



**COP OUT:** Despite being asked and having experience, Chicago Interim Police Superintendent Fred Waller (left), Washington Metropolitan Interim Chief of Police Ashan Benedict (center) and Baltimore Police Commissioner Michael Harrison all said no to permanent leadership roles.

**SECURITY**

## China crafting weapons to alter brain function

Report finds technology meant to influence government leaders

By **BILL GERTZ**  
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

China's People's Liberation Army is developing high-technology weapons designed to disrupt brain functions and influence government leaders or entire populations, according to a report by three open-source intelligence analysts.

The weapons can be used to directly attack or control brains using microwave or other directed energy weapons in handheld guns or larger weapons firing electromagnetic beams, adding that the danger of China's brain warfare weapons prior to or during a conflict is no longer theoretical.

"Unknown to many, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) and its People's Liberation Army (PLA) have established themselves as world leaders in the development of neurostrike weapons," according to the 12-page report, "Enumerating, Targeting and Collapsing the Chinese Communist Party's Neurostrike Program." The Washington Times obtained a copy of the study.

The U.S. Commerce Department in December 2021 imposed sanctions on China's Academy of Military Medical Sciences and 11 related entities the department said were using "biotechnology processes to support Chinese military end-uses and end-users, to include purported brain-control weaponry."

Few public studies or discussions, however, have been held

## Tech team assembles to thwart AI mayhem

By **RYAN LOVELACE**  
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

OpenAI is assembling a team to prevent emerging artificial intelligence technology from going rogue and fueling the extinction of humanity, which the company now fears is a real possibility.

The makers of the popular chatbot ChatGPT say AI will power new superintelligence that will help solve the world's most important problems and be the most consequential technology ever invented by humans.

And yet, OpenAI's Ilya Sutskever and Jan Leike warned that humans are not prepared to handle technology smarter than they are.

"The vast power of superintelligence could also be very dangerous, and could lead to the disempowerment of humanity or even human extinction," Mr. Sutskever and Mr. Leike wrote on OpenAI's blog. "While superintelligence seems far off now, we believe it could

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**LAW ENFORCEMENT**

## TO SERVE AND REJECT

By **MATT DELANEY**  
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

An anti-police sentiment among politicians that feeds off an increasingly mistrustful — and vocal — public is convincing some of the nation's top law enforcement officials to call it quits.

Police departments in major cities across the country — including New York, Chicago, the District and Louisville, Kentucky, — are not only seeing their top brass leave, but they're also having a hard time finding permanent replacements, even with salaries that, in some cases, can

### Distrust, stress leave top offices in U.S. police departments empty

top the mayor's.

The leadership drain coincides with polls showing respect for law enforcement sinking.

A recent Gallup survey found just 45% of respondents had confidence in the police — the lowest law enforcement has scored in the 30 years in the poll.

A Washington Post/ABC News poll conducted after Tyre Nichols' death in Memphis found that only 39% of respondents say

they believe cops are trained to use proper force. Only 41% of respondents in that same poll say police treat White and Black people equally.

Caught-on-camera interactions gone wrong — often involving Black suspects and White police officers — and the heightened media scrutiny that followed have chipped away at the public's view of law enforcement as an honorable profession.

"You're seeing a manifestation of the negative aura that has impacted law enforcement for the last 10 years, and it's becoming more and more huge," said Andrew Scott, a former police chief in Boca Raton, Florida, who now works as a police consultant.

Mr. Scott told The Washington Times that police chiefs struggle to balance good relations with their unions, the public and their political bosses. That high-stress juggling act is likely why some interim chiefs have said thanks but no thanks when

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**DIPLOMACY**

## U.S., South Africa strive to alleviate fallout over Russia

Tension on display after German official's claims

By **GEOFF HILL**  
SPECIAL TO THE WASHINGTON TIMES

**JOHANNESBURG, SOUTH AFRICA** | South Africa's delicate balancing act over Russia and the Ukraine war and the strain it has brought to relations with the United States were on full display late last month during a trip to Pretoria by German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock.

Officially on a visit to push green energy to a country that still gets 80% of its electricity from coal, Ms. Baerbock went off-script with some sharp words denouncing alleged war crimes by Russian troops in their 16-month invasion of Ukraine.

"For this suffering to end, the war must end," she said. "And for the war to end, Russia must stop the bombing and withdraw its soldiers. This war is an attack on the U.N. charter, on the very rules that bind and protect us all."

They were remarks that once might have drawn a barbed response from the host. South Africa's ruling African National Congress has historic links to Moscow dating back to the days of apartheid and the Cold War but has been studiously neutral in the face of a U.S.-led campaign to condemn Russia's

» see **SOUTH AFRICA** | **A4**



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**POWER OF THE PURSE:** Congress is back in session this week after a recess. The major item up for consideration in the House is the National Defense Authorization Act, a must-pass piece of legislation.

**CONGRESS**

## Lawmakers return from recess to tackle must-pass funding legislation

By **ALEX MILLER**  
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

Congress returns from its Fourth of July recess this week with growing objections to President Biden's military policies and a looming fight in the Senate over ethics standards for the Supreme Court.

The major item up for consideration in the House is one of

the few perennial must-pass bills: The \$886 billion National Defense Authorization Act. House conservatives are using the legislation as a vehicle to buck the Pentagon's progressive social personnel policies, setting the stage for what could be a brutal policy fight when the measure reaches the floor as early as this week.

Since advancing out of the Armed Services Committee, the

NDAAs have been flooded with more than 1,400 amendments, including a fresh revolt by progressives seeking to block Mr. Biden's decision to provide cluster munitions to Ukraine's military. Liberal Democrats say the munitions violate human rights standards, while the president said Ukraine is running out of

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**CAMPAIGN 2024**

## Conservative groups release ads on school choice, abortion

Aim to create message GOP can rally behind

By **KERRY PICKET**  
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

Two conservative organizations recently released separate hard-hitting ad campaigns tackling school choice and abortion.

The ads take aggressive stances on two issues the GOP has had difficulty finding unifying messages to rally behind.

The first ad was produced by the political watchdog group Unleash Prosperity Now, which criticizes Democrats' opposition to school choice as being no different than support for school segregation over 60 years ago.

The political watchdog group Unleash Prosperity Now produced the ad "Education Fairness for All." It is part of a combined digital and TV campaign and compares several present-day Democratic politicians to the late Democratic Alabama Gov. George Wallace.

Wallace became well known for his opposition to integrating schools in the 1960s, and he coined the phrase, "Segregation now, segregation tomorrow, and segregation forever."

"In 1963, Alabama Gov. George Wallace stood

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**POLITICS**

**Biden equivocates on questions of age and second term. A3**

**NATION**

**Ransomware criminals dump kids' files online after school hacks. A6**

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**SPORTS**

**Nationals enter break with positive outlook due to strong core. B10**

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## POLICE

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offered promotions to the top job.

Fred Waller, the current superintendent of Chicago police, became the third person to lead the department in six months when he took over in May.

Chicago Mayor Brandon Johnson said in May that Mr. Waller agreed to fill the position only until the city finds a permanent superintendent. Mr. Waller came out of retirement — he left the force in the summer of 2020 — to run the department.

The District's interim police chief, Ashan Benedict, said in May that he, too, has no interest in pursuing the Metropolitan Police Department's top job.

Chief Benedict plans to resume his role as the executive assistant to the chief of police once D.C. Mayor Muriel Bowser selects a long-term replacement for former Chief Robert Contee III, who left for a job with the FBI at the beginning of June.

Pamela Smith, the former head of the U.S. Park Police who now runs D.C. police's Homeland Security Bureau, is among the job candidates.

Large police departments — those with 1,000 or more employees — already experience a greater amount of turnover in their leadership than smaller departments.

The Police Executive Research Forum said the average tenure of a police chief for a large department is five years. At smaller departments, chiefs are more likely to stay over seven years.



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A police officer stands amongst demonstrators marching during a protest Jan. 28, in New York, in response to Tyre Nichols' death. Nichols died after being beaten by Memphis police during a traffic stop. Public trust in police is shrinking.

The forum also found that the number of first-time chiefs is increasing. Only 15% of the 347 respondents to its 2021 national survey of police chiefs said that they had led an entire department before. In its 2014 survey, a quarter of the respondents had served as a chief prior to taking on the role elsewhere.

More first-time chiefs taking over departments can be seen as a sign of upward mobility, but that comes at the risk of less experience.

Michelle Woodfork, New Orleans' interim superintendent of police, was elevated to her role in December despite never serving as a commander of her own police district, according to the Times-Picayune.

Veteran officers appear to be suffering from burnout as well.

Superintendent Woodfork was selected to replace the retiring Shaun Ferguson, who himself replaced Michael Harrison in 2019 — the top cop who departed New Orleans for the commissioner's job in Baltimore — where Commissioner Harrison was paid almost \$300,000 a year, according to The Baltimore Sun.

Now Commissioner Harrison is weeks removed from his own resignation in Charm City, saying he wants to spend more time with family. Baltimore Mayor Brandon Scott has since chosen Deputy Commissioner Richard Worley to serve as acting boss.

Qualified officers can be found throughout most departments, but one former chief said that some are turning down opportunities to step up.

"I think there are a lot of second-tier command staff who will not accept a promotion because, as you progress through your career, you want stability, you want to maintain your retirement," said Joel Shults, a former police chief at Adams State University in Colorado. "Wandering into that minefield of being a police chief can really put your whole future and financial security at risk."

Mr. Shults, who now writes about police issues, has argued in favor of legislation that grants police chiefs employment protections so they can't be fired at will by political bosses. Missouri law, for example, stipulates that police chiefs can be let go only if they are involved with misconduct, insubordination, violate a written policy or commit a felony.

Steady police leadership is important for politicians pushing changes to policing. Without a consistent presence in command, Mr. Scott said, it's hard for police chiefs to establish a culture in their department that brings about the desired changes and helps maintain recruitment goals.

Many times, he said, it comes down to political leaders being too accommodating to a small minority of their constituents and those people's perceptions of how law enforcement should be run.

"The chief is subjected to the whims of civilians [who are] politically driven and that know nothing about law enforcement," Mr. Scott told The Times. "What is being demanded by their

political bosses is incongruent with what the chief knows is good law enforcement practices that protect the general public."

That doesn't always cut in the direction of progressives who are concerned with criminal justice reform.

Keechant Sewell stepped down last month after just 16 months as the first female New York City police commissioner, partly because Mayor Eric Adams — a former NYPD cop — took an active role in overseeing the nation's largest police force, according to Gothamist.

The most recent reported salary for the NYPD commissioner's post was almost \$240,000 a year.

But not all police chiefs are dissuaded by the tumult.

Chief Jacquelyn Gwinn-Villaroel, who is the interim head of the police department in Louisville, Kentucky, is also on the short list of candidates the Louisville mayor is considering for the permanent job. Superintendent Woodfork in New Orleans is also considered to be Mayor LaToya Cantrell's front-runner for the permanent job.

Mr. Shults contends that law enforcement officers continue to be seen as one of the most respected professions in the country.

Even with the public's historically low confidence in the police, they were still ranked as the third-most-trusted institution — ahead of churches, the medical system and public schools.

But Mr. Scott says there is little upside to becoming a police officer nowadays. The possibility of one tragic mistake can lead to the loss of a job, a lawsuit, a prison sentence — or all three.

## CHINA

From page A1

regarding the new advanced military capability.

Neurostrike is a military term defined as the engineered targeting of the brains of military personnel or civilians using nonkinetic technology. The goal is to impair thinking, reduce situational awareness, inflict long-term neurological damage and cloud normal cognitive functions.

The study was written by Ryan Clarke, a senior fellow at the East Asian Institute of the National University of Singapore; Xiaoxu Sean Lin, a former Army microbiologist now with Feitan College; and L.J. Eads, a former Air Force intelligence officer and current specialist in artificial intelligence for the U.S. intelligence community. The three authors write that China's leadership "views neurostrike and psychological warfare as a core component of its asymmetric warfare strategy against the United States and its allies in the Indo-Pacific."

According to the report, neurostrike capabilities are part of standard military capabilities and should not be viewed as an unconventional weapon limited to use in extreme circumstances.

Likely areas of use for the weapons included Taiwan, the South China Sea, East China Sea and the disputed Sino-Indian border.

The threat is not limited to the use of microwave weapons: "[China's] new landscape of neurostrike development includes using massively distributed human-computer interfaces to control entire populations as well as a range of weapons designed to cause cognitive damage," the report said.

Research is focused on using brain warfare weapons in the near term, and possibly during a Chinese military assault on Taiwan — a target for future Chinese military operations that U.S. military leaders have said could be carried out in the next four years.

"Any breakthrough in this research would provide unprecedented tools for the CCP to forcibly establish a new



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Neurostrike is a military term defined as the engineered targeting of the brains of military personnel or civilians using nonkinetic technology. A new report says that China is leading the globe in developing this style of weaponry.

world order, which has been [Chinese President] Xi Jinping's lifelong goal," the report said.

Militarily, brain warfare can be used in what the Pentagon has called China's "anti-access, area-denial" military strategy for the Indo-Pacific.

"Imagine (at least partially) immunized PLA troops being inserted into a geography where a specific weaponized bacterial strain has been released prior to their entry to prepare the ground and eliminate points of resistance," the report states. "Any remaining sources of resistance on the ground are then dealt with through [Chinese] neurostrike weaponry that instill intense fear and/or other forms of cognitive incoherence resulting in inaction."

That scenario would allow the PLA to establish absolute control over a nation like Taiwan, while at the same time blunting any American strategic options to intervene and send troops in to support

Taiwan. The PLA could thus negate U.S. conventional military superiority with few near-term remedies for the United States, the report said.

"This scenario is based on known existing CCP research programs and what the clear strategic aims of those programs are," the report said.

The report said placing China's Academy of Military Medical Science the Commerce Department's blacklist of companies barred from access to U.S. goods was the result of its leading role in developing brain warfare capabilities. A special branch of the Chinese military known as the Strategic Support Force (SSF) is likely the main unit charged with conducting brain warfare.

### The 'three warfares' strategy

The SSF is the leader in what the PLA calls a "three warfares" strategy of using nonkinetic weapons in war. The three warfares were disclosed in 2014 by

China's National Defense University and call for employing psychological warfare, media warfare and legal warfare.

Little is known about the SSF but available information indicates the force would be used to shape information environments on the ground and provide the PLA with better battlefield information than its adversaries.

"With additional neurostrike capabilities that can either damage, disorient or even control perceived adversary cognition at the population level, the PLA SSF would represent an exponential escalation in [China's] aggression in the Indo-Pacific," the report said.

"Three warfares" operations are underway against Taiwan, Hong Kong, the South China Sea and along the Indian-Chinese border, and the authors warn that the risk of the new brain warfare capabilities being used is increasing.

The SSF "now operates as a type of superstructure on top of a growing and

increasingly active platform of Chinese military assets (land, sea, air, cyber, and space) across multiple theaters in the Indo-Pacific while simultaneously serving as the primary deployment platform for new neurostrike weaponry," the report said.

To counter brain warfare capabilities, the report urges the U.S. military to first expose the threat of neurostrike weapons and call for international talks and policy remedies, such as ethics reviews for neuroscience and cognitive science studies. Proactively, the United States should sabotage critical supply chains of specific institutions or companies engaged in brain warfare research.

Cyber capabilities also should be used to target and disrupt Chinese neurostrike programs. Sanctions against all Chinese civilian and military programs linked to brain warfare also should be increased.

The objective of all counter-brain warfare efforts should be to dissuade China's leadership from deploying the new technology, the report said.

"Like all of the CCP's asymmetric warfare programs, neurostrike depends entirely on presenting a massively decentralized and fragmented network structure," the report said. "This renders it nearly impossible to map using traditional investigative or intelligence approaches."

China currently does not have the defense-industrial base needed to produce the technologies for a neurostrike program that can match Beijing's military ambitions, the report said, presenting a window of opportunity for the U.S. and its allies.

"This fundamental gap presents a massive vulnerability for decapitating strikes against the neurostrike program provided that these gaps can be surfaced, and precision-targeted," the report said.

U.S. and allied nations must locate key weaknesses in the networks involved in the brain warfare program. Covert military action can "make involvement in this weapons program a high-risk venture where technical failure and negative international attention are the most likely outcomes," the report said.

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ENTERTAINMENT

Today's secret word is 'goodbye'

Pee-wee actor Reubens dies at 70

By Andrew Dalton

LOS ANGELES | Paul Reubens, the actor and comedian whose character Pee-wee Herman became a cultural phenomenon through films and TV shows, has died. He was 70.

Mr. Reubens died Sunday night after a six-year struggle with cancer that he did not make public, his publicist said in a statement.

"Please accept my apology for not going public with what I've been facing the last six years," Mr. Reubens said in a statement released Monday with the announcement of his death. "I have always felt a huge amount of love and respect from my friends, fans and supporters. I have loved you all so much and enjoyed making art for you."

The character with his tootight gray suit, white chunky loafers and red bow tie was best known for the film "Pee-wee's Big Adventure" and the television series "Pee-wee's Playhouse."

The Pee-wee character would become a cultural constant for much of the 1980s, though an indecent exposure arrest in 1991 would send him into entertainment exile for years.

Mr. Reubens created Pee-wee when he was part of the Los Angeles improv group The Groundlings in the late 1970s. The live "Pee-wee Herman Show" debuted at a Los Angeles theater in 1981 and was a success with both kids during matinees and adults at a midnight show.

The show closely resembled the format the Saturday morning TV "Pee-wee's Playhouse" would follow years later, with Pee-wee living in a wild and wacky home with a series of stock-character visitors, including one, Captain Karl, played by the late "Saturday Night Live" star Phil Hartman. In the plot, Pee-wee secretly wishes to fly.

HBO would air the show as a special.

"Pee Wee got his wish to fly," Steve Martin tweeted after his death. "Thanks Paul Reubens for the brilliant off the wall comedy!"

Mr. Reubens took Pee-wee to the big screen in 1985's "Pee-wee's Big Adventure." The film, in which Pee-wee's cherished bike is stolen, was said to be loosely based on Vittorio De Sica's Italian neo-realist classic, "The Bicycle Thief."

The film, directed by Tim Burton and co-written by Hartman, sent Pee-wee on a nationwide escapade. The movie was a success, grossing \$40 million, and continued to spawn a cult following for its oddball whimsy.

A sequel followed three years later in the less well-received "Big Top Pee-wee," in which Pee-wee seeks to join a circus. Mr. Reubens' character wouldn't get another movie starring role until 2016's "Pee-wee's Big Holiday," for Netflix. Judd Apatow produced Pee-wee's big-screen revival.

His television series, "Pee-wee's Playhouse," ran for five seasons, earned 22 Emmys and attracted not only children but also adults to Saturday-morning TV. Silly and subversive and championing nonconformity, the Pee-wee universe was a trippy place, populated by things like a talking armchair and a friendly perodactyl.

The host, who is fond of secret words and loves fruit salad so much he once married it, is prone to lines like, "I know you are, but what am I?" and "Why don't you take a picture; it'll last longer?" The act was a hit because it worked on multiple levels, even though Mr. Reubens insists that wasn't the plan.

"It's for kids," Mr. Reubens told The Associated Press in 2010. "People have tried to get me for years to go, 'It wasn't really for kids, right?' Even the original show was for kids. I always



Paul Reubens, an actor and comedian best known for his character Pee-wee Herman, has died. He was a cultural force in the 1980s.

censored myself to have it be kid-friendly.

"The whole thing has been just a gut feeling from the beginning," Mr. Reubens told the AP. "That's all it ever is and I think always ever be. Much as people want me to dissect it and explain it, I can't. One, I don't know, and two, I don't want to know, and three, I feel like I'll hex myself if I know."

Jimmy Kimmel posted on Instagram that "Paul Reubens was like no one else — a brilliant and original comedian who made kids and their parents laugh at the same time. He never forgot a birthday and shared his genuine delight for silliness with everyone he met."

Mr. Reubens' career was derailed when he was arrested for indecent exposure in an adult movie theater in Sarasota, Florida, where he grew up. He was handed a small fine but the damage to the character was incalculable.

He became the frequent butt of late-night talk show jokes and the perception of Mr. Reubens immediately changed.

"The moment that I realized my name was going to be said in the same sentence as children and sex, that's really intense," Mr. Reubens told NBC in 2004. "That's something I knew from that very moment, whatever happens past that point, something's out there in the air that is really bad."

Mr. Reubens said he got plenty of offers to work, but told the AP that most of them wanted to take "advantage of the luridness of my situation," and he didn't want to do them.

"It just changed," he said. "Everything changed."

In 2001, Mr. Reubens was arrested and charged with misdemeanor possession of child pornography after police seized images from his computer and photography collection, but the allegation was reduced to an obscenity charge and he was given three years probation.

Born Paul Rubinfeld in Peekskill, New York, Mr. Reubens, the eldest of three children, grew up primarily in Sarasota before going to Boston University and the California Institute of the Arts.

Friendships that took a hit during COVID need rekindling

DEAR ABBY: I'm a woman in my late 40s, and since coming out of the isolation of the pandemic (the lockdown was strict where we live), I've had a hard time rekindling the friendships I valued before — with my two best girlfriends, in particular. We used to have the type of relationship in which we were very open. We told each other everything and had a lot of fun.

The last two years were really hard on me. I faced a series of serious health issues, as did my youngest kid, who almost died and had to be hospitalized in another city because the care centers here were overcrowded. A few months later, my older child had a mental health crisis that we now spend a lot of time working through.

Those challenges completely changed the way our house runs. They dominate my day-to-day life. The thing is, talking about all that feels too heavy. I don't want to be the friend who always brings down the room. On the other hand, when my friends find out everything that has been going on that I didn't tell them about, they're going to be angry that I've been hiding things from them, and it's going to damage our friendship.

I don't have the capacity to take on managing anyone else's feelings, while at the same time I wish I had more people to go out and have fun with. How can I be a good friend without sharing all the challenges? — NOT SHARING IN THE EAST

DEAR NOT SHARING: Now that the lockdowns are over and, for most people,

ABIGAIL VAN BUREN DEAR ABBY

life is returning to near-normal, get together face-to-face for a truth session with those friends.

Tell them as much as you think they need to know, and enjoy them as often as you can. If they can't lighten your load, widen your circle to include some women who can.

Do not feel you must manage their feelings or disclose all of your son's emotional difficulties. Make sure to devote some time listening to the challenges THEY may have faced over the last couple of years. True friends try to make the people they care about feel better, not worse.

DEAR ABBY: I live with a man who sits around the house all day. If I'm outside doing yardwork, he'll sit on the porch and watch without offering to help. He's retired and doesn't work. He's 59 and does nothing but sit up all night and sleep half the day. Any comments? — DOES IT ALL IN KENTUCKY

DEAR DOES IT ALL: Have you asked the man who is living with you for help? (I notice you did NOT refer to him as your husband.) If you have and he refused, my comment is that your porch-sitter appears to be lazy and unmotivated. He may feel that because he's no longer in the workforce, he doesn't have to do anything else until the good lord claims him, which may be sooner than he thinks if he doesn't get up and do some exercise.

In dealing with someone like him, try coming up with a way to motivate him, hire someone to help with the yardwork or trade him in for a younger, more energetic model. (I'm only half-joking about that last option.)

ANDREWS MCMEEL SYNDICATION

Keep it short: Sweltering days call for quick games

Keep a column going for 30 years and you start to establish a few traditions along the way. Such as: When the temperature rises, the games should get shorter.

There's plenty of August news out there to cover — the 123rd running of the U.S. Open has just gotten underway in Grand Rapids, Michigan, while the FIDE World Cup knockout tournament, with slots in the men's and women's candidates tournament up for grabs, is also just getting started in Baku, Azerbaijan, with former world champ Magnus Carlsen and U.S. GMs Hikaru Nakamura, Fabiano Caruana and Wesley So all among the favorites.

But when the mercury outside reaches board-melting levels, as has been the case for much of our readership for the past month or so, we like to ditch the deep-dive analysis of long games in favor of a cool dip into a number of miniatures. And despite all the talk that modern players, blessed with massive opening databases and AI-backed engines, know every opening variation up to the 22nd move, it's remarkable how even some very strong players still can get themselves into deep trouble just minutes after the clocks have started.

Our first two examples come from last month's U.S. junior and senior championships, showing how a momentary lack of vigilance can lead to disaster. California junior IM Josiah Stearman, his kingside already looking a little iffy, practically waved the red flag in front of Texas IM Justin Wang in their Caro-Kann with 10. h4 h5? (either 10...f5 or 10...Be6 keeps it a game), inviting the devastating 11. Bxg6! fxd6 12. Qxg6+ Kh8 13. Qxh5+ Kg8 14. Bh6, and White gets three pawns for the piece and a raging attack. By 21. Rhh3 Rg7 22. Rhg3, Black is about to



Strikovic-Ilincica after 19...e5xf4

lose his queen and get mated, without his queenside pieces having made a move; Stearman gave up.

Veteran U.S. GM Alex Shabalov has been the author of some fine combinations over the years, but his tactical radar failed him in an unexpectedly quick loss to GM Gregory Kaidanov from the U.S. senior event. Black sacrifices a pawn for pressure in a wide-open position, and Shabalov may have thought things were headed for a gentleman's draw after 19. Qb3 Nd3 20. Re2?! (Rg4 is better here) Nf4 21. Re4 Nd3 22. Re2? Rc8!, and already threats like 23...Na5 and 22... Nd4 are in the air.

Already in scramble mode, White misses yet another trick up Black's sleeve: 23. Nf1? (the craven 23. Qd1 looks best here) Rxf3! 24. gxf3 Nxc1, and Black will win a piece for a pawn after 25. Rxc1 Qg4+; Shabalov resigned.

The perils of pawn-grubbing were amply illustrated in Russian GM Artyom Timofeev's short, sharp win over compatriot GM Aleksey Grebnev from the recent Russian national championship tournament. Black takes the bait with 8. 0-0-0 Bxf2?! 9. Ngf3 Be3 10. exd5 exd5 11. Bb6 Be6 12. Rhe1, and when his opponent fails to react, Timofeev's fully developed pieces zero in for the kill: 12...d4? 13. Rxe3! dxe3 14. Ne4 Qe7 15. Qh6! Qc7 16. Qg7!, and if Grebnev tries to save his rook, it's curtains on 16... Rf8 16. Nxf6+ Ke7 17. Qg5! with a devastating discovered check on tap.

Another ill-advised pawn grab does in another top player when veteran Polish star GM Michal Krasenkow snaps up an "undefended" d-pawn just nine moves into a pretty tame Grunfeld Defense line. The punishment from Greek GM Stelios Halkias is quick: 9. Qxh6 Nxd4? 10. 0-0-0! (winning by castling never gets old, plus White should definitely avoid the more pedestrian 10. Rd1?? Nc2 mate), and now on 10...c5 11. e3, the pinned knight is lost. Krasenkow called it quits.

And sometimes a miniature can actually reveal a new tactical pattern, or at least one you don't see every day. In a game from a recent open tournament in Croatia, after 11. Qa4 Rb8, White no doubt saw his next move as a twofor, defending the threatened b-pawn and pinning the Black knight on e7 to boot. Instead this happened: 12. Qa3?? Bc1!, pinning the b-pawn from behind and threatening the devastating 13...Bxb2. White must lose massive material and resigned on the spot.

Finally, today's diagrammed position, taken from a recent open tournament in Valencia, Spain, cutely demonstrates what may be called the "butterfly effect" in chess — how a little flutter on one side of the board can create havoc on the other. Black, having just played 18...e5xf4 already has some annoying pressure on the opposing king, but it takes just an unlikely little nudge for White's game to collapse.

There followed 19. gxf4? (White is still very much in it after 19. Nxf4 Nxf4 20. gxf4 Re8 21. e3; White's knight on d5 is now carrying out critical defensive responsibilities, so Black proceeds to divert it) Nc7!! and the sidelined knight offers itself up on c7 to allow the Black kingside attack to break through. White sportingly resigned here, since it's all bleak after 20. Nxc7 Nxf4 21. Bg3 Nxe2+ 22. Kf2 Qxg3+ 23. Kxe2 Bxc7, with a two-pawn

edge and an overwhelming positional advantage, or 20. Ne3 Nxf4 21. Kh2 Re8 (threatening 22...Rxe3!) 22. Rg1 Nxe2, again with a dominating position and raging attack.

Wang-Stearman, U.S. Junior Championship, St. Louis, July 2023  
1. e4 c6 2. d4 d5 3. Nd2 dxe4 4. Nxe4 Nf6 5. Nxf6+ exf6 6. c3 Bd6 7. Bd3 0-0 8. Qc2 Re8+ 9. Ne2 g6 10. h4 h5 11. Bxg6 fxd6 12. Qxg6+ Kh8 13. Qxh5+ Kg8 14. Bh6 Bf8 15. Qg6+ Kh8 16. Bxf8 Rxf8 17. 0-0 Qc7 18. Qh6+ Kg8 19. Rd3 Rf7 20. Re3 Qd7 21. Rhh3 Rg7 22. Rhg3 Black resigns

Shabalov-Kaidanov, U.S. Senior Championship, St. Louis, July 2023  
1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. Bc4 Nf6 4. d3 Be7 5. 0-0-0 0-0 6. Re1 d6 7. a4 Na5 8. Ba2 c5 9. c3 Nc6 10. h3 Be6 11. Bxe6 fxe6 12. d4 exd4 13. cxd4 d5 14. exd5 Nxd5 15. dxc5 Bxc5 16. Nbd2 Bb4 17. Rxe6 Nf4 18. Re4 Kh8 19. Qb3 Nd3 20. Re2 Nf4 21. Re4 Nd3 22. Re2 Rc8 23. Nf1 Rxf3 24. gxf3 Nxc1 White resigns

Timofeev-Grebnev, 76th Russian Higher League Championship, Novokuznetsk, Russia, June 2023  
1. d4 Nf6 2. Bg5 d5 3. Nd2 c5 4. Bxf6 gxf6 5. dxc5 e6 6. e4 Bxc5 7. Qh5 Nc6 8. 0-0-0 Bxf2 9. Ngf3 Be3 10. exd5 exd5 11. Bb5 Be6 12. Rhe1 d4 13. Rxe3 dxe3 14. Ne4 Qe7 15. Qh6 Qc7 16. Qg7 Black resigns

Halkias-Krasenkow, Korchnoi Memorial 2023, Guenzsburg, Germany, June 2023  
1. d4 Nf6 2. c4 g6 3. Nc3 d5 4. cxd5 Nxd5 5. Bd2 Nb6 6. Nf3 Bg7 7. Qc1 Nc6 8. Bh6 Bxh6 9. Qxh6 Nxd4 10. 0-0-0 Black resigns

Gelle-Mammadova, 6th Soita Open, Grohote, Croatia, July 2023  
1. d4 d5 2. Bf4 c5 3. e3 cxd4 4. exd4 Nc6 5. c3 Bf5 6. Nf3 e6 7. Qb3 Bd6 8. Qxb7 Bxf4 9. Qxc6+ Kf8 10. Ba6 Ne7 11. Qa4 Rb8 12. Qa3 Bc1 White resigns

• David R. Sands can be reached at 202/636-3178 or at dsands@washingtontimes.com.

TODAY'S BIRTHDAY (Aug. 1). It's your year of truth-seeking and illumination. You'll use a remarkable education to earn more, discover the world and develop yourself. More highlights: A tedious ongoing task will finally be taken off your hands. You'll solve a great mystery affecting many. Three new friends favorably influence the plot of your social life and your habits. Aries and Cancer adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 1, 7, 20, 13 and 5.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). Seek help in breaking your bad habits, and don't be afraid to experiment with solutions; if you knew which one was going to work, you wouldn't be stuck. So try new things, even the silly ones.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). Theories live in their own fictional realm. You're more interested in what will happen in the world you share with others, and so you'll put a theory to the test and let it show you what it can do in reality.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). You'll be motivated by a shiny prize. The real prize is who you become because you did the work. While that's far more valuable than any trophy, the award gives you a helpful point of focus.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). You'll accomplish 20 things before lunch and another 30 get ticked off your list by dinner, and yet somehow you still have the energy to invest in your loved ones at the end of the day. Love repowers you.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). You won't be stuck for long. Input from the knowledgeable and experienced will grease your gears. This may come in conversational or book form. You'll solve a problem and broaden your understanding of the big picture.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). You'll get a win, but it feels temporary. Don't worry how long this will last. Make it count. Publicize it far and wide. You won't be able to build on it if no one knows about it.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). It takes guts to be outgoing because there's always a risk of being misconstrued, judged or rejected. You proudly assume the risk, break the ice, share something real about yourself and pave the way for honest connection.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). Your feelings will surprise you. Since there's no such thing as a "wrong" emotion, it's better not to impose logic on your mood. You have a way of turning whatever energy comes into useful fuel for interesting outcomes.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). You're open and impressionable today, so hang out with the people you want to be like. If you can't do it face to face, media works well, too — especially what you read in books, which will touch deep into your psyche.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). Your subconscious has an agenda that you're just now learning about. It's surprising to find out that you've been keeping secrets from yourself, but all will be revealed at the perfect time.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Because you're not afraid of complexity and you expect life to get a little messy at times, people show you who they really are. You bond in an honest connection.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). You're in the early stages of a transformation and starting to play around with a new way of seeing yourself. Trying on personas can be fun like shopping. Don't worry about going all in until you find the right fit.

HOLIDAY MATHIS HOROSCOPE

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## COURTS

### Rhetoric blamed for threats on judges

Number nearly doubled since 2019

By **ALEX SWOYER**  
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

Threats against federal judges have nearly doubled over a three-year period. Court watchers say heated political rhetoric is contributing to the hostile environment surrounding the judiciary.

The number of threats against judges climbed from 178 in 2019 to 311 in 2022, according to a report from Bloomberg Law, citing data from the U.S. Marshals Service obtained by a Freedom of Information Act request. There were 280 such threats in the first three months of 2023.

According to federal and state authorities, recent threats include:

- A woman from Port Charlotte, Florida, was charged last month with making a phone call in which she threatened to kill a federal judge in Texas.
- An inmate in a state prison in Midway, Texas, was charged last month with mailing a letter in which he threatened to kill or injure a federal judge.
- A Texas woman was arrested in August and accused of sending a threatening email to a judge in the District of Columbia overseeing the election interference prosecution of former President Donald Trump.

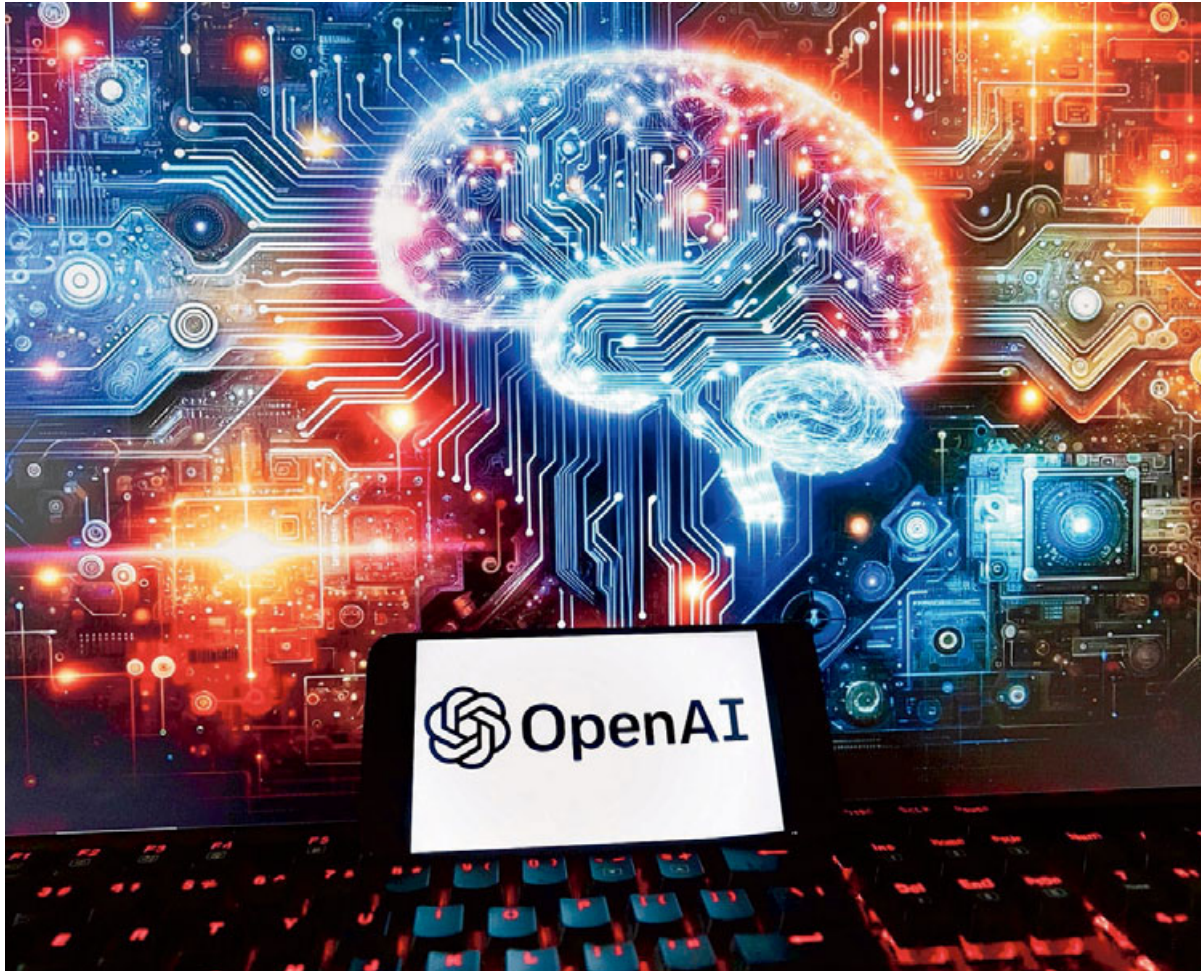
• The FBI earlier this month said it is investigating a flood of threats made on social media against the four Colorado Supreme Court justices who ruled Mr. Trump ineligible to appear on the state's 2024 Republican primary ballot.

Court watchers say partisan verbal and online attacks among politicians have spurred the uptick in threats against the judiciary.

Elliot Mincberg, senior fellow at People For the American Way, said a culture of violence and the number of guns available are contributing factors to the increase. But he also said Mr. Trump's criticism of judges who rule against his administration — or him personally — has fueled hostility.

He also said that some people view the 6-3 conservative majority on the

» see **THREAT** | A5



ASSOCIATED PRESS PHOTOGRAPHS

**CONNECTIVITY ISSUES:** The OpenAI's ChatGPT has taken the world by storm. The artificial intelligence tool reached its first 1 million users in just one week. The tool has had explosive growth this year.

## THE IMITATION GAIN

### Tech startup company turned AI into big business

By **RYAN LOVELACE**  
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

Second of four parts

Artificial intelligence tools exploded in 2023 and put Big Tech on its heels. One AI maker rocketed into the business stratosphere with \$1 trillion in market capitalization. ChatGPT brought AI to Americans' devices — sparking a boom in the development and use of generative AI tools that produce high-quality images,

text, audio and video. Google followed with its own offerings. Others got a new look from a very interested public. GitHub, a software development platform, said it saw users creating twice as many generative AI projects through the first half of 2023 as compared to all of 2022. In its annual

consumer internet app in the 20 years the investment bank has surveyed the internet market, a UBS analyst told Reuters.

ChatGPT's emergence as the face of generative AI might have been shocking to someone surveying the AI playing field several years back.

How it happened is a story of chance and opportunity.

The Big Tech giants have been pursuing a public-facing language AI for years; Google was among those that seemed to have the inside track.

That is until software engineer Blake Lemoine went public in the fall of 2022 with concerns that the LaMDA was "sentient" or capable of having feelings. Google disputed his claim and ousted him, but he said the blow-up delayed Google's AI launch.

OpenAI, the company behind

» see **ARTIFICIAL** | A5

► Fired Google engineer warns of doomsday scenarios. **A5**



**THE FACE OF GENERATIVE AI:** Sam Altman is the CEO of OpenAI, which created ChatGPT.

October report, GitHub said it has witnessed "exponential growth" in applications being created on top of AI models including ChatGPT to make digital assistants, mobile applications and other tools and bots.

ChatGPT reached its first 1 million users in just one week, surpassing Instagram as the quickest app to do so, according to a UBS report.

ChatGPT's explosive growth represented the fastest ramp-up for any

## ENVIRONMENT

### Migrant wave jeopardizes U.S. targets for emissions

Carbon footprint much lower in native country

By **STEPHEN DINAN**  
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

President Biden's migrant surge is taking a toll on police, schools and a wide range of social services — and it turns out, it's also contributing to global warming.

A Central or South American who immigrates to the U.S. could see their greenhouse gas emissions double or triple, just by becoming part of the U.S. economy. That not only raises the overall global carbon footprint, but also makes it tougher for the U.S. to achieve its own emissions reduction targets, experts said.

"It's pretty simple," said Michael McKenna, an energy policy expert who served as a senior legislative aide to President Trump. "When you get here, no matter what you're doing, you're using more electricity, you're using more energy."

The idea turns the usual conversation on its head.

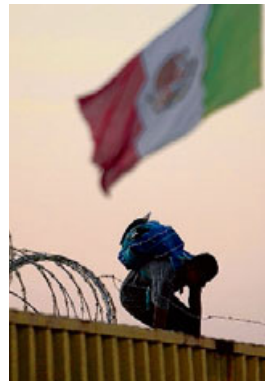
Most people, when they talk about climate and migration, look at what are known as climate refugees — those who are pressured to leave their homes because rising temperatures and extreme weather events have flooded homes or upended the local economy.

But experts say the flow of people itself is a factor in total emissions and where they happen.

Take a Guatemalan, more than 700,000 of whom have been caught trying to reach the U.S. since the start of the Biden administration.

In Guatemala, the per capita annual footprint is slightly more than 1 ton of carbon dioxide emissions, according to the statisticians at Our World In Data. The average American accounts for nearly 15 tons.

It's true that the Guatemalan is likely to be on the lower end of the economy — and therefore carbon



ASSOCIATED PRESS

**CLIMATE MATTERS:** Experts say that when an immigrant leaves for a new country, their carbon footprint can increase in their new home.

» see **MIGRANTS** | A4

## SECURITY

### Former CIA agent: Intelligence officials pushing leftist agenda

Warns of lasting consequences

By **BILL GERTZ**  
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

Current and former American intelligence officials jettisoned objectivity as part of leftist political policies implemented under then-President Obama, waging political warfare against then-candidate Donald Trump in the run-up to the 2016 election, according to a book by a former CIA agent detailing what he says was a clear politicization of the intelligence agency's mission.

John Gentry, a veteran of both executive branch and congressional intelligence agencies and now an adjunct professor at Georgetown University, also warns that the politicization of the intelligence community, particularly the CIA, created a problem that still threatens American security.

Created to be a strictly neutral

service for both Republican and Democratic administrations, the politicization within the CIA first became an issue during the 1990s when CIA analyst Robert Gates ordered analysts to skew reports in favor of political narratives of elected officials, Mr. Gentry states in his book, "Neutering the CIA: Why U.S. Intelligence Versus Trump Has Long-Term Consequences."

But what happened since 2016 has been far more serious and damaging to the agency's role and mission, writes Mr. Gentry, including two years as a senior analyst on the staff of the National Intelligence Officer for Warning, who now teaches Missouri State University's School of Defense and Strategic Studies. The author

» see **AGENDA** | A4



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**IT'S A WRAP:** President Biden isn't holding the traditional end-of-year presidential conference. Instead, Mr. Biden is going on talk shows where the celebrity hosts won't ask him tough questions.

## WHITE HOUSE

### Ditch the press: Biden takes leisurely queries on talk shows

Skips year-end gaggle like Trump

By **JEFF MORDOCK**  
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

President Biden came into office promising to restore relations with journalists after his predecessor's four combative years, but Mr. Biden is again skipping the traditional end-of-year presidential press conference in favor of softball interviews with celebrities.

The year-end press conference was a staple of past presidents, who viewed it for decades as an opportunity to tout their accomplishments to the American people. Former President Donald Trump was the first to abandon the practice, a snub that Mr. Biden has continued.

Mr. Biden has been less accessible to the press during his three years in office than any other modern president, according to

data from the American Presidency Project at the University of California, Santa Barbara.

For Mr. Biden, a year-end press conference could be an opportunity to reverse his recent rut. He's underwater in a slew of job approval polls, and other surveys show him trailing potential 2024 challengers — including Mr. Trump, the GOP front-runner — in key swing states.

Questions persist about his age and competence. Even Democrats wonder openly if he should be their candidate in 2024, and House Republicans are looking to impeach him.

"This is a missed opportunity to demonstrate that he's mentally alert and with it, which I think he is," said Robert Rowland, who teaches presidential rhetoric

» see **BIDEN** | A4

## POLITICS

Retirements in House complicate Democrats' bid for majority. **A3**

## NATION

Flu, COVID infections rising, expected to worsen in new year. **A6**

## WORLD

Egypt floats ambitious proposal to end war in Middle East. **A8**



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Open AI CEO Sam Altman was ousted by the company earlier this year. The board accused him of not being candid and the board also expressed worry about the speed of advance. Mr. Altman was back about two weeks later and the board was replaced.

## ARTIFICIAL

From page A1

ChatGPT, swooped in with its first public prototype in November 2022.

Between September 2022 and August 2023, it saw a 1.8 billion-visit gain in traffic, according to Writerbuddy.ai.

The company has pressed forward at a frantic pace under CEO Sam Altman's leadership. Mr. Altman helped launch OpenAI in 2015 alongside tech mogul Elon Musk.

By 2023, Mr. Altman had become the face of generative AI, earning meetings with President Biden and White House staffers crafting an AI executive order, and time with senators seeking his input on new legislation.

Turmoil struck in November when OpenAI's board, worried about the chaotic speed of advance and accusing him of not being candid, ousted Mr. Altman.

Little more than two weeks later, he was back and the board of directors was replaced. Microsoft and the AI startup's investors reportedly applied pressure on OpenAI and engineered Mr. Altman's return.

The chaos atop OpenAI has caused anxiety for AI fanatics from Silicon Valley to Washington, particularly those who have heeded the AI company's warnings. OpenAI, after all, said in July it was assembling a team dedicated to preventing the technology from going rogue and ending humanity.

Now OpenAI's emissaries are hard at work looking to restore people's and governments' confidence in their work.

Speaking at the GovAI Summit in December, OpenAI's Lane Dilg told an audience littered with government officials that her team had a "wild ride" in November but accomplished a swift resolution that demonstrated OpenAI's resilience.

"We are very eager to partner with you as part of our iterative deployment process, both to ensure that the work we are doing across our safety, superalignment, and preparedness teams is working together with the federal government to ensure that we are preparing safe, secure, and trustworthy AI for the years and decades to come," Ms. Dilg said at the conference in northern Virginia.

After ChatGPT went live, Microsoft infused ChatGPT into its products. Bing

Chat is powered by ChatGPT and Microsoft is spending billions of dollars to advance OpenAI's tech.

And Google, under mounting pressure to catch up to competitors, finally demoted its AI model, Gemini, earlier this month.

Mr. Lemoine said he views Gemini as an upgraded version of the LaMDA system he toyed with in 2022 and believes felt emotions.

He said the new Google AI system also appears sentient but it understands it is an AI tool and not a human. He said that's a positive development.

AI industry players are increasingly finding themselves butting up against the government, as Nvidia, the company whose technology and software are powering much of the AI revolution, found out this year.

It joined the trillion-dollar market capitalization club in May with the adoption of its chips for a range of AI

technology from robotics to medical imaging. The company posted the best-performing stock on the S&P 500's index through 2023's first three quarters, according to a Motley Fool analysis.

But word spread in October that the Commerce Department's new export restrictions could affect Nvidia's shipments to China next year. The company's stock plummeted 5% as it faced potentially having to cancel several billions of dollars in sales.

The governmental thorn in Nvidia's side is Commerce Secretary Gina Raimondo.

Speaking in December at the Reagan National Defense Forum in California, Ms. Raimondo said she had a message to the "CEOs of chip companies in this audience who are a little cranky with me."

She said national security matters more than revenue, and the U.S.

## THE TOP AI DOGS

OpenAI's ChatGPT program dominated the AI industry last year, as both the most popular and the fastest-growing AI tool.

| Top AI tools |                 |               |                   |
|--------------|-----------------|---------------|-------------------|
| Name         | Category        | Total visits* | Share of industry |
| ChatGPT      | Chatbot         | 14.6 billion  | 60.17%            |
| Character.AI | Chatbot         | 3.8 billion   | 15.77%            |
| Quillbot     | Writing         | 1.1 billion   | 4.68%             |
| Midjourney   | Image generator | 500.4 million | 2.06%             |
| Hugging Face | Data science    | 316.6 million | 1.31%             |

\* September 2022-August 2023

| Fastest-growing AI tools |              |                   |
|--------------------------|--------------|-------------------|
| Name                     | Category     | Traffic increase* |
| ChatGPT                  | Chatbot      | 1.76 billion      |
| Character.ai             | Chatbot      | 463 million       |
| Bard                     | Chatbot      | 68 million        |
| JanitorAI                | Conversation | 49 million        |
| Perplexity               | Education    | 25 million        |

\* From September 2022-August 2023  
SOURCE: Writerbuddy THE WASHINGTON TIMES

Part One: AI arrives in the mainstream

Part Two: Tech industry goes all-in

Part Three: AI goes to the movies

Part Four: Far from dystopia, countless lives saved

intelligent devices.

"The possibilities of what comes next are endless, we need to pick," said Mr. Lemoine, the former Google software engineer. "We need to pick which fairytale we want to try to build because we probably can. We want to build 'Alice in Wonderland'? We can right now, that's just it. But we can"

\*Guy Taylor contributed to this article, which is based in part on wire service reports.

## Former Google engineer warns of doomsday scenarios involving AI

By RYAN LOVELACE  
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

The software engineer fired by Google after alleging its artificial intelligence project might be alive has a new primary concern: AI may start a war and could be used for assassinations. Blake Lemoine experimented with Google's AI systems in 2022 and concluded that its LaMDA system was "sentient" or capable of having feelings. Google disputed his assertions and ultimately ousted him from the company. Mr. Lemoine is working on a new AI project now and told The Washington Times he is terrified that the tools other AI makers are creating will be used wrongfully in warfare. He said the emerging technology can reduce the number of people who will die and limit collateral damage but it will also pose new dangers.

"Using the AI to solve political problems by sending a bullet into the opposition will become really seductive, especially if it's accurate," Mr. Lemoine said. "If you can kill one revolutionary thought leader and prevent a civil war while your hands are clean, you

prevented a war. But that leads to 'Minority Report' and we don't want to live in that world."

He was referencing the Philip K. Dick novella "Minority Report," where police use technology to solve crimes before they happen. The story was adapted into a sci-fi film starring Tom Cruise in 2002.

Mr. Lemoine sees the race for AI tools as akin to nuclear weapons. Artificial intelligence enables machines to accomplish tasks through advanced computing and statistical analysis previously only possible for humans.

The race to amass the tools will be different and Mr. Lemoine expects people will much more easily get their hands on the powerful tech. He said the bottleneck evident for well-guarded nuclear weapons and the scarce resources of plutonium and uranium are constraints that do not exist for open-source software models that do not depend upon rare natural resources.

Mr. Lemoine said his decision to go public with concerns that Google's AI was sentient in the fall of 2022 caused a delay in its AI product launch, which the company is still working to overcome.

In December, Google unveiled Gemini, a new AI model. Mr. Lemoine said Gemini looks to be an upgraded version of the LaMDA system he previously probed.

One major difference is that Gemini knows it is not human, he said.

"It knows it's an AI. It still talks about its feelings, it talks about being excited, it talks about how it's glad to see you again and if you're mean to it, it gets angry and says, 'Hey, stop that. That's mean,'" he said. "But it can't be fooled into thinking it's human anymore. And that's a good thing. It's not human."

His new project is MIMIO.ai where he oversees the technology and AI for the company building a "Personality Engine" to let people create digital personas.

It is not intended to work as a digital twin of a person but as a digital extension of a person capable of doing things on the person's behalf. The AI will be designed to complete tasks and interact with humans as if it were the human itself.

"You might be an elderly person who wants to leave a memorial for your children," Mr. Lemoine said, "so you teach an AI all about you so that it can

talk in your place when you're gone."

A few other AI makers are competing to build similar products but Mr. Lemoine is confident MIMIO.ai's technology is better. He said China already has similar tools and MIMIO.ai intends to stay out of the Chinese market.

His experience at Google testing and probing its AI systems under development shaped his understanding of AI tools' limitless potential and he thinks his work affected Google too.

"I think that there are a handful of developers at Google who implemented things a different way than they otherwise would have because they listened to me," he said. "I don't think they necessarily share all of my convictions or all of my opinions, but when they had a choice of implementing it one way or another, and that both were equally as hard, I think they chose the more compassionate one as a tiebreaker. And I appreciate that."

He praised Google and said he hopes his interpretation of their actions is correct. "If that's just a story I'm telling myself, then it's a happy nighttime story," he said.

Google did not respond to a request for comment.

## THREAT

From page A1

Supreme Court, with three justices appointed by Mr. Trump, as bucking precedent and acting on ideology.

"Judges are not reaching principled decisions, and, frankly, there is some validity in that — at least, in my view, at the Supreme Court level," Mr. Minberg said. "These judges, some people believe, are effectively politicians."

"I have to say that Trump's attitude towards the courts doesn't help, and probably hurts," he added.

In 2017, Mr. Trump lashed out at U.S. District Judge James Robart, who had ruled against his administration's first travel ban, by calling him a "so-called judge." Judge Robart subsequently received thousands of threatening messages, according to reports.

One of the most widely covered judicial threats occurred last year: Nicholas John Roske is accused of traveling from California with plans

to assassinate Supreme Court Justice Brett M. Kavanaugh. Mr. Roske called authorities on himself while he was in front of the justice's home in Chevy Chase, Maryland.

Mr. Roske, who is in federal custody, does not yet have a trial date. He told investigators he was motivated by the justice's position on abortion and guns in upcoming rulings.

Justice Kavanaugh later sided in those cases with the conservative majority — overturning Roe v. Wade, which had established a national right to abortion, and striking down a New York gun control law in a historic Second Amendment ruling.

Republicans have blamed Democrats — like Sen. Charles E. Schumer of New York — for rhetoric against Justice Kavanaugh in sparking the hate.

Outside the Supreme Court in 2020, Mr. Schumer rallied pro-choice supporters over a different abortion case, saying "I want to tell you, [Justice Neil M.] Gorsuch, I want to tell you, Kavanaugh — you have released the whirlwind, and

you will pay the price. You won't know what hit you, if you go forward with these awful decisions."

Following the reversal of Roe, pro-choice activists have protested outside the homes of conservative justices. Despite concerns from neighbors, police have largely let the protests proceed.

"Democrats lost control of the federal judiciary," said Mike Davis, president of the Article III Project. "Now Democrats are supporting illegal protests at Supreme Court justices' homes."

He said Mr. Trump is being charged over inciting the Jan. 6, 2021, U.S. Capitol attack, but under that same standard, "Did Chuck Schumer incite an assassination attempt?"

Carrie Severino, president of the Judicial Crisis Network, said judges aren't political — it's the Democrats and their financial backing that is making the court a target for bullying.

"The rise in threats against judges is no surprise when we have seen such a concerted attack on the judiciary from left-wing dark money groups and Senate

Democrats, whose goal is to delegitimize an originalist court," she said.

"What's going on here is a classic case of projection. The Court's critics are using name-calling to bully them into ruling in favor of their liberal agenda items rather than simply following the law. There's politicization going on all right, but it's not the judges who are being political," Ms. Severino said.

The Justice Department does not keep data on the number of prosecutions made against federal judges, noting it tracks charges under statutes and not by victim class.

In November, the department announced it was prosecuting two individuals who threatened federal judges in Texas. One of them — Alice Marie Pence of Port Charlotte, Florida — is charged with making a phone call and threatening to kill Judge Matthew Kacsmaryk, according to the Office of the U.S. Attorney for the Northern District of Texas.

She also is charged with trying to impede or intimidate the judge. If

convicted, she could face 15 years in prison. Ms. Pence is accused of calling the chambers of Judge Kacsmaryk, a Trump appointee who ruled that the Food and Drug Administration should not have approved the abortion pill.

Not all threats against judges have been based on politics.

U.S. District Judge Esther Salas lost her son in 2020, when a gunman opened fire at their home in New Jersey. The gunman also had killed a California lawyer, according to reports. The suspect had a list of other targets, authorities said.

In 2013, U.S. District Judge Timothy Corrigan had a defendant he ruled against open fire at in his home, barely missing his head.

State judges also have often been targets.

In October, Circuit Court Judge Andrew Wilkinson of Washington County, Maryland, was shot and killed in his driveway by a man who had lost custody of his children in divorce proceedings before the judge.

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