has spread more rapidly from Venezuela than measles. Viruses containing the same genetic markers as in the outbreak in Venezuela have spread across the continent, from neighboring Colombia to distant Argentina. Outside of Venezuela, the vast majority of the patients are in Latin America's largest nation: Brazil.

Venezuela's health ministry did not respond to repeated requests for comment. PAHO records, however, show hundreds of suspected measles cases were reported there in 2016.

The government launched a targeted vaccination campaign in the most affected area — the illegal mining zones in Bolívar state — after cases were recorded there in mid-2017.

But vaccination programs had been slipping nationwide for years, according to Venezuelan doctors — providing a recipe for disaster even as the government was slow to respond to new outbreaks.

Two Venezuelan physicians familiar with the country's vaccina-



THE WASHINGTON POST

"The epidemic is the result of a despotic, incompetent government in Venezuela."

Arthur Virgílio Neto, Manaus mayor

tion program said failing infrastructure has contributed to the problem. At Caracas University Hospital — one of the capital's largest — there are holes in doors in the infectious disease ward where measles patients are kept, compromising containment efforts, according to doctors. Refrigerators are often broken in Caracas clinics, making storage of vaccines challenging. Also, cars

used to deliver vaccines are frequently out of service because of a lack of spare parts, according to the doctors, who spoke on the condition of anonymity out of fear of government reprisals.

The Venezuelan government, with the aid of the PAHO, launched a more comprehensive, nationwide measles vaccination program this year. But the damage, doctors say, had already been done.

"When a virus enters a country, what you do is protect the population, and the government simply didn't," said Julio Castro, professor at Caracas University Hospital's Tropical Medicine Institute. "Once the virus was here, they did nothing to truly stop it from spreading. Knowing that so many of our kids weren't vaccinated, they should have raised a national alarm. They didn't."

International agencies — including the PAHO and the U.S. Agency for International Development, the U.S. government's overseas development organization — have launched emergency health programs in Venezuela's neighboring countries to contain the outbreaks, including ramped-up vaccination and detection operations in Colombia and Peru.

But nowhere has the response been more massive than in Brazil.

'I wasn't vaccinated'

The road to Venezuela passes by Northside Emergency Hospital in Manaus, a sprawling city of 2.1 million that boomed under 19th-century rubber barons.

Here, 600 miles from the Venezuelan border, the hospital's litest patients are struggling for breath in an infectious disease ward that was converted months ago into a measles isolation wing. In one room, Talia Miranda, 21, stroked the hand of her 4-month-old son, Theo.

When he had come in nine days earlier, his measles-related pneumonia had been so bad he needed to be incubated. He was still not out of danger — but doing better than an infected infant in the room next door who doctors said might not pull through.

Authorities have strung up measles advisory posters around town, and the outbreak is constantly in the news. Miranda had been counting the days until her son was 6 months old — the date when doctors said it would be safe to vaccinate him. But then she caught measles herself and passed it on to him.

"I don't blame the Venezuelans; they're just looking for a safe place," she said, fighting back tears. "I blame myself. I wasn't vaccinated. He got it from me."

Indeed, the spread of illnesses like measles has underscored the dangerous weakness of the vaccination programs in countries like Brazil. When measles swept in from Venezuela, almost one-third of Amazonas state's 4 million inhabitants were unvaccinated.

Officials have scrambled to respond. The government set up a situation room in Manaus, with dozens of maps on the wall, and tracked the disease as it invaded the city. Doctors unfamiliar with measles underwent urgent training. Health authorities went to universities and medical schools, recruiting more than 1,000 trainees who were taught how to give vaccinations. A door-to-door operation began — from moss-covered colonial buildings and teeming slums to jungle settlements reachable only by days-long trips in canoes.

Yet the mobilization failed to prevent a major outbreak — by late summer, medical personnel were receiving 900 suspected measles victims a week. Overwhelmed, health workers moved from sending patients to hospital isolation wards to recommending home containment for all but the worst cases. Emergency vaccination points were set up at schools and churches.

After the delivery of 1 million vaccinations, the number of suspected new cases is dropping — down to 170 a week.

Few in Manaus are angry at the Venezuela migrants, who generally have been met with sympathy here. Residents are, however, blaming the Venezuelan government.

"The epidemic is the result of a despotic, incompetent government in Venezuela," said Virgílio, the Manaus mayor. "Their lack of attention to national health care has created these negative consequences, and we have to pay the price."

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