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NEW MEXICO ISSUES TRAFFIC SAFETY RFP

The New Mexico Dept. of Transportation is looking for a firm to handle its annual \$3M traffic safety marketing and video campaign aimed at reducing crashes, injuries and deaths, as well as working on other DOT initiatives.



The Land of Enchantment says it has made significant progress over the past decade in reducing crashes despite a rise in population and traffic volume. It credits that success to public education, enforcement and a strong media campaign. New Mexico has reported its lowest level of alcohol-related fatalities (4.5 percent) in five years, plus seat belt usage in excess of 90 percent.

Driver inattention, failure to yield and tailgating are the main causes of crashes, while alcohol/drug use, driver inattention and excessive speed are the main causes of deaths.

The DOT's desired partner will develop annual marketing campaigns to "inform and educate the public of increased enforcement and other traffic safety initiatives based on social marketing techniques and principles that influence driving behaviors such as seatbelt usage, impaired driving, speeding, texting, aggressive driving, underage drinking, and other issues that may cause crashes," according to its RFP.

The contract will run for four-years. Proposals are due Sept. 16 and must be submitted electronically to the www.bidexpress.com portal.

[Download RFP \(PDF\)](#).

BANNON INDICTED FOR BORDER WALL FRAUD

Federal prosecutors indicted former Trump campaign manager and PR strategist Steve Bannon on fraud charges connected to fundraising for the president's border wall.



Steve Bannon

The "We Build the Wall" online donor campaign raised money from the public to erect a barrier on the US/Mexico border.

Bannon is among four people that allegedly "received hundreds of thousands of dollars in donor funds from We Build the Wall, which they each used in a manner inconsistent with the organization's public representations."

They each face two counts of conspiracy to commit wire fraud and money laundering. Each charge carries up to 20 years in prison.

Bannon is the second Trump campaign manager to face charges. Paul Manafort was convicted of fraud in 2018.

FACEBOOK CMO STEPS DOWN

Facebook global chief marketing officer Antonio Lucio announced that he plans to depart from the social media giant.

His departure becomes effective Sept. 18.

Lucio joined Facebook in 2018, succeeding former CMO Gary Briggs, mere months after the Cambridge Analytica data breach, which became only one of a series of public relations crises to rock the social media network in recent years, the latest being a [massive June advertising boycott](#) that was organized by a coalition of civil rights groups in an effort to address the "long history of allowing racist, violent, and verifiably false content to run rampant on its platform."

According to [reporting](#) by the *New York Times*, Lucio was tasked with cleaning up the platform's brand, as well as unifying its sub-brands—including Instagram, WhatsApp and Messenger—under the Facebook umbrella.

Before joining Facebook, Lucio was global CMO at Hewlett Packard and prior to that, global chief marketing and communications officer at Visa. He previously spent a decade at Pepsico, where his final role was chief innovation and health and wellness officer.

[In a post to his LinkedIn page](#), Lucio called 2020 a "very challenging" and "reflective year," and said that given the "historical inflection point we are in regarding racial justice," he has decided to leave the platform "to dedicate 100% of my time to diversity, inclusion and equity."



Antonio Lucio

MCCANN HEALTH SNAGS BCW'S JIM JOSEPH

McCann Health has brought on Burson Cohn & Wolfe global president of brand solutions Jim Joseph as president, North America. Joseph played a major role in the merger of Cohn & Wolfe and Burson Marsteller in 2018.

Before joining BCW, he served as president and partner at Lippe Taylor and managing director at Saatchi & Saatchi Wellness. With the move to McCann, Joseph resigned as chair of the PR Council.

In his new post, Joseph will oversee McCann Health's advertising and promotion agencies in the U.S. and Canada. Joseph replaces Amar Urhekar, who left the post last October. Since then, global chief operating officer Linda Szyper has filled the role on an interim basis.



Jim Joseph

WEBER SHANDWICK DELIVERS PR FOR USPS

Weber Shandwick is handling crisis messaging for the US Postal Service, a client since 2009, as it counters attacks from president Trump and concerns over its ability to handle mail-in ballots.



Louis DeJoy

Postmaster General Louis DeJoy, a major Trump donor, and Postal Service Board of Governors Chairman Robert Duncan, testified before the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee (Aug. 21) and the House Oversight and Reform Committee (Aug. 24).

DeJoy, whom CNN dubbed “perhaps the most public-facing postmaster general since Benjamin Franklin,” is considering kicking off a PR push to allay voter concerns that mail-in ballots will not be safe with the USPS.

He has promised to put “on hold” any plan to restructure the USPS until after the election.

Weber Shandwick, which is owned by Interpublic, handles strategy, marketing, crisis and internal/external communications, according to the USPS.

DICK’S HIRES FINSBURY’S PETER LAND

Dick’s Sporting Goods has brought on Peter Land as chief communications and sustainability officer, a newly created position. Land comes to the company from Finsbury, where he served as partner. (Finsbury is Dick’s public relations agency of record.)



Peter Land

He previously was senior vice president, corporate communications at both AOL and PepsiCo, chief marketing officer for the Breeders’ Cup and global managing director at Edelman.

In his new post, Land is responsible for internal and external communications including media relations, government affairs, internal, store and executive communications, crisis communications, corporate event management and sustainability.

JUUL’S TROY TAKES ADVISOR SPOT AT LEAVITT

Tevi Troy, who was VP public policy at Juul Labs, has signed on as advisor at Leavitt Partners, the intelligence gathering and consulting shop that helps clients navigate the rapidly changing healthcare market.



Tevi Troy

Michael Leavitt, three-time Utah governor, ex-EPA administrator and Secretary of Dept. of Health & Human Services, launched the Salt Lake City shop.

LP advises industry leaders on market influences, value-based care, alternative payment models, federal strategies, public health, digital technology and alliance formation.

Prior to Juul, Troy served as CEO of the American Health Policy Institute, deputy secretary at the Dept. of Health & Human Services and deputy assistant to president George W. Bush for domestic policy.

WILKES-BARRE/SCRANTON AIRPORT FLIES RFQ

The Wilkes-Barre/Scranton International Airport is looking for a firm to handle its PR, marketing and communications programming. The goal is to help reimagine the airport in the local and distant communities, according to the RFQ.



The selected firm will assess the airport’s current market position, develop messaging, launch social media initiatives, handle special events and work with local/regional businesses to create collaborative marketing programs.

American, United and Delta provide service to the Wilkes-Barre/Scranton International, which is the fifth-largest airport in Pennsylvania and the “gateway to the Poconos.”

Responses are due Sept. 4. They go to:

Executive Director; Wilkes-Barre/Scranton International Airport; 100 Terminal Drive, Suite 1; Avoca, PA 18641.

The outside envelope must be labeled “Marketing and/or Communications Consultant RFQ Response.”

[Download RFQ \(PDF\).](#)

MEDIA MANEUVERS

NBCUniversal has axed vice chairman Ron Meyer. Meyer had disclosed to the company that he paid hush-money to a woman with whom he said he had “a very brief and consensual affair with many years ago.” According to the *Los Angeles Times*, Meyer made the disclosure after others became aware of the secret payments. A *Variety* report alleges that the woman at the center of the controversy is actress Charlotte Kirk, whose extramarital affair with former Warner Bros. CEO Kevin Tsujihara in 2013 and 2014 prompted his resignation from the company in 2019. A co-founder of Creative Artists Agency, Meyer came to Universal Studios in 1995, serving as its president until 2013, when he became NBCUniversal vice-chairman.



Ron Meyer

Vice’s Motherboard tech vertical, is launching *The Mail*, a weekly pop-up newsletter about the United States Postal Service, which will start up on Aug. 25 and run through the end of November. While access to the main newsletter will be free, there will be an \$8 per month paid membership that will include three monthly printed zines that will be mailed out via USPS. The Mail will be written by Motherboard senior staff writer Aaron Gordon, and in addition to producing stories about the USOS, it will report on topics including digital security, hacking and labor.

Meredith Corp. has sued theMaven, the new owner of *Sports Illustrated*, for more than \$1 million, a report in the *Des Moines Register* says. Meredith acquired the magazine as part of its January 2018 purchase of Time, Inc. It sold Sports Illustrated’s assets to Authentic Brands Group in May 2019, and ABG licensed the magazine’s publishing rights to theMaven shortly after that. As part of the deal, Meredith agreed to provide the magazine with services including accounting, human resources, IT and website support. Meredith’s attorneys claim now claim that theMaven ignored invoices related to those services for months and are still \$1.1 million behind on bills.

WHY COVID-19 IS SPEEDING UP ESG MOMENTUM

The economic dislocation brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic has rippled through the global economy. In spite of this period of economic instability, momentum behind Environmental, Social and Governance is strengthening, particularly with respect to the social dimension of ESG.



(Clockwise) Bryan Armstrong, Zaineb Bokhari, Ben Herskowitz & Geoff Serednesky co-authored this article.

What's the fuss about 'S'?

According to a recent investor study conducted by FTI Consulting, 57 percent of respondents believe corporate ESG programs are more important today and going forward compared to before the pandemic.

While many companies have taken decisive steps to safeguard their employees and implement business continuity measures, a shockingly high number of companies haven't. According to Just Capital's COVID-19 Corporate Response Tracker, 30 percent of

America's 301 largest publicly traded companies as of June 9, 2020 still hadn't implemented remote work policies or modified work schedules, and 37 percent hadn't yet implemented health and safety measures

For investors, ESG is becoming a more important tool in helping them evaluate these non-financial risks. In fact, 62 percent of investors in our recent survey said they expect to use ESG strategies and related tools to a greater extent over the next 12-18 months to manage their own portfolios.

As adoption of ESG accelerates in the investment community, we expect pressure on corporates to increase disclosure and transparency related to risk management will follow suit. This is particularly true given the inability of many companies to reliably forecast business trends in the current environment.

This adoption curve is also being aided by a growing body of evidence linking ESG to favorable stock performance. FTI's recent investor study corroborates this, as 58 percent of investors believe those companies with above-average ESG practices have been more effective at managing business risks associated with the COVID-19 pandemic. Further, we found that 64 percent of investors also believe that companies with above-average ESG practices are better prepared for future pandemics, crises, and other black swan events.

There are several top-of-mind risks for investors that fall within the social dimension of ESG that companies should be prepared for as they navigate through the pandemic.

Issue #1: privacy and data security

Increases in remote work and digitization as a result of COVID-19 directly increase companies' exposure to data privacy and security risks. Failure to implement sufficient oversight of employee and customer privacy and data security can have an adverse material impact on a company's performance and valuation. Data security issues can be quite costly, as was the case when Verizon lowered its purchase price of Yahoo by \$350 million after security breaches exposed sensitive user information of more than a billion Yahoo users.

On a more acute—and hopefully, temporary—basis, private-sector companies are now using various forms of technology to identify, track and monitor the spread of COVID-19. Gathering and securely storing information such

as this presents a new set of risks that companies may not have fully contemplated yet.

For investors, data security remains at the forefront of social risks they care most about. While companies can't completely eliminate the risk inherent in data collection and storage, they do have the power to strategically identify and manage the associated risks and communicate proactively to stakeholders their actions and mitigation plans.

Issue #2: human capital management

As companies implement cost-reduction initiatives, including staff reductions and furloughs, regulators have seen a material increase in whistleblowers who no longer fear employer retaliation. Per a *Washington Post* article on April 16, thousands of Occupational Safety and Health Administration complaints have been filed against companies for workplace safety concerns.

Beyond OSHA complaints, per a [May 26 Reuters article](#), Steven Peikin, the agency's co-head of enforcement, noted that the Securities and Exchange Commission fielded about 4,000 complaints from mid-March to mid-May, representing a year-over-year increase of 35 percent.

To ensure employees feel protected—and thus protect against value-destroying lawsuits and/or public complaints—companies must establish a culture of safety in which employees see, hear and experience a sustained effort to keep them safe and well. Safety must be seen as a shared responsibility with regular reminders of what is expected.

Issue #3: widening executive pay gap

In addition to workforce reductions and furloughs, some companies also reduced executive compensation to help rein in costs. According to executive compensation experts, Semler Brossy, nearly 20 percent of Russell 3000 companies had made explicit announcements regarding executive and director pay actions in their SEC filings through May.

As the process of reopening and resuming economic activity begins, companies must take special care as they contemplate returning executive compensation to pre-crisis levels. This is particularly true if employee pay and benefits do not recover in parity or as quickly as the executive suite.

Risks are also high for companies that receive taxpayer-funded aid—a point of view that came across strongly in our Shifting Expectations survey. Respondents indicated that Americans do not want to bail out most industries and therefore organizations that receive aid will be expected to both retain staff levels, pay, and benefits and provide considerable transparency on executive pay and corporate expenditures.

Preparing for the next black swan event

As we look beyond the current pandemic, investors will undoubtedly amp up the pressure on companies to provide greater transparency and disclosure around material risk factors in their industry and business as well as the governance and controls they have put in place to manage them. When done well, an effective ESG program provides a natural platform from which to organize, align, and implement enhancements to a company's enterprise risk management, while at the same time ensuring "full credit" is received for their efforts from key stakeholders.

Bryan Armstrong is Senior Managing Director & Head of Capital Markets in the Americas at FTI Consulting. Zaineb Bokhari is Managing Director, Capital Markets, FTI Consulting. Geoff Serednesky is Managing Director, Research, FTI Consulting. Ben Herskowitz is Senior Director, Capital Markets, FTI Consulting.

NASSAU HEALTH CARE CORP. SEEKS PR HELP

Nassau Health Care Corp., the primary healthcare provider for people on New York's Long Island, is seeking a partner to create, develop and implement a marketing and PR strategic plan.



NHCC operates the 19-story, 530-bed Nassau University Medical Center and the 589-bed A. Holly Patterson Extended Care

skilled nursing facility. It also is affiliated with Northwell Health (formerly known as North Shore-Long Island Jewish Systems) and the Health Sciences Center at the State University at Stony Brook.

The desired PR partner will design outreach and a communications strategy to attract and engage healthcare consumers. It will conduct outreach via local media, newsletters, social media and business/trade publications.

The partner will draft speeches on relevant healthcare issues, monitor media news cycles for marketing exposure opportunities and handle PR crises.

Proposals are due Sept. 11. Proposers must submit the original, four copies and a CD or flash drive to: Megan C. Ryan; Nassau Health Care Corporation; 2201 Hempstead Turnpike; East Meadow, NY 11554

Proposers also must send a CD or flash drive to the Dept of Legal Affairs on the 19th floor at the same address.

[Download RFP \(PDF\)](#).

FH PITCHES KOREAN TRADE MINISTER TO WTO

FleishmanHillard is pitching the bid of Yoo Myung-hee, South Korea's first female trade minister, to become the next director-general of the World Trade Organization.

She is among a field of eight seeking the opportunity to succeed Roberto Azevedo, who is stepping down Aug. 31. In May, he announced plans to leave the WTO due to frustration over the lack of coordination of the US, China and Europe to combat COVID-19. His term was to expire in 2021.

F-H is working with the South Korean Ministry of Trade, Industry and Energy in promoting Yoo for the WTO job. It is reviewing media coverage and providing advice on placement opportunities. The firm may draw up a targeted media list, draft articles, edit content and conduct media outreach.

The WTO director-general selection process is currently in the "make yourself known to members" stage. The organization plans to name a new leader in September.

PN NAMES ROBINSON CHIEF CLIENT OFFICER

Porter Novelli has promoted Ayanna Robinson to global chief client officer. Robinson has been with the firm since 2001 and was previously EVP, Atlanta corporate and reputation management leader.



Ayanna Robinson

She has led engagements for such clients as Bayer Crop Science, Centers for Disease Control and Habitat for Humanity. Calling her "the ideal person to help us forge a new path for the chief client officer role," Porter Novelli CEO David Bentley said Robinson "has proven her ability to foster growth while also making a positive impact at Porter Novelli and in her communities."

Porter Novelli and in her communities."

DUBAI BANK RELIES ON EDELMAN

Edelman is providing communications services to Mashreq Bank, one of the oldest financial services institutions in the United Arab Emirates.

The firm's August 5 letter of agreement calls for it to provide strategic advice in consulting with Mashreq's external counsel, non-US media management & monitoring, and handling inquiries from overseas journalists.

The relationship between Edelman and Mashreq may be terminated by either party upon 30 days written notice. Edelman pre-bills the client \$20K to cover a portion of the estimated fees.

Mashreq, which is based in Dubai, bolstered its PR effort last month via the recruitment of Aimee Peters as group head of marketing & corporate communications.

She was head of marketing—global B2B coverage & capital markets at HSBC, where Peters was in charge of marketing across its wholesale, investment and commercial banking divisions.

At Mashreq, Peters oversees developing the bank's brand strategy, with a focus on digital and mobile channels.



MERCURY LENDS HAND TO HOMELESS VETS

Omnia Group, a Manhattan real estate development firm, is using Mercury to educate the Dept. of Veterans' Affairs about its program to provide housing options and supportive services to homeless veterans.

The US Dept. of Housing and Urban Affairs' homeless assessment report found more than 37K veterans experienced homelessness on a single night in January 2019, of whom 61 percent were staying in emergency shelters or transitional housing programs.

The number of homeless vets has declined by 50 percent from 2009 to 2019, according to the report.

Former Congressman Jeff Miller, who co-chairs Mercury's Washington and Tampa offices, handles VA outreach for Omnia.

The Florida Republican headed the House Veterans' Affairs Committee during his three terms in Congress before stepping down in 2017.

Omnicom owns Mercury.

TELLMED BRINGS ON MARY COYLE

Healthcare communications agency TellMed Strategies has hired Mary Coyle as strategic director. Coyle was previously president of Coyle Communications.

She has also served as a senior vice president at Ruder Finn, Marina Maher Communications, TogoRun, Omnicom PR and MSLGROUP. Coyle has worked with clients in the pharmaceutical, biotech, medical device and consumer health sectors. At TellMed, she will provide oversight and strategic direction to clients, as well as playing an integral role in building the agency's business.



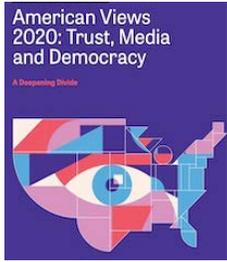
Mary Coyle

"Mary's extensive experience and expertise across healthcare communications is a perfect complement to our senior management team," said TellMed founder and managing director Tara DiMilia.

AMERICANS SEE INCREASED MEDIA BIAS

Americans' confidence in the news media has been waning for years, but an increasing number have lost trust in the media's ability to inform viewers with objective reporting and feel the press is now actively driving the country's current partisan divide, according to a biennial report by the Knight Foundation and opinion poll giant Gallup.

About half of those surveyed (49 percent) said they see a "great deal" of political bias in news coverage, up from 45 percent reported during the last iteration of the Knight/Gallup study two years ago. Nearly three-quarters said they consider media bias to be a "major problem" (73 percent), up from 65 percent in the 2017 study.



More than half of respondents (56 percent) admit they've even noticed at least a "fair amount" of bias in the news sources they rely on most. Paradoxically, however, a majority (69 percent) said they're more concerned about potential bias in news sources consumed by others as opposed to bias in their own preferred media channels (29 percent).

Nearly eight in 10 Americans (79 percent) said they think news organizations exhibit this bias because they're trying to persuade the public to adopt a certain viewpoint, while three-quarters (75 percent) are worried that media owners are willfully influencing their companies' coverage. Only 12 percent believe the media are trying to report the news accurately and fairly but are simply unable to do so.

Nearly three-quarters of respondents identifying as Republican (71 percent) said they have an unfavorable opinion of the news media, compared to only 22 percent of Democrats.

Overall, nearly half of those polled (48 percent) think the media bears "a great deal" of blame for the country's polarized political climate, while more than a third (36 percent) believe the media bears "a moderate amount" of blame. But respondents indicated they still value the news media's role in a free society, as 84 percent said they believe the media is "critical"—or at least "very important"—to a democracy.

The Knight Foundation/Gallup report, "American Views 2020: Trust Media and Democracy," was based on survey data from more than 20,000 U.S. adults collected between November and February.

MACDOUGALL GIVE MOMENTA PR MOMENTUM

MacDougall Biomedical Communications represents Cambridge-based Momena Pharmaceuticals as it agrees to be acquired by Johnson & Johnson for \$6.5B cash.

It's the biggest pharmaceuticals deal of the year, according to Bloomberg, and the latest sign that drug companies are "looking for ways to bulk up even as the coronavirus pandemic upends other businesses."



Momena CEO Craig Wheeler said that "J&J's leadership in immunology, extensive capabilities, and global reach, as well as its alignment with our vision of pioneering therapies for complex diseases is a strong fit for our company and our portfolio."

The deal will be completed by the end of the year

MacDougall Biomedical managing director Karen Sharma, a veteran of Schwartz Communications and Newgrange Consulting, represents Momena.

ACCOUNTS IN TRANSIT

French/West/Vaughan has been selected as agency of record for **Reflexion**, a cognitive sports training system. FWV has already initiated work on behalf of Reflexion to generate awareness of the system's achievements in accelerated sports cognition. The agency will also support influencer marketing strategies and strategic partnerships for the brand. Reflexion is currently being used by such sports training centers and collegiate athletic departments as Miami Sports Vision, Asylum Sports Center, the U.S. Air Force Academy and Arkansas State, as well as by sports performance researchers at Duke University and Penn State. A consumer version of the platform is available for home use.



Matter Communications has added **bioAffinity Technologies**, an oncology-focused company developing non-invasive diagnostic tests and targeted therapies for early detection and treatment of cancer; **BioStar Capital**, a value-add investment firm focused on transformational medical device technologies in cardiovascular and orthopaedic medicine; and **Bridge Connector**, a healthcare interoperability company.

Stryker-Munley Group has been named public relations agency of record for **Linear Air, Inc.**, which provides air taxi and personal jet charters. "We hired Stryker-Munley Group to build awareness of the many flights available to travelers, as well as promoting the safety and convenience of private air and to open new partnerships within the travel and hospitality industries," said Linear Air founder and CEO Bill Herp.

NEWS OF FIRMS

Finn Partners managing partner, global health **Gil Bashe** will receive the Lifetime Achievement Awards at this year's PM360 Trailblazer Awards, which will be held as a virtual event on Oct. 1. Before coming to Finn in 2015, Bashe led health practices at agencies including Sutton PR, Medicus PR, Hill & Knowlton and Makovsky. "Gil was a pioneer in health communications when just the idea of that was still in the nascent stages," said PM360 publisher and CEO Anna Stashower.



Gil Bashe

San Francisco-based **Rocket Science** has launched XROCKET, a business unit focused on sell-side advisory for mergers and acquisitions. The new unit aims to help agency clients prepare for VC fund raises, attract investor interest leading up to IPO filings, or position themselves as attractive M&A acquisition targets. Its proprietary Valuation Audit scores companies on the key metrics used in M&A negotiations.

The 2021 PRSA-NY Nominating Committee is now accepting nominations from members for the chapter's next executive committee and board of directors. The 2021 PRSA-NY board of directors will include three new positions: vice president of diversity & inclusion, senior director of diversity & inclusion and associate director of diversity & inclusion. The elections will be held on Oct. 29 and the deadline for nominations is Sept. 9. To submit a nomination, [click here](#).

COMMENTARY

During the midst of the worst economic collapse since the Great Depression, president Trump called for a boycott of Goodyear Tire & Rubber Co. on August 19 because images from a purported diversity training session listed “Make America Great” and “Black Lives Matter” hats and shirts as unaccepted workplace attire.



That’s nuts.

Dismissing the fact that a US president should be boosting rather than trashing American business, Trump is attacking the livelihood of Goodyear’s rank and file, which helped him win the Buckeye State in 2016.

The president is so full of himself and distracted by petty grievances that he cannot see how a boycott of Goodyear might backfire.

“The funny thing is, the people that work for Goodyear, I can guarantee you I poll very well with all of those great workers at Goodyear,” said Trump.

We’ll see about that.

Ohio Congressman Tim Ryan, who briefly ran for the Democratic presidential nomination, put it best. “It’s about MAGA and him. It has nothing to do with the 3,000 people that work there, the entire ripple effect throughout northeast Ohio, what Goodyear has meant to our community,” said Ryan.

Goodyear tried to set the record straight. It released a statement saying it neither distributed the visual nor was it part of a diversity class.

Restating its zero tolerance for harassment or discrimination, Goodyear does ask employees “to refrain from workplace expressions in support of political campaigning for any candidate or political party, as well as similar forms of advocacy that fall outside the scope of racial justice and equity issues.”

It was too late. The Trumpian damage was already done.

Boycotts are what Trump does best. They are easy attention-getters, and Trump craves any attention that he can get. He’s called for boycotts against Apple, Macy’s, Univision, National Football League and Harley-Davidson.

Trump uses boycotts to divert attention from the various scandals plaguing his administration.

The Goodyear boycott call came the day after the Republican-controlled Senate Intelligence Committee released its nearly 1,000-page report on Russian meddling in the 2016 presidential election that found ample evidence of collusion between the Trump campaign and Moscow.

What’s the definition of collusion? It’s when Trump’s then-campaign manager Paul Manafort provides polling data to a Russian intelligence agent to allow Vladimir Putin to better target his online disinformation campaign on battleground states such as Michigan, Wisconsin and Pennsylvania.

And then there are the ghosts of more than 175K Americans killed from COVID-19 haunting the White House because the president failed to give the virus the attention that it deserved earlier this year.

Solving a global pandemic is hard work. Rolling out a boycott of Goodyear is a piece of cake.

Trump thought he was doing the right thing, posthumously pardoning women’s rights activist Susan B. Anthony to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the 19th amendment to the Constitution, which gave women the right to vote.

Anthony was arrested in 1872 for voting in Rochester and then convicted in a high-profile trial. She refused to pay a fine, but authorities declined to take any further action against her.

Trump’s pardon though does a disservice to Anthony, [wrote Annalisa Merelli in Quartz](#).

“To pardon Anthony is to forgive her of a crime that should never have been one, to imply that the state has moral standing over her—when it was Anthony’s actions, like many other disobediences before and since, that gave the state its own moral standing. “

Merelli understands the temptation to erase an unjust crime. “But Anthony’s sentence, like John Lewis’s for each act of good trouble, or Martin Luther King Jr.’s for protesting in Selma, or Sojourner Truth’s for daring to be Black in Indiana, are a point of pride in their biographies, a testament to great ideals and greater courage.

“They are at once the mark of their heroism and an indelible reminder that the law can be unjust, that indeed it was, and challenging it was—and still is—a profoundly moral act of democracy,” wrote Merelli.

Out of focus... White House trade advisor Peter Navarro is hopping mad over the possible insider trading by Eastman Kodak executives ahead of the announcement that Uncle Sam was giving a \$765M loan to the beleaguered company.

It’s “probably the dumbest decision made by executives in corporate history,” said Peter Navarro on August 17. “You can’t fix stupid,” he told CNBC’s Squawk Box. “You can’t even anticipate that degree of stupidity.”

Irate Navarro, though, is washing his hands of the matter because he says he has a lot of things on his plate and the Securities and Exchange Commission is already probing Kodak’s disclosure of the deal.

That’s too bad. Many are perplexed why down-and-out Kodak, which emerged from bankruptcy in 2013, got the loan to finance the launch of Kodak Pharmaceuticals in the first place. It was a bolt out of the blue.

The company, which blew the shift from film to digital, already tried its hand at becoming a drug company. It paid \$5.1B in 1988 to buy Sterling Drug. We know how that turned out. Kodak flopped.

The company amassed \$211M in second-quarter 2020 revenues. Traditional/digital printing accounted for 81 percent of total revenues.

Inquiring minds want to know why a money-losing company (e.g., \$5.1M in Q2) got a \$765M loan, which is now on hold. Something doesn’t smell right. Those inquiring minds may want to consult the July 28 press release from the US International Development Finance Corp., which says the loan was made “at the direction of President Donald J. Trump.”

To paraphrase Navarro, the \$765M loan is “probably the dumbest decision made by officials in US federal government history.”

—Kevin McCauley