

More People
Feel the Strain
Of a Shutdown

Layoff Fears, No Pay
and Disrupted Plans

By EILEEN SULLIVAN

WASHINGTON — Reverberations of the federal government shutdown, which began nearly two weeks ago, are starting to be felt by certain segments of Americans, hinting at problems that could deepen for the public if Congress cannot reach a funding agreement soon.

In some Native American communities, medical services such as diabetes monitoring and telehealth sessions, have been curtailed or canceled. Veterans no longer have access to career counseling or regional benefits offices. Taxpayers rushing to meet a Wednesday deadline for extended filing are going to have to wait on hold because fewer Internal Revenue Service customer service agents are working to answer questions.

In addition, many of the country's fruit and vegetable farmers face hurdles in planning for next year's crops because there is so much uncertainty about what federal assistance they can expect. Large segments of the federal work force on Friday received what will be their last paycheck until the government reopens.

And the Trump administration said on Friday that more than 4,000 federal employees will be laid off in a new round of mass firings, a maneuver that is facing a legal challenge.

As the strains deepen, the fallout has done little to tip the scales in Washington, where Republicans and Democrats are locked in a standoff over how to extend funding to keep the government open.

President Trump has cut or paused billions in funding for Democratic jurisdictions and intensifying his threats to overhaul the federal bureaucracy. Last week, he publicly mulled denying legally mandated back pay to some federal workers, inserting more anxiety into a work force that has faced stress and uncertainty since he returned to the Oval Office.

"Most of them are going to get back pay, and we're going to try and make sure of that," Mr. Trump said on Wednesday. "But some of them are being hurt very badly by the Democrats and they therefore won't qualify."

The White House did not respond directly to a question seeking to clarify what the president meant, instead issuing a statement blaming Democrats for the shutdown, which started on Oct. 1.

About 600,000 federal workers are furloughed because of the shutdown. Others are working without pay because they hold

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In Tel Aviv, watching the sunset at the beach on Sunday, hours before the expected exchange of hostages between Israel and Hamas.

Black Workers
Are Cast Aside
In Policy Shifts

By LYDIA DePILLIS

Joblessness for Black workers is rising again, two years after reaching a record low. It's a troubling indicator: Joblessness often spikes higher for historically marginalized groups during economic downturns, and takes longer to fall.

This time, the Trump administration's assault on diversity programs and cuts to the federal work force could make it even more difficult for Black workers to recover when conditions improve.

The African American unemployment rate has surged over the past four months, from 6 to 7.5 percent, while the rate for white people ticked down slightly to 3.7 percent. On top of a slowing economy, the White House's actions have disproportionately harmed Black workers, economists said.

"I think the speed at which things have changed, in such a dramatic fashion, is out of the ordinary," said Valerie Wilson, who directs the program on race, ethnicity and the economy at the Economic Policy Institute, a left-leaning think tank. "There's been such a rapid shift in policy, rather than something cyclical or structural about the economy."

At least since the 1970s, when the federal government started

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Mexico Hopes It Won't Be the Next Venezuela

By PAULINA VILLEGAS and JACK NICAS

CULIACÁN, Mexico — As President Trump has blown up one boat after another off Venezuela's coast and declared an "armed conflict" against drug cartels, a question with stark consequences has arisen much closer to the United States.

Could Mexico, where far more drugs are made by some of the world's most powerful criminal groups, be next?

"I would be honored to go in and do it," Mr. Trump said in May, about using U.S. forces to hunt cartel members. "The cartels are trying to destroy our country. They're evil."

Yet three senior Mexican officials

Rejecting Concept of
Armed Help Against
Cartels From U.S.

said in interviews that, although they are watching the U.S. military action with caution, Mexico is not worried — for now.

That is because, they said, the cooperation between the countries has become simply too robust and yielded too many results on migration and drugs for them to imagine the Trump administration jeopardizing it by conducting unilateral military strikes. Their assessments were reinforced by two Trump administration officials

who emphasized collaboration between the countries.

But perhaps more surprisingly, these views were shared by several members of a top cartel who said they were unafraid of American intervention. They were more focused on an ongoing conflict within their ranks, they said.

So far, the U.S. government says it has targeted only boats leaving Venezuela, a country ruled by an autocratic government that Washington has long wanted gone.

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STAKE OFFER Venezuela's leader proposed allocating oil and mineral wealth to the U.S. to appease President Trump. PAGE A7



MERIDITH KOHUT FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Eye on a Menace in the Sky

The U.S. Army is trying to catch up with the expanding use of deadly drones in warfare. Page A12.

Embers Sometimes Rise From the Dead to Devastate California

By SHAWN HUBLER and HEATHER KNIGHT

In October 1991, a grass fire was reported in Northern California near the Caldecott Tunnel on a slope in the Berkeley Hills. The fire was small, but five years of drought had primed the eucalyptus and Monterey pines for the blaze. It was nighttime before firefighters finished checking for hot

spots and counted themselves lucky it had not been windier.

By noon the next day, that luck had run out.

As a Diablo wind rose, fallen embers that had seemed dead the previous evening suddenly came alive. Mop-up crews who had come back to make one last check and retrieve their fire hoses watched in astonishment as flaming pine needles went flying and

trees exploded into one of the deadliest wildfires ever in California.

Mark Hoffman, 71, was a lieutenant in the Oakland fire department when the so-called Tunnel fire swept through, destroying nearly 3,500 homes and killing 25 people. He thought of the fire recently, almost exactly 34 years later, after the authorities in Los Angeles attributed the Palisades fire

to remnants of an earlier blaze that firefighters thought had been extinguished.

"It was like, 'Oh, no — that again,'" Mr. Hoffman said.

They're called holdover fires, rekindled fires, re-ignitions — even zombie fires. The culprits of many major fires in California are varied and well known: utility-company equipment failures,

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In Mexico, the industry is facing a choice between halting deforestation or losing access to the U.S. market. PAGE A6

Web Blackout in Afghanistan

A telecommunications shutdown and restrictions on social media have rattled the country's residents. PAGE A10

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Norway Hunts for 'Missing' Oil

Explorers at an energy company have drilled as far as seven miles horizontally to find a trove of oil in an abandoned natural gas field. PAGE B1

Hegseth's Effort to Limit Press

The defense secretary's hostile approach to the news media is unprecedented, former Pentagon officials say. PAGE B1

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Key Figure in Selma Marches

Jesse L. Douglas, 90, a lieutenant to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., helped organize protests to expand voting rights. PAGE B8



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The Sass Menagerie

To contrast the president's dark talk about Portland, Ore., protesters are wearing colorful animal suits. PAGE A15

Drop in International Students

The number of arrivals into the U.S. in August fell by 19 percent this year compared with last year. PAGE A14

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Life After Being a Meme

Tyrique Stevenson and the Chicago Bears are headed back to Washington, where his blunder led to the winning score last October. He said the experience helped him grow. PAGE D1

N.B.A.'s Burning Questions

With the regular season set to start next week, each of the 30 teams is entering with one concern that could shape its fortunes and become a major story line. PAGES D4-5

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John McWhorter

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'Les Misérables' at 40

Critics initially panned it, but public love for the musical with songs like "One Day More" and "On My Own" has kept it going strong. PAGE C1

