

### World News

With the Presidential election looming, it's time to explore the role of foreign actors. China, Russia, and Iran are cited as countries trying to sway the election [1]. Of these, China has the most wealth and deeper technology penetration. For instance, Chinese parts and hidden ownerships are considered a risk to US voting machines [2]. Additionally, there are cases where China has used disinformation in an attempt to sway Taiwan's elections [3]. Moreover, China has been caught in the past trying to influence US elections. Case in point, John Huang was agent of influence" of the People's Republic of China and was suspected of funneling large contributions to a number of people within the Democrat party [4]. Additionally, Mr. Huang was a arms dealer who was tied to illegal importation of 2,000 AK-47 fully automatic rifles into the US [5]. The extensive evidence uncovered led the FBI to examine if Communist China funneled money to Democrats [6].

When China was admitted into the World Trade Organization, most considered this a good thing [7]. However, we continue to experience the unintended consequences of enriching China. While the world continues to struggle with the COVID-19 outbreak, China is reporting increased exports [8]. Additionally, China continues its military expansion. For example, the Communist giant has the third largest air force with over 2,500 aircraft [9]. The Chinese threat has not gone unnoticed by Japan. Outgoing Prime Minister Shinzo Abe has set in motion plans for Japan to be capable of attacking distant land targets [10]. What's more, China conducted a major military exercise within Taiwan's air defense identification zone [11]. Finally, one piece is calling for China to

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### Wuhan Coronavirus

Before this cycle's material, there is one question to ponder. If China was not admitted into the World Trade Organization, would there have been a COVID-19 outbreak?

We begin asking, is COVID-19 a good bioweapon? While it does have some properties desirable of such a weapon, it fails in others [1]. The virus could have been a weapon in development; but in its current form it is not weaponized. For instance, a bioweapon necessitates the need to have a cure in order to protect the developers own people. What we saw was Wuhan, China

suffered a number of deaths related to the virus [2]. What's more, China just now reported having a vaccine to combat the pandemic [3].

Perhaps one of the biggest lessons learned was how to respond to the virus. Sweden opted not to force businesses to close and experienced a high death rate as a consequence [4]. However, Europe is now experiencing increases in the number of infections while Sweden's continues to fall [5]. For instance, Denmark reported more new infections than did Sweden [6]. Moreover, the death rate per million people is lower in

Sweden than in the US [7]. A final question, what was gained by the endless lockdowns in the US?

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2. Page, Jeremy, and Fan, Wenxin, Wall Street Journal, *Wuhan's Coronavirus Death Toll Surges by 50% After China Revision*, April 17, 2020.
3. AFP, *China shows off Covid-19 vaccines for first time*, September 9,

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#### Special points of interest:

- Nasdaq Composite closes above 12,000 for a new record high
- S&P 500 closes above 3,500 for a record high

# Wuhan Coronavirus

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Than the US, September 9, 2020.

2020.

4. McGann, Hilary, and Reynolds, Emma, CNN, *Sweden records highest death tally in 150 years in first half of 2020*, August 20, 2020
5. Mulier, Thomas, Bloomberg, *Europe Passes U.S. in New Covid Cases, Returning as Hot Spot*, September 10, 2020.
6. Rolander, Niclas, and Buttler, Morten, Bloomberg, *New Covid Cases Soar in Denmark, Surpassing No-Lockdown Sweden*, September 10, 2020.
7. Miltimore, Jon, Catalyst, *Sweden Has a Lower COVID-19 Death Rate*

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*It is enough that the people know there was an election. The people who cast the votes decide nothing. The people who count the votes decide everything.—Joseph Stalin*

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prepare for war [12].

1. BBC News, *US election 2020: China, Russia and Iran 'trying to influence' vote*, August 8, 2020.
2. Popken, Ben, et. Al., NBC News, *Chinese parts, hidden ownership, growing scrutiny: Inside America's biggest maker of voting machines*, December 19, 2019.
3. Kurlantzick, Joshua, Council on Foreign Relations, *How China Is Interfering in Taiwan's Election*, November 7, 2019.
4. Washington Post, *Campaign Finance Key Player: John Huang*, July 24, 1997.

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5. Jackson, David, and Jacoby, Mary, *Chicago Tribune*, *China Arms Dealer Guest of Clinton*, December 21, 1996.
6. Weiner, Tim, New York Times, *FBI Looks at Whether China Funneled Money to Democrats*, February 14, 1997.
7. Schifferes, Steve, BBC News, *China admitted to WTO*, November 10, 2001.
8. Tan, Huileng, CNBC, *China says August exports beat expectations, jumping 9.5% from a year ago*, September 7, 2020.
9. Osborn, Kris, Fox, *Pentagon: Chinese Air Force fast-becoming massive threat*, September 6, 2020.
10. Kelly, Tim, and

Takenaka, Kiyoshi, Reuters, *Abe plan for land-attack counterpunch could mark major military shift for Japan*, September 11, 2020.

11. Lee, Yimou, and Blanchard, Ben, Reuters, *Taiwan denounces large-scale Chinese drills near island*, September 10, 2020.
12. Xijin, Hu, Global Times, *China must be militarily and morally ready for a potential war*, September 11, 2020.

## Terrorism

In this newsletter, terrorism within the US is the main focus. The death of Freddie Gray while in police custody was the catalyst for major protests in many US cities [1]. While most of the protests have been peaceful, the main stream news media has focused on the 500+ violent riots seen over the Summer [2]. That is, approximately 93% of protests were peaceful while the others were not [3]. Nevertheless, over 500 riots is a significant enough event for further exploration. For example, in the city of Portland, Oregon, there has been over 100 days of protest [4]. This includes violent deaths tied to the ongoing protests [5]. Another fixture of the Portland nightly riots includes the use of firebombs [6]. Moreover, one need only look at the August 10<sup>th</sup> pictures from the Chicago riot and looting to realize that the damage from the non-peaceful protests is staggering [7]. In Kenosha, Wisconsin, the damage due to riots is estimated at \$50 million [8]. In Minneapolis, the costs of protests and riots is estimated at \$500 million [9].

In addition to the largescale damage caused by the riots,

the police have become a target. For instance, there are calls to defund the police in some large cities [10]. This is coupled by the troubling trend where assassins are targeting police officers [11].

1. BBC News, *Freddie Gray's death in police custody - what we know*, May 23, 2020.
2. Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED), *Demonstrations & Political Violence in America: New Data For Summer 2020*, September 3, 2020.
3. Kaur, Harmeet, CNN, *About 93% of racial justice protests in the US have been peaceful, a new report finds*, September 4, 2020.
4. Calicchio, Dom, Fox News, *Portland 'riot' declared after Molotov cocktails tossed*, September 6, 2020.
5. Stimson, Brie, Fox News, *Portland's antifa-supporting gunman appeared to target victim, police say*, September 6, 2020.
6. Fox 12 Oregon, *Police: Firebombs thrown at officers during riot in SE Portland; more than 50 people arrested*, September 6, 2020.
7. NBC 5 Chicago, *Shattered Glass, Debris: Photos Show Destruction After Night of Unrest in Chicago*, August 10, 2020.
8. Flores, Terry, Kenosha News, *Damage due to rioting, unrest in Kenosha tops \$50 million; 2,000 Guard assisted here*, September 9, 2020.
9. Chakraborty, Barnini, Fox News, *Costs from weeks of protests take financial toll on cash-strapped cities across US*, August 15, 2020.
10. Andrew, Scottie, CNN, *There's a growing call to defund the police. Here's what it means*, June 17, 2020.
11. Stimson, Brie, Fox News, *Compton 'ambush' leaves 2 LA County sheriff's deputies 'fighting for their lives'*, September 13, 2020.

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*The political lesson of Watergate is this: Never again must America allow an arrogant, elite guard of political adolescents to bypass the regular party organization and dictate the terms of a national election.—Gerald R. Ford*

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## Economy

This newsletter cycle started with the S&P 500 and Nasdaq Composite indexes closing at record highs [1]. The two indexes continued record closes on August 25 [2]. Again, on August 26, the two indexes had record closes [3]. On August 28, the Nasdaq and S&P 500 closed at new record highs with the S&P breaking 3,500 [4]. Then the two indexes again closed at record highs on September 1 [5]. On September 2, both indexes again closed at record highs with the Nasdaq Composite closing above 12,000 [6]. After the record closings, the stock market indexes tumbled and experienced a significant downturn [7].

The employment picture remains bleak. According to the Labor Department, the unemployment rate for August was 8.4% [8]. While improving, the number is too high. Additionally, the number of first-time unemployment claims depicts a weak economy. For the week ending August 22, the number of first-time unemployment claims reported by the Department of Labor was 1,068,000 [9]. For the week ending August 29, the

number reported was 881,000 [10]. Finally, for the week ending September 5, the number reported was 884,000 [11].

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2. Culp, Stephen, Reuters, *S&P 500, Nasdaq close at record highs on trade, vaccine developments*, August 25, 2020.
3. Watts, William, MarketWatch, *S&P 500, Nasdaq Composite end at records as momentum shares surge*, August 26, 2020.
4. DeCambre, Mark, MarketWatch, *Dow ends Friday around 3% off record closing high as stock market wraps up best August in 36 years*, August 28, 2020.
5. Carew, Sinéad, Reuters, *S&P, Nasdaq close at record highs in tech-fueled rally*, September 1, 2020.
6. DeCambre, Mark, and Wiltermuth, Joy, MarketWatch, *Stocks book fresh round of records, Dow ends 1.5% shy of all-time high, on hopes of COVID treatments, cures*, September 2, 2020.
7. Hall, Jason, The Motley Fool, *S&P 500 News: Amazon Leads Big Tech Stock Sell-Off, Wiping Out Broad Gains in Other Sectors*, September 11, 2020.
8. Garber, Jonathan, FOX Business, *Big Tech selloff overpowers job market gains*, September 4, 2020.
9. Department of Labor, *Unemployment Insurance Weekly Claims*, August 27, 2020.
10. Department of Labor, *Unemployment Insurance Weekly Claims*, September 3, 2020.
11. Department of Labor, *Unemployment Insurance Weekly Claims*, September 10, 2020.

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*I just think we have to  
create the climate so that  
people will come out on  
election day and vote.—  
Martin Luther King III*

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