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Inside C2

Southern DAILY

Make Today Different

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Texas governor sends migrants to New York City as immigration standoff accelerates

NEW YORK, Aug 5 (Reuters) - Texas Governor Greg Abbott, a Republican, said on Friday he has started to send buses carrying migrants to New York City in an effort to push responsibility for border crossers to Democratic mayors and U.S. President Joe Biden, a Democrat.

The first bus arrived early on Friday at the city's Port Authority Bus Terminal in midtown Manhattan carrying around 50 migrants from Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Honduras and Venezuela. Volunteers were helping to steer people who had no relatives in town to city resources. "Most of them don't have anybody to help. They don't know where to go, so we're taking them to shelters," said one volunteer at the bus station, Evelin Zapata, from a group called Grannies Respond.

One family of four from Colombia, who ended up at a homeless intake center in the Bronx, were unsure of where they would spend the night. Byron and Leidy, both 28, said they left the country's capital Bogota because they were having trouble finding work. They did not provide their last name.

Biden to set new U.S. guidelines on reproductive rights, 100 days after Roe v Wade



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Country music star Loretta Lynn dies at age 90

White House guidelines for AI aim to mitigate harm
"It's a little easier to enter the country now, before it was very hard to come here with children," said Leidy, who traveled with her kids Mariana, 7, and Nicolas, 13. She said the family had hoped someone they knew in New York would take them in, but that plan did not work out. "We came here because they said they would help us find a place to sleep to not have to stay in the street," Leidy said.

Abbott, who is running for a third term as governor in November elections, has already sent more than 6,000 migrants to Washington since April in a broader effort to combat illegal immigration and call out Biden for his more welcoming policies. read more

Biden came into office in January 2021 pledging to reverse many of the hardline immigration policies of his Republican predecessor, former President Donald Trump, but some efforts have been blocked in court.

Abbott said New York City Mayor Eric Adams could provide services and housing for the new arrivals.

"I hope he follows through on his promise of welcoming all migrants with open arms so that our overrun and overwhelmed border towns can find relief," Abbott said in a statement.

Arizona Governor Doug Ducey, another Re-

publican, has followed Abbott's lead and bused another 1,000 to Washington.

U.S. border authorities have made record numbers of arrests under Biden although many are repeat crossers. Some migrants who are not able to be expelled quickly to Mexico or their home countries under a COVID-era policy are allowed into the United States, often to pursue asylum claims in U.S. immigration court.

'POLITICAL PAWNS'
People enter the Prevention Assistance and Temporary Housing (PATH) center where earlier migrants who arrived from Texas under the order of Texas Governor Greg Abbott were sent to be processed in the Bronx, New York City Adams' office has in recent weeks criticized the busing efforts to Washington, saying some migrants were making their way to New York City and overwhelming its homeless shelter system.

On Friday the mayor's press secretary Fabien Levy said Abbott was using "human beings as political pawns," calling it "a disgusting, and an embarrassing stain on the state of Texas."

Levy said New York would continue to "welcome asylum seekers with open arms, as we always have, but we are asking for resources to help do so," calling for support from federal officials.

White House press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre on Friday called the Texas initiative "shameful" and an unnecessary burden on taxpayers in that state.

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WEA LEE'S GLOBAL NOTES

10/03/2022

Hurricane Ian Death Toll Still Rising



After almost a week, the death toll from Hurricane Ian has risen to 67 in Florida which was hit by a category 5 storm after making landfall in southwest Florida Ian, then traveled to the coast.

Up until now, the rescue operations are still underway. FEMA director Deanne Criswell said the impact of the storm has been devastating.

“While we certainly hope to find more people alive and bring them out, we will be going ahead to support the state in their needs as we continue to go house-by-house and make sure every individual is accounted for, Criswell said.”

More than 1,000 people have been rescued and

evacuated from the flooded areas since the storm hit.

President Biden and his wife Jill will travel to Puerto Rico today to survey damage from Hurricane Fiona which hit a week earlier. The president will then go to Florida on Wednesday to assess the damage from Hurricane Ian.

We were told that many of the businesses and homes in that area are without flood insurance. We hope that the federal government will give them a hand to recover.

With climate change affecting countries all around the world, here in Houston we live in a coastal area that will be facing all kinds of hurricanes soon. We need to be prepared again for the challenges coming in the future.



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Southern DAILY Make Today Different

Editor's Choice



Swedish geneticist Svante Paabo, who won the 2022 Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine for discoveries that underpin our understanding of how modern day humans evolved from extinct ancestors, reacts after being thrown into the water by co-workers, at the Max-Planck Institute for evolutionary anthropology in Leipzig, Germany. REUTERS/Lisi Niesner



A man runs past a burning street barricade during a protest against the government and rising fuel prices, in Port-au-Prince, Haiti. REUTERS/Ralph Tedy Erol



U.S. President Joe Biden delivers remarks at Port of Ponce, Puerto Rico. REUTERS/Evelyn Hockstein



Former U.S. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson testifies during the trial of Thomas Barrack, a billionaire friend of Donald Trump who chaired the former president's inaugural fund, at the Brooklyn Federal Courthouse in New York, in this courtroom sketch. REUTERS/Jane Rosenberg



Two men practice boxing on Sea Point promenade at sunset in Cape Town, South Africa. REUTERS/Esa Alexander



Traditionally dressed Bavarians arrive to shoot salute on the stairs of the Bavaria statue on the last day of the 187th Oktoberfest in Munich, Germany. REUTERS/Michaela Rehle

Bill Gates: "I Don't Want To Be 'A Voice Of Doom And Gloom On Covid', But The Worst' Could Still Be Ahead"

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



Bill Gates speaks during the Global Investment Summit at the Science Museum on October 19, 2021, in London, England. (Photo/Leon Neal | Getty Images News | Getty Images)

After more than two years of Covid-19, plenty of people are lowering their guards. But the pandemic isn't over yet — and, Bill Gates warns, the worst might still be ahead.

"We're still at risk of this pandemic generating a variant that would be even more transmissible and even more fatal," the billionaire Microsoft co-founder and public health advocate told the Financial Times on Sunday. "It's not likely, I don't want to be a voice of doom and gloom, but it's way above a 5% risk that this pandemic, we haven't even seen the worst of it."

New Covid cases, powered by the BA.2 subvariant of Covid's omicron strain, are currently growing across the U.S.: The country's seven-day average of daily new U.S. cases is up to 54,429 as of Sunday, according to Johns Hopkins University data. That's a 9% increase over the week prior, with cases growing in 39 states over that time frame.

But Covid-related deaths are declining, leading White House Covid czar Dr. Ashish Jha to say last month that he's "not overly concerned right now" about BA.2. Rather, its spread is more a reminder that Covid is still lurking — and as Gates notes, the virus could potentially mutate again, resulting in a strain of greater concern.

For Gates, one lesson from the Covid pandemic so far is that preemptive planning and protective measures could help the world better manage future pandemics. It's the core concept of his upcoming book, "How to Prevent the Next Pandemic," set to publish later this year.



One proposal, he says, is for the World Health Organization to launch a global surveillance team, consisting

of experts who can quickly spot new health threats around the world and rapidly coordinate with global governments to prevent future illnesses from growing into pandemics. Gates, who has labeled his proposed task force the "Global Epidemic Response and Mobilization" (GERM) initiative, told the Financial Times that the idea would require significant financial investment from WHO and its member countries in order to create a global team of experts, including epidemiologists and virologists, and give them the tools they need to proactively identify and contain future outbreaks. It's a plan that Gates previously floated at the 2022 TED conference in April, where he noted that WHO would likely need to spend more than \$1 billion per year on such a global response team. That's costly, but the cost of another pandemic could be far greater. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has estimated that the Covid pandemic will cost the global economy over \$12.5 trillion by 2024. Meanwhile, more than 6.2 million people are believed to have died globally from the coronavirus, according to WHO, and Gates has repeatedly said in recent years that the world was not properly prepared for this pandemic.



"It seems wild to me that we could fail to look at this tragedy and not, on behalf of the citizens of the world, make these investments," Gates told the Financial Times on Sunday. The line echoed a comment he made at the TED conference in April: "We need to spend billions in order to save trillions."

Between the proposed GERM team and other suggestions from his upcoming book — including fighting back against misinformation and making vaccines more accessible globally — Gates has said that his goal for 2022 is "making sure that Covid-19 is the last pandemic." And, while he cautions against becoming complacent against Covid's ongoing risks, the billionaire has also expressed optimism that the coronavirus will be more manageable by this summer — saying in January that, ideally, most Americans will eventually be able to treat Covid like the "seasonal flu." (Courtesy <https://www.cnbc.com/>)

Related



In this screengrab, Bill Gates speaks during All In WA: A Concert For COVID-19 Relief on June 24, 2020 in Washington. (Photo/Getty Images)

Bill Gates may not love New Year's resolutions, but he's still setting large goals for 2022 and beyond. At the top of his list: avoiding future pandemics. In his end-of-year blog post earlier this month, the billionaire Microsoft co-founder and healthcare philanthropist wrote that among the world's biggest problems, the next Covid-level health scare is pressing enough to demand attention in 2022.

"We can't afford to repeat the suffering of the last two years," Gates wrote. "The world had a chance to invest in the tools and systems that could've prevented the Covid-19 pandemic, and we didn't take it." Gates hinted that the topic will be the subject of his next book, set to publish next year. In the meantime, he wrote, investing in medical research and development is a smart place to start: Many of the world's highest-profile medical projects, paused by Covid, could accelerate again in the near future.



In one example, he noted, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation helped fund a Phase III trial of islatravir, a preventative HIV medication, in Africa. Current pill treatments offer reliable protection, but they must be ingested in frequent or otherwise planned intervals. The new treatment, also a pill, would only need to be taken once per month — and the trial's first results, released this summer, were promising, Gates noted. Gates and ex-wife Melinda French Gates have also donated billions of dollars to various health organizations. In a 2019 Wall Street Journal essay, the pair said they'd given up to \$10 billion to organizations like the Global Fund, the Global Polio Eradication Initiative and Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance (GAVI) over the past two decades.

In his blog post, Gates wrote, some of this year's achievements show that the world may really be able to end the Covid pandemic and curb the next one, from governments and nonprofits combating climate change together to the World Health Organization's approval of the first malaria vaccine.



But a growing global distrust in public institutions, he noted, represents a significant hurdle. According to the 2021 Edelman Trust Index, a survey of more than 33,000 people across 28 countries that Gates cited in his post, Americans in particular don't trust their public officials: The study noted that 40% of U.S. respondents "deeply" distrust the country's federal government.

"If your people don't trust you, they're not going to support major new initiatives," Gates wrote. "And when a major crisis emerges, they're less likely to follow guidance necessary to weather the storm." It's a timely issue: According to some experts, the next pandemic could be even worse, and it might not even be far away. "I think that as time goes forward we're going to see more of them," Richard Preston, author of "The Hot Zone," a 1994 book about Ebola, told CNBC last year. "And they're going to balloon faster."



For Gates, that means political leaders and private citizens alike need to get on board with preventative actions — before Covid starts to fade from people's priority lists.

"Now is the time to learn from our mistakes and take steps to prevent this terrible experience from ever happening again," Gates wrote. "I'm hopeful that we'll see broad support for pandemic preparedness efforts, and I plan on spending a lot of time advocating for them."

Related COVID Vaccines Saved 20M Lives In 1st Year, Scientists Say

Nearly 20 million lives were saved by COVID-19 vaccines during their first year, but even more deaths could have been prevented if international targets for the shots had been reached, researchers reported Thursday.

On Dec. 8, 2020, a retired shop clerk in England received the first shot in what would become a global vaccination campaign. Over the next 12 months, more than 4.3 billion people around the world lined up for the vaccines. The effort, though marred by persisting inequities, prevented deaths on an unimaginable scale, said Oliver Watson of Imperial College London, who led the new modeling study.

"Catastrophic would be the first word that comes to mind," Watson said of the outcome if vaccines hadn't been available to fight the coronavirus. The findings "quantify just how much worse the pandemic could have been if we did not have these vaccines."

The researchers used data from 185 countries to estimate that vaccines prevented 4.2 million COVID-19 deaths in India, 1.9 million in the United States, 1 million in Brazil, 631,000 in France and 507,000 in the United Kingdom.



This March 2021 photo shows vials of the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine being prepared

for packaging at the company's facility in Puurs, Belgium. According to a study published Thursday, June 23, 2022 in the journal Lancet Infectious Diseases, nearly 20 million lives were saved by COVID-19 vaccines during their first year, but even more deaths could have been prevented if global targets had been reached. (Photo/Pfizer via AP)

An additional 600,000 deaths would have been prevented if the World Health Organization target of 40% vaccination coverage by the end of 2021 had been met, according to the study published Thursday in the journal Lancet Infectious Diseases.

The main finding — 19.8 million COVID-19 deaths were prevented — is based on estimates of how many more deaths than usual occurred during the time period. Using only reported COVID-19 deaths, the same model yielded 14.4 million deaths averted by vaccines. The London scientists excluded China because of uncertainty around the pandemic's effect on deaths there and its huge population. The study has other limitations. The researchers did not include how the virus might have mutated differently in the absence of vaccines. And they did not factor in how lockdowns or mask wearing might have changed if vaccines weren't available.

Another modeling group used a different approach to estimate that 16.3 million COVID-19 deaths were averted by vaccines. That work, by the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation in Seattle, has not been published.



In the real world, people wear masks more often when cases are surging, said the institute's Ali Mokdad, and 2021's delta wave without vaccines would have prompted a major policy response.

"We may disagree on the number as scientists, but we all agree that COVID vaccines saved lots of lives," Mokdad said.

The findings underscore both the achievements and the shortcomings of the vaccination campaign, said Adam Finn of Bristol Medical School in England, who like Mokdad was not involved in the study.

"Although we did pretty well this time — we saved millions and millions of lives — we could have done better and we should do better in the future," Finn said. Funding came from several groups including the WHO; the UK Medical Research Council; Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance; and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. (Courtesy <https://apnews.com/>)

COMMUNITY

People Got Tired Of All The Restrictions

People Got Fed Up With Flu Pandemic Measures One Hundred Years Ago – And Paid A Price



Armistice Day celebrations on Nov. 11, 1918, worried public health experts as people crowded together in cities across the U.S. (AP Photo)

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

Picture the United States struggling to deal with a deadly pandemic. State and local officials enact a slate of social-distancing measures, gathering bans, closure orders and mask mandates in an effort to stem the tide of cases and deaths. The public responds with widespread compliance mixed with more than a hint of grumbling, pushback and even outright defiance. As the days turn into weeks turn into months, the strictures become harder to tolerate.

Theater and dance hall owners complain about their financial losses. Clergy bemoan church closures while offices, factories and in some cases even saloons are allowed to remain open. Officials argue whether children are safer in classrooms or at home. Many citizens refuse to don face masks while in public, some complaining that they're uncomfortable and others arguing that the government has no right to infringe on their civil liberties.

As familiar as it all may sound in 2021, these are real descriptions of the U.S. during the deadly 1918 influenza pandemic. In my research as a historian of medicine, I've seen again and again the many ways our current pandemic has mirrored the one experienced by our forebears a century ago.



No mask, no service on streetcar in 1918. (Photo/Universal History Archive/Universal Images Group via Getty Images)

As the COVID-19 pandemic enters its second year, many people want to know when life will go back to how it was before the coronavirus. History, of course, isn't an exact template for what the future holds. But the way Americans emerged from the earlier pandemic could suggest what post-pandemic life will be like this time around.

Sick and tired, ready for pandemic's end

Like COVID-19, the 1918 influenza pandemic hit hard and fast, going from a handful of reported cases

in a few cities to a nationwide outbreak within a few weeks. Many communities issued several rounds of various closure orders — corresponding to the ebbs and flows of their epidemics — in an attempt to keep the disease in check. These social-distancing orders worked to reduce cases and deaths. Just as today, however, they often proved difficult to maintain. By the late autumn, just weeks after the social-distancing orders went into effect, the pandemic seemed to be coming to an end as the number of new infections declined.



People were ready to be done with masks as soon as it looked like the flu was receding. (PhotoQuest/Archive Photos via Getty Images)

People clamored to return to their normal lives. Businesses pressed officials to be allowed to reopen. Believing the pandemic was over, state and local authorities began rescinding public health edicts. The nation turned its efforts to addressing the devastation influenza had wrought.

For the friends, families and co-workers of the hundreds of thousands of Americans who had died, post-pandemic life was filled with sadness and grief. Many of those still recovering from their bouts with the malady required support and care as they recuperated. At a time when there was no federal or state safety net, charitable organizations sprang into action to provide resources for families who had lost their breadwinners, or to take in the countless children left orphaned by the disease.

For the vast majority of Americans, though, life after the pandemic seemed to be a headlong rush to normalcy. Starved for weeks of their nights on the town, sporting events, religious services, classroom interactions and family gatherings, many were eager to return to their old lives.

Taking their cues from officials who had — somewhat prematurely — declared an end to the pandemic, Americans overwhelmingly hurried to return to their pre-pandemic routines. They packed into movie theaters and dance halls, crowded in stores and shops, and gathered with friends and family.

How many extra deaths occurred in 1918-1920 pandemic?

Excess deaths in the state of Michigan over the course of the influenza pandemic reflect the disease surges that occurred across the nation — an initial wave in

spring 1918, a second bigger wave in fall of that year, another that extended into that winter and a final wave at the start of 1920. Excess deaths are those above the average amount public health officials expect for the time of year, based on what's happened normally in the past.

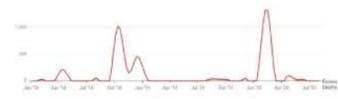


Chart: The Conversation, CC-BY-ND Source: Siddharth Chandra, Julia Christensen, Madhur Chandra, Nigel Paneth, "Pandemic Reemergence and Four Waves of Excess Mortality Coinciding With the 1918 Influenza Pandemic in Michigan: Insights for COVID-19", American Journal of Public Health 111, no. 3 (March 1, 2021): pp. 430-437.

Officials had warned the nation that cases and deaths likely would continue for months to come. The burden of public health, however, now rested not on policy but rather on individual responsibility.

Predictably, the pandemic wore on, stretching into a third deadly wave that lasted through the spring of 1919, with a fourth wave hitting in the winter of 1920. Some officials blamed the resurgence on careless Americans. Others downplayed the new cases or turned their attention to more routine public health matters, including other diseases, restaurant inspections and sanitation. Despite the persistence of the pandemic, influenza quickly became old news. Once a regular feature of front pages, reportage rapidly dwindled to small, sporadic clippings buried in the backs of the nation's newspapers. The nation carried on, inured to the toll the pandemic had taken and the deaths yet to come. People were largely unwilling to return to socially and economically disruptive public health measures.



No matter the era, aspects of daily life go on even during a pandemic. Chicago History Museum/Archive (Photos via Getty Images)

It's hard to hang in there

Our predecessors might be forgiven for not staying the course longer. First, the nation was eager to celebrate the recent end of World War I, an event that perhaps loomed larger in the lives of Americans than even the pandemic.

Second, death from disease was a much larger part of life in the early 20th century, and scourges such as diphtheria, measles, tuberculosis, typhoid, whooping cough, scarlet fever and pneumonia each routinely killed tens of thousands of Americans every year. Moreover, neither the cause nor the epidemiology of influenza was well understood, and many experts remained unconvinced that social distancing measures had any measurable impact.

Finally, there were no effective flu vaccines to rescue the world from the ravages of the disease. In fact, the influenza virus would not be discovered for another 15 years, and a safe and effective vaccine was not available for the general population until 1945. Given the limited information they had and the tools at their disposal, Americans perhaps endured the public health restrictions as long as they reasonably could.



The COVID-19 vaccine won't end the pandemic right away.

A century later, and a year into the COVID-19 pandemic, it is understandable that people now are all too eager to return to their old lives. The end of this pandemic inevitably will come, as it has with every previous one humankind has experienced.

If we have anything to learn from the history of the 1918 influenza pandemic, as well as our experience thus far with COVID-19, however, it is that a premature return to pre-pandemic life risks more cases and more deaths.

And today's Americans have significant advantages over those of a century ago. We have a much better understanding of virology and epidemiology. We know that social distancing and masking work to help save lives. Most critically, we have multiple safe and effective vaccines that are being deployed, with the pace of vaccinations increasingly weekly. Sticking with all these coronavirus-fighting factors or easing off on them could mean the difference between a new disease surge and a quicker end to the pandemic. COVID-19 is much more transmissible than influenza, and several troubling SARS-CoV-2 variants are already spreading around the globe. The deadly third wave of influenza in 1919 shows what can happen when people prematurely relax their guard. (Courtesy <https://theconversation.com/>)