

DOD moves to address climate change

By COREY DICKSTEIN
Stars and Stripes

Troops, equipment and installations across the Defense Department must become more resilient to extreme weather conditions that will grow harsher in the coming years amid a changing climate likely to stoke global security and stability problems, a top Pentagon official said Friday.

The Defense Department has been mandated to include climate change adaptation into its planning for small units to top-line strategic efforts to ensure the United States retains its military prowess even under the most difficult conditions, said Richard Kidd, the deputy assistant secretary of defense for environment and energy resilience. He spoke Friday with the Washington-based Defense Writers Group, one day after the Pentagon released its new 32-page strategy to adapt to changing climate.

"We're going to adapt our training, we're going to adapt our plans, policies and procedures. We're going to pivot the entire department towards living ... and operating in a reality altered by climate change," Kidd said, noting the world was growing not only hotter but more volatile as harsher climate leads to problems including food and water scarcity in some parts of the world. "What climate change does is it makes that insecurity, instability more pronounced... I think that insecurity and instability, while they have been in the world for a long time to this point, it's going to become more pronounced in the years ahead."

The Pentagon cannot ignore the problem,

Kidd said. Officials have fingered climate change as a major problem facing the military in recent years and they have blamed it, in part, for a huge uptick in homeland military operations, especially for the National Guard. In recent years, more troops have spent more time fighting larger and longer-burning wildfires in the western United States and others have been called to respond to increasingly potent hurricanes and flooding in the east. Some of those storms accounted for billions of dollars of damage suffered at coastal military installations in recent years, including major devastation in a pair of 2018 hurricanes at key posts such as Tyn dall Air Force Base, Fla., and the Marines' Camp Lejeune, N.C.

Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin labeled climate change an "existential threat" to the nation's national security in a statement accompanying the release Thursday of DOD's Climate Adaptation Plan.

"The Department of Defense must act swiftly and boldly to take on this challenge and prepare for damage that cannot be avoided," Austin said in the statement. "Every day, our forces contend with the grave and growing consequences of climate change, from hurricanes and wildfires that inflict costly harm on U.S. installations and constrain our ability to train and operate, to dangerous heat, drought, and floods that can trigger crises and instability around the world."

The Pentagon plan was one of 23 climate change-focused plans released by federal agencies on Thursday. About one week after President Joe Biden took office, he directed the government's largest agencies to design

new plans to adapt their operations to changing climate and find ways to mitigate the impacts the U.S. federal government has on the changing climate.

While Thursday's plan focuses on how the department can continue functioning despite the near-term, unavoidable consequences of climate change, the Pentagon's crucial plans to reduce its own longer-term impact on climate change are forthcoming, Kidd said. The Defense Department expects to release a report later this year detailing its plans to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions, he said.

Greenhouse gases include a number of gases that trap heat in the atmosphere and contribute to climate change, according to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Carbon dioxide, which is emitted from burning fossil fuels among other human activities, accounts for about 80% of human-caused greenhouse gas emissions, according to the EPA.

The Defense Department is the single largest institutional consumer of fossil fuels in the world and emits more greenhouse gas than two-thirds of all the nations on Earth, according to the Pentagon. Kidd said the Pentagon has worked for 10 years to reduce its reliance on carbon-emitting fuels, but it has a lot of improvement still to achieve.

"I think the science is very clear right — we have to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions to zero, and we have to do it before 2050 if we want to avoid the most pronounced effects of climate change," Kidd said. "All agencies in the federal government are expected to contribute to that objective ... so, we're going to be a part of that effort."

Damaged US submarine in port following collision

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — A U.S. Navy nuclear-powered submarine that was damaged in a collision with an unknown underwater object in the South China Sea last weekend has arrived in port at Guam, the Navy said Friday.

No further details about the circumstances of the collision or the extent of damage to the USS Connecticut were available, but China's Foreign Ministry expressed "serious concern" about what happened.

"As the party involved, the U.S. should clarify

in detail the situation of the accident, including the location, the intention of the sailing, details of the accident, such as what exactly it collided with, whether it caused a nuclear leak, and whether it damaged the local marine environment," Foreign Ministry spokesperson Zhao Lijian told reporters Friday.

When it disclosed the Oct. 2 accident on Thursday, U.S. Pacific Fleet said that there had been no damage to the sub's nuclear propulsion system and that it had not yet determined what underwater object had been

struck. It did not say where the collision happened, but other officials said it was in the South China Sea.

China claims total sovereignty over the South China Sea, a stance that is not accepted by the United States and its allies.

The U.S. sub's underwater collision in the South China Sea was unusual, and the Navy said it is under investigation. About 11 crew members sustained injuries that the Navy said ranged from moderate to minor, including scrapes and bruises.

Taliban refuse to work with US on ISIS

Associated Press

ISLAMABAD — The Taliban on Saturday ruled out cooperation with the United States to contain extremist groups in Afghanistan, staking out an uncompromising position on a key issue ahead of the first direct talks between the former foes since America withdrew from the country in August.

Senior Taliban officials and U.S. representatives were to meet Saturday and Sunday in

Doha, the capital of Qatar. Officials from both sides have said issues include reining in extremist groups and the evacuation of foreign citizens and Afghans from the country. The Taliban have signaled flexibility on evacuations.

However, Taliban political spokesman Suhail Shaheen told The Associated Press there would be no cooperation with Washington on containing the increasingly active Islamic

State in Afghanistan. ISIS has taken responsibility for a number of recent attacks, including a suicide bombing Friday that killed 46 minority Shiite Muslims and wounded dozens as they prayed in a mosque in the northern city of Kunduz.

“We are able to tackle Daesh independently,” Shaheen said, when asked whether the Taliban would work with the U.S. to contain the Islamic State affiliate. He used an Arabic acro-

nym for ISIS.

ISIS has carried out relentless assaults on the country’s Shiites since emerging in eastern Afghanistan in 2014. It is also seen as the terror group that poses the greatest threat to the United States for its potential to stage attacks on American targets.

The weekend meetings in Doha are the first since U.S. forces withdrew from Afghanistan in late August.

US vaccinations up due to mandates, boosters

Associated Press

The number of Americans getting COVID-19 vaccines has steadily increased to a three-month high as seniors and people with medical conditions seek boosters, and government and employer mandates push more workers to take their first doses.

Demand is expected to spike in a few weeks if regulators authorize the Pfizer vaccine for elementary school children, and some states are reopening mass vaccination clinics in anticipation.

In Missouri, a mass vaccination site at a former Toys R Us store is set to open Monday. Virginia plans to roll out nine large vaccination centers over the next few weeks,

including one at the Richmond International Raceway.

Colorado opened four mass vaccination sites in mid-September, largely to deal with employer mandates, and officials saw a 38% increase in vaccinations statewide during the first week.

The total number of doses being administered in the U.S. is climbing toward an average of 1 million per day, almost double the level from mid-July — but still far below last spring’s. The increase is mainly due to boosters, with nearly 10% of the nation’s over-65 population already getting third shots, but there are signs of increased demand from other groups as well.

On Thursday, 1.1 million doses were given, including just over 306,000 to newly vaccinated people, said Dr. Cyrus Shahpar, the White House COVID-19 data director.

Organizers of the effort to reach the roughly 67 million unvaccinated American adults say the rise in demand can be traced to approval of the Pfizer booster, mandates that have forced employees to choose between the shot and their jobs and sobering statistics that show nearly all COVID-19 deaths are among the unvaccinated.

“We’re seeing people who need the shot to keep a job,” said Dr. Ricardo Gonzalez-Fisher, who runs a mobile vaccine clinic mostly for Latinos in Colorado.

French envoy to Australia: Sub deal deceitful, risky

Associated Press

PARIS — France’s ambassador to Australia says Australian officials lied to his face and raised the risk of confrontation in Asia by crafting a secret submarine deal with the United States and Britain that undermined trust in democratic alliances.

France is determined to protect its interests in the Indo-Pacific region, and to put “muscle” into Europe’s geopolitical strategy toward an increasingly assertive China, Ambassador Jean-Pierre Thebault said Friday. He spoke in an interview with The Associated Press before heading back to his post in Canberra.

“The way you treat your allies does reso-

nate in the region,” Thebault said in a gilded chamber inside the French Foreign Ministry, located on the banks of the Seine River in Paris. “The logic of confrontation is not a good one for the peace and stability of the region. We think that we should act otherwise.”

The French government recalled Thebault to Paris last month along with the French ambassador to the U.S. The unprecedented diplomatic move reflected the depth of France’s anger at an agreement for Australia to obtain a fleet of eight nuclear-powered submarines built with U.S. technology.

The Indo-Pacific deal, concealed from French officials, scuppered a previous \$66 billion contract for Australia to buy 12 con-

ventional diesel-electric submarines from a French manufacturer.

“I don’t understand how it was possible to commit such a lie. I don’t understand how people, several of whom I know, were capable of lying to me ... face to face for 18 months,” Thebault said of the Australian officials he worked with.

The ambassador noted that France makes nuclear-powered submarines, and he said Australia refused them when their deal was first struck in 2016, opting for diesel-powered versions instead.

“You could at least have ... had a frank and honest conversation, which never happened,” he said.

Biden won't block papers for Jan. 6 probe

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The White House says that President Joe Biden will not block the handover of documents sought by a House committee investigating the Jan. 6 insurrection at the U.S. Capitol, setting up a showdown with former President Donald Trump, who wants to shield those White House records from investigators.

The Friday letter from White House counsel Dana Remus to the Archivist of the United States comes at the start of a potentially lengthy legal battle over the investigation. Trump, who told his supporters to “fight like hell” the morning of the insurrection and has defended the rioters who beat police and broke into the Capitol, is trying to block Congress from learning more. Biden has so far sided with House Democrats, who have asked for thousands of pages of documents and subpoenaed witnesses connected to Trump.

The House committee investigating the insurrection, which formed over the summer, now has the momentous task of sorting through the details and obtaining documents and testimony from witnesses who may or may not be cooperative. And the jockeying between the two administrations, Congress and the witnesses is certain to delay the investigation and set the stage for messy litigation that could stretch well into 2022.

In a separate development, a lawyer for Steve Bannon said the former White House aide won't comply with the House committee's investigation because Trump is asserting executive privilege. Bannon is the only one of the top Trump aides subpoenaed on Sept. 23 who was not working for the Trump administration on Jan. 6.

Two other aides, former White House Chief of Staff Mark Meadows and former Pentagon aide Kash Patel, are “engaging”

with the committee, lawmakers said in a statement.

Trump responded with his own letter to the National Archives formally asserting privilege over nearly 50 documents.

Referring to the Presidential Records Act, Trump wrote, “I hereby make a protective assertion of constitutionally based privilege with respect to all additional records.” He said if the committee seeks other information he considers privileged information, “I will take all necessary and appropriate steps to defend the Office of the Presidency.”

The investigation sets up a unique clash, pitting the current administration against its predecessor. Since Biden now holds the office of the presidency, he will make the call on some of Trump's privilege claims. And while Biden has accommodated the first requests from Congress, the White House has said it will review new claims on a “case by case basis.”

McConnell says he won't help raise debt limit again

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell said Friday he would not again help Democrats extend the government's borrowing authority, raising fresh doubts about how Congress will avert a federal default when a temporary patch expires in December.

McConnell issued his warning in a letter to President Joe Biden a day after the Senate approved a \$480 billion boost in the federal debt limit, enough to last about two months. In an eleventh-hour turnabout, the Kentucky Republican was among 11 GOP senators who provided decisive support Thursday for a procedural move that opened the door for subsequent Senate passage of that measure with only Democratic support.

Some GOP senators openly criticized their leaders not holding out longer against Democrats' efforts to extend the debt limit, which they said would have sharpened their message that a still-developing multibil-

lion-dollar package of Biden's top domestic priorities is wasteful and damaging to the economy.

McConnell said Friday that he made his decision to refuse future help because of his opposition to the huge domestic bill and because of a “bizarre spectacle” on the Senate floor by Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y. After the bill passed, Schumer criticized Republicans for trying to push the country over “the cliff's edge” by opposing the debt limit extension.

“In light of Senator Schumer's hysterics and my grave concerns about the ways that another vast, reckless, partisan spending bill would hurt Americans and help China, I will not be a party to any future effort to mitigate the consequences of Democratic mismanagement,” McConnell wrote.

It remains unclear how Democrats would push new legislation further extending federal borrowing authority come December without GOP backing.

California pipeline likely damaged long before spill

Associated Press

HUNTINGTON BEACH, Calif. — An underwater oil pipeline off the Southern California coast was likely damaged by a ship's anchor several months to a year before it ruptured and sent oil spewing into the ocean and then onto some of the area's best-known beaches, investigators said Friday.

Coast Guard Capt. Jason Neubauer, chief of the office of investigations and analysis, said after the first strike it's possible other ships' anchors subsequently struck the steel pipe that brings oil to shore from three platforms out at sea. Investigators previously said a large section of the pipe was bowed after being struck and dragged along the seabed.

It remains unknown when the slender, 13-inch crack began leaking oil, and investigators will pour over a year of data on ship movements near the area of the break. No ships have been identified as suspects at this point.

“We're going to be looking at

every vessel movement over that pipeline, and every close encroachment from the anchorages for the entire course of the year,” Neubauer said.

The accident scene is outside the Long Beach-Los Angeles port complex that is the largest in the country and handles some 4,000 vessels a year. Many of them are from overseas and that could complicate the process of boarding ships of interest in the investigation to get information.

It now appears many factors played a role in the pipe's failure — possible repeated anchor strikes, stresses from being dragged along the seafloor and the corrosive forces of seawater.

Neubauer said investigators have narrowed their search to large cargo vessels that would be powerful enough to move a 4,000-foot section of pipeline 105 feet across the ocean floor. He also said investigators have zeroed in on a windy storm Jan. 24-25 that could have caused problems for ships trying to anchor in the vicinity of the twin ports.

Court resumes Texas ban on abortions

Associated Press

AUSTIN, Texas — A federal appeals court Friday night quickly allowed Texas to resume banning most abortions, just one day after clinics began racing to serve patients again for the first time since early September.

A one-page order by the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals reinstated the nation's strictest abortion law, which bans abortions once cardiac activity is detected, usually around six weeks. It makes no exceptions in cases of rape or incest.

"Patients are being thrown back into a state of chaos and fear," said Nancy Northup, president of the Center for Reproductive Rights, which represents several Texas clinics that had briefly resumed normal

abortion services.

She called on the U.S. Supreme Court to "step in and stop this madness."

Clinics had braced for the New Orleans-based appeals court to act fast after U.S. District Judge Robert Pitman, an appointee of President Barack Obama, on Wednesday suspended the Texas law that he called an "offensive deprivation" of the constitutional right to an abortion. Knowing that order might not stand long, a handful of Texas clinics immediately started performing abortions again beyond six weeks, and booked new appointments for this weekend.

But barely 48 hours passed before the appeals court accepted Texas' request to set aside Pitman's ruling — at least for now — pending further arguments. It gave the Bi-

den administration, which had brought the lawsuit, until Tuesday to respond.

"Great news tonight," Republican Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton tweeted. "I will fight federal overreach at every turn."

Texas had roughly two dozen abortion clinics before the law took effect Sept. 1. During the brief period the law was on hold, many Texas physicians remained unwilling to perform abortions, fearful that doing so could still leave them in legal jeopardy.

It is unclear how many abortions Texas clinics performed in the short time the law was put on hold. On Thursday, at least six abortions providers had resumed normal services or were gearing up to do so, according to the Center for Reproductive Rights.

Marathon bomber faces death penalty revival

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Biden administration will try to persuade the Supreme Court this week to reinstate the death penalty for convicted Boston Marathon bomber Dzhokhar Tsarnaev by arguing that a jury had no need to examine evidence that the government itself relied on at an earlier phase of the case.

Tsarnaev's guilt in the deaths of three people in the bombing near the finish line of the marathon in 2013 is not at issue in the case the justices will hear Wednesday — just whether he should be sentenced to life in prison, or death.

Nor is the court likely to ponder the administration's aggressive pursuit of a capital sentence for Tsarnaev even as it has halted federal executions and President Joe Biden has called for an end to the federal death penalty.

Instead, the main focus will be on evidence that Tsarnaev's lawyers wanted the jury to hear that supported their argument that his older brother, Tamerlan, was the mastermind of the attack and that the impressionable younger brother was somehow less responsible. The evidence implicated Tamerlan Tsarnaev in a triple killing in the Boston suburb of Waltham on the 10th

anniversary of the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks.

The federal appeals court in Boston ruled last year that the trial judge made a mistake in excluding the evidence and threw out Tsarnaev's death sentence. There's a second issue in the case: whether the trial judge did enough to question jurors about their exposure to extensive news coverage of the bombing.

The Trump administration, which carried out 13 executions in its last six months, quickly appealed. When the new administration didn't indicate any change of view, the court agreed to review the case.

Impact of forest thinning on fires creates division

Associated Press

SACRAMENTO, Calif. — Firefighters and numerous studies credit intensive forest thinning projects with helping save communities like those recently threatened near Lake Tahoe in California and Nevada, but dissent from some environmental advocacy groups is roiling the scientific community.

States in the U.S. West and the federal government each year thin thousands of acres of dense timber and carve broad swaths through the forest near remote communities, all designed to slow the spread of massive wildfires.

The projects aim to return overgrown forests to the way they were more than a century ago, when lower-intensity blazes cleared the

underbrush regularly and before land managers began reflexively extinguishing every wildfire as soon as possible.

Such so-called fuel reduction efforts also include using fire to fight fire, with fires deliberately set in the cooler, wetter months to burn out dangerous fuels. Forest managers credit such burns with helping protect the Giant Forest in Sequoia National Park. The state of California eased some regulations to increase the use of that tactic.

While most scientific studies find such forest management is a valuable tool, environmental advocates say data from recent gigantic wildfires support their long-running assertion that efforts to slow wildfires have instead accelerated their spread.

The debate came to a head over this year's giant Bootleg Fire in southern Oregon.

"Not only did tens of thousands of acres of recent thinning, fuel breaks, and other forest management fail to stop or slow the fire's rapid spread, but ... the fire often moved fastest through such areas," Los Padres Forest-Watch, a California-based nonprofit, said in an analysis, joined by the John Muir Project and Wild Heritage advocacy groups.

James Johnston, a researcher with Oregon State University's College of Forestry, called the groups' conclusions "pretty misleading," "irresponsible" and "self-contradicting."

"Claims that modern fuel-reduction thinning makes fire worse are not credible," Johnston said.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

'Lizard King' charged with trafficking turtles

FL MIAMI — A convicted wildlife smuggler who still operates as a leading buyer and seller of reptiles has been accused by federal prosecutors of scheming to smuggle illegally harvested Florida turtles to China, Japan and other places.

Michael Van Nostrand and his company, Strictly Reptiles Inc. of Davie, Fla., established a network of "collectors" who searched the Florida wilds for certain fresh-water turtle specimens, including the three-stripe mud turtle, the U.S. Attorney's Office said in a news release.

Van Nostrand, 54, is charged with conspiring with others to illegally traffic wildlife and faces up to five years in prison and a fine of at least \$250,000 if convicted. His company faces a fine of at least \$500,000.

Van Nostrand gained notoriety through "The Lizard King," a 2008 bestseller that described a U.S. Fish and Wildlife agent's yearslong investigation of his business. He was ultimately sentenced to eight months in prison in 1998 for buying smuggled Argentine boas, tegu lizards and other protected wildlife, and to pay \$250,000 to the World Wildlife Fund.

Little Rock 9 member marks 80th birthday

AR LITTLE ROCK — Elizabeth Eckford, one of the nine Black students who first integrated Little Rock's Central High School in 1957, celebrated her 80th birthday at the school with the help of about a dozen students.

The students, who are members of the Civil Rights Memory Project, lined the sidewalk in front of the high school, holding handwritten signs.

A teacher sang "Amazing Grace," and the students sang "Happy Birthday" to Eckford. Students and other guests took turns taking pictures with her and telling her stories.

"It was the best birthday I had in a long, long time," Eckford said.

Woman sentenced for drowning puppy in pond

NJ WEST MILFORD — A woman who drowned a 10-week-old puppy that was found submerged and in a weighted cage in a northern New Jersey pond two years ago has been sentenced to six months in jail.

Tonya Fea, 49, of Boonton, must also serve five years of probation under the sentence, according to the Passaic County Prosecutor's Office. She had pleaded guilty in August to animal cruelty and has been barred from owning dogs.

Fea admitted submerging the female golden retriever puppy in April 2019 at Greenwood Pond in West Milford. Authorities have said Fea initially claimed the puppy was dead before she submerged it, but eventually admitted it died due to her actions.

Largest class in 7 years reports for training

KY FRANKFORT — Members of the largest academy class in seven years have reported for training to join the Kentucky State Po-

lice, Gov. Andy Beshear said. There are 100 cadets in the class.

KSP Commissioner Phillip Burnett Jr. said the size of the latest cadet class is the result of support the agency received from Beshear's administration and the legislature. The governor has supported efforts to expand KSP's recruitment efforts.

Woman held in church fire attended services

AL MONTGOMERY — A woman charged with setting fire to a church attended by Gov. Kay Ivey showed up at services before the blaze, raising suspicions with odd actions and a comment about the "rich white men" who had led the congregation, federal court documents show.

About two weeks before fires were discovered at First Baptist Church of Montgomery on Sept. 30, a custodian and security officer saw a woman with long hair leave the church and return a few hours later with short hair, according to a sworn statement by a federal investigator. She asked about the church's cameras, requested a tour and commented on past ministers being "rich white men."

The same woman showed up again during a night service just hours before fires that investigators say were intentionally set caused \$25,000 in damage in the sanctuary and an office area.

Zebras escape pumpkin farm, snarling traffic

IL PINGREE GROVE) — Two zebras that escaped from a suburban Chicago pumpkin farm had travelers on

a state highway doing double takes as the exotic animals hit the road during their brief taste of freedom.

The young male and female zebras escaped from a pen inside an indoor zoo at Goebbert's Pumpkin Patch and Apple Orchard in Pingree Grove. They crossed Route 47 several times and wandered through farm fields in the Chicago suburb.

Illinois State Police were called due to the ensuring chase being near Interstate 90, The Daily Herald reported. Other police agencies also joined the pursuit of the striped escapees.

After about two hours, workers with the pumpkin patch and the zoo tracked down the animals on all-terrain vehicles and captured both of them. The zebras, which are supplied to the pumpkin patch by another business, were not injured during the pursuit.

Advocacy group seeks interpreter services

NM SANTA FE — An advocacy group for disadvantaged communities in New Mexico says more language translation and interpreter services are needed for people who don't speak Spanish or English.

The Center on Law and Poverty asked a state District Court judge to intervene and order more robust services in languages such as Vietnamese, Chinese, Dari, Arabic, Swahili, Kinyarwanda and Dine. The group warns that some foreign language speakers are likely to be missing crucial health and nutritional support that they are eligible to receive.

— From Associated Press



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Webb has 10 strikeouts to lead Giants

Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO — Logan Webb pumped his fists as he set down a star-studded Dodgers lineup all game long, then raised his pitching hand in appreciation after a masterful postseason debut.

Webb struck out 10 while working into the eighth inning, Buster Posey hit a two-run homer that held up, and the 107-win San Francisco Giants blanked defending World Series champion Los Angeles 4-0 on Friday night in the opener of their NL Division Series.

Those two Giants standouts summed up this year perfectly for the NL West champs: A brilliant performance by the young right-hander supported by a veteran catcher who has shined on this big October stage so many times before.

Webb credited Posey's presence behind the plate in helping him excel.

"Just having him back there, honestly," Webb said. "He'll calm me down."

Kris Bryant and Brandon Crawford also homered to back a combined five-hitter by Webb and a pair of relievers.

Everybody knows this matchup between century-old rivals takes this best-of-five playoff series to another level. They finished with baseball's two best records, the division coming down to the final day as the Dodgers wound up one game back with 106 wins, ending their run of eight consecutive West crowns.

That meant Los Angeles had to get by the Cardinals in the wild-card game Wednesday night then fly straight to the Bay Area, where a loud crowd packed Oracle Park.

"The energy today was awesome," Webb said.

The Dodgers will try to even the series when they send 20-game winner Julio Urías to the mound for Game 2 on Saturday night opposite San Francisco All-Star right-hander Kevin Gausman.

Webb waved his pitching hand walking off to a rousing ovation in the eighth after a two-out single by Mookie Betts. He didn't walk a batter while outpitching Los Angeles ace Walker Buehler.

"He was out there pretending like it was a game in the backyard," Bryant said.

Webb joined just two other pitchers to ever win a postseason start with 10 or more strikeouts, no walks and no runs — Jake Arrieta for the Cubs on Oct. 7, 2015, against the Pirates and the Phillies' Cliff Lee on Oct. 18, 2009, against the Dodgers.

Tyler Rogers relieved for the final out in the eighth and rookie Camilo Doval calmly worked the ninth.

Giants manager Gabe Kapler, making his own playoff debut on the dugout's top step, had absolute confidence the 24-year-old Webb would shine in the biggest start of his life. Just last Sunday, Webb pitched his team past the Padres in the regular-season finale as San Francisco clinched the club's first division title since 2012. Webb hasn't lost since May 5 at Colorado.

Featuring a changeup and slider, Webb was in total command. He also turned four comebackers into outs.

"I just think to be quite honest with you we didn't make adjustments," Los Angeles manager Dave Roberts said.

Tellez HR, throw lift Brewers past Braves in Game 1

Associated Press

MILWAUKEE — Rowdy Tellez fouled off Charlie Morton's pitch in a scoreless game, then headed toward the dugout for a deep breath and a new bat.

Just the break the Milwaukee Brewers needed.

Tellez spoiled Morton's gem by hitting a two-run homer in the seventh inning, leading the Brewers over the Atlanta Braves 2-1 Friday in the opener of their NL Division Series.

"I'm still out of breath," Tellez said. "It was a crazy moment."

Corbin Burnes, Adrian Houser and Josh Hader combined on a four-hitter that gave Milwaukee the early lead in this best-of-five series. Game 2 is Saturday in Milwaukee.

Former Brewer Orlando Arcia grounded to second with runners on the corners to end the game. That came after Milwaukee catcher Omar Narváez — who combined with first baseman Tellez on a key first-in-

ning double play — blocked Hader's 1-2 pitch in the dirt to keep Freddie Freeman at third base.

Neither team produced much offense until the Brewers finally broke through in the seventh.

After Morton (0-1) plunked Avisail García with a 1-2 pitch to start the inning, Tellez ripped another 1-2 offering from Morton over the center-field wall to break a scoreless tie.

"Even in those at-bats, I got them where I wanted to be," Morton said. "I just didn't finish them off. I hit Avi, and then I grooved one to Rowdy."

Tellez was 1-for-13 against the Braves this season until delivering that 411-foot drive, which came immediately after the hefty, bearded slugger fouled a pitch off.

"I don't know if I broke that bat," Tellez said. "I just saw something fly off of it. I was like, 'I need all the help I can get right now.'"

"I walked back, and the bat boy didn't even realize it. I kind of just collected my breath and calmed myself, got back to the box, and I said, '(Keep) my foot down and just see the pitch and hit the ball hard.' That's all I wanted to do."

The big hit capped quite a comeback for Tellez, who was activated from the injured list Saturday after missing about three weeks with a right patella strain.

"It was a tight timetable," Brewers manager Craig Counsell said. "We knew it was going to be tight. We were fortunate that he got himself healthy. The training staff did a heck of a job."

Atlanta's Joc Pederson lofted a pinch-hit homer off Houser (1-0) with two outs in the eighth.

Morton's 85th and final pitch to Tellez was among the few mistakes he made all day. He struck out nine, walked one and hit a batter to continue his re-

cent history of exceptional postseason performances.

Burnes was every bit as good in his first career postseason start.

The NL Cy Young Award contender opened the game with two straight walks and threw 40 pitches in the first two innings but settled down from there. The right-hander struck out six and gave up two hits and three walks in six shutout innings, throwing 91 pitches.

Burnes walked the first two batters he faced — Jorge Soler and Freeman — with Soler advancing to third on a passed ball.

Ozzie Albies followed with a sharp grounder down the first-base line that Tellez caught just before stepping on the bag. When he noticed Soler was trying to score from third, Tellez threw to the plate.

Narváez caught the one-hop throw and tagged Soler to complete the double play. Counsell called it the play of the game.

Red Sox power past Rays to even series

Associated Press

ST. PETERSBURG, Fla. — Boston slugger J.D. Martinez wasn't sure how well he'd run, but he thought his sprained left ankle would be OK in the batter's box Friday.

Lucky for him, the Red Sox took their time rounding the bases all night while turning an early deficit against the Tampa Bay Rays into a blowout win.

Martinez hit a tiebreaking, three-run homer in his return to the lineup and Boston backed Tanner Houck's clutch relief effort with a franchise postseason record five home runs, rallying past the Rays 14-6 to even their AL Division Series at one game each.

Game 3 of the best-of-five showdown is Sunday in Boston.

Kiké Hernandez had five of the 20 hits for the Red Sox, including a homer and three doubles, becoming Boston's first player with four extra-base hits in a postseason game.

Xander Bogaerts, Alex Verdugo and Rafael Devers also connected for the Red Sox, who stunned Tampa Bay after ace Chris Sale allowed a first-inning slam to Jordan Luplow and was pulled following just three

outs.

"Obviously, we had to make adjustments, and Tanner came in and did an outstanding job," Boston manager Alex Cora said. "But offensively, it was like: 'Hey, don't panic.' We put up two (runs) in the first, and we still got eight innings. They did an amazing job the whole night."

Hernández's leadoff homer in the fifth off Collin McHugh tied it before Martinez went deep against Matt Wisler (0-1) four batters later.

"He is definitely a huge piece of that lineup, and I think he showed why today," Rays catcher Mike Zunino said of Martinez. "He came in, I know coming off an injury, and battling with that isn't easy. But he had great at-bats all day. You tip your cap."

Houck (1-0) kept the Red Sox in the game after Sale was rocked for five runs in the first inning. The rookie right-hander came out of the bullpen to start the second inning and allowed one run and two hits over five frames, retiring his first 11 batters before yielding a two-out single to Wander Franco in the fifth.

Ji-Man Choi entered as a defensive replacement for Luplow and had the only oth-

er hit off Houck, a two-out solo homer in the sixth. Houck struck out five.

Martinez had four hits after missing Tuesday night's wild-card victory over the New York Yankees and Game 1 of the ALDS. He was injured stumbling over second base while heading to the outfield during the regular-season finale at Washington.

"It felt all right hitting," Martinez said. "Didn't feel good running, but felt all right hitting."

Bogaerts, Verdugo and Hernández had solo shots to steady staggering Boston, which lost the opener 5-0 Thursday night. Martinez then delivered the lead.

Devers' two-run homer off Michael Wacha hiked the Red Sox's advantage to 11-6 in the eighth. Christian Vazquez had an RBI infield single in the ninth, which Hernández followed with a two-run single. Bogaerts, Verdugo and Vazquez had three hits each.

Tampa Bay hadn't allowed 14 runs in a game since Boston beat them 20-6 on Aug. 11.

"We knew coming in they have a very talented offense, and they just put together a lot of quality at-bats ... and just kind of put it on us," Rays manager Kevin Cash said.

Correa, Alvarez help Astros take 2-0 lead over Sox

Associated Press

HOUSTON — Carlos Correa was aggressive at the plate. Same for Yordan Alvarez and Kyle Tucker. Jose Altuve turned in a couple of gems in the field.

The Houston Astros are relentless — especially in the playoffs.

Correa hit a two-run double during Houston's five-run seventh inning, and the Astros beat the Chicago White Sox 9-4 on Friday for a 2-0 lead in their AL Division Series.

"They've been here before and they've experienced it," Houston manager Dusty Baker said. "Belief is a big part of this game and belief will take you a long, long ways — and these guys as a unit, they believe."

Sure looks that way.

Tucker homered and drove in three runs as the Astros moved within one win of their fifth

straight appearance in the AL Championship Series. Alex Bregman had two hits and scored twice, and Altuve made a couple of big plays.

"I think experience plays a huge part of it," Correa said. "The moment is never too big for the guys in that clubhouse."

Game 3 of the best-of-five series is Sunday night in Chicago.

Houston grabbed the lead for good on Alvarez's tiebreaking RBI single off Aaron Bummer (0-1) with one out in the seventh. Craig Kimbrel then took over and retired Yuli Gurriel before Correa's drive to right sailed past Leury García, who turned all the way around while trying to track down the ball.

Correa screamed and gestured to the crowd to yell with him as he reached second. The star shortstop is eligible for free agency after this season, and it's going to be quite costly for the

AL West champion Astros to keep him.

The versatile García had just moved from second base to right, replacing Adam Engel.

"They're really good, but I thought we played really well, too," White Sox manager Tony La Russa said. "But they played better — just enough."

Tucker then punctuated the inning with a two-run shot into the seats in left, lifting Houston to a 9-4 lead.

The Astros got 10 hits for the second straight day, but their defense stole the show.

Altuve led the way. He made a diving grab to take a hit away from Andrew Vaughn in the sixth. He wowed again when he fielded a sharp grounder from Eloy Jiménez and got the throw to first base in time for the first out of the eighth.

Gurriel got the first two outs of the fourth when the first base-

man turned an unassisted double play, and Tucker dashed to grab a fly ball hit by Yasmani Grandal with runners on first and second in the seventh.

"Defense is something that we work on before we even hit," Baker said. "These guys take pride in defense. And so that's something I think is overlooked by a lot of clubs, but never on my clubs."

The loss drops AL Central champion Chicago to 0-6 in Houston this season.

The White Sox are trying to avoid another early postseason exit after they were eliminated by Oakland in the first round last year.

"Our backs are against the wall right now," shortstop Tim Anderson said. "We know what we need to do. We've got to take care of business. Things will get better. It's good to head back home, for sure."

No. 5 Bearcats have easy time with Owls

Associated Press

CINCINNATI — Desmond Ridder threw for 259 yards and three touchdowns and No. 5 Cincinnati routed Temple 52-3 on Friday night for its 23rd straight home victory.

Jerome Ford ran for a career-high 149 yards and two scores to help the Bearcats (5-0, 1-0 American) avoid a letdown after their big victory at Notre Dame last week.

“First time really playing a complete game,” Cincinnati coach Luke Fickell said. “Not saying perfect by any means, but a complete game. We talked about keeping that pressure on.”

The home streak is the second-longest in the country, behind Clemson at 31. The Owls are the last team to beat the Bearcats at Nippert Stadium,

edging them 35-24 in 2017.

Temple (3-3, 1-1) has played Cincinnati tough in recent years with the previous three meetings decided by a combined 20 points, including a 15-13 victory by the Bearcats in the last meeting in 2019.

Cincinnati figured to get off to a fast start against the Owls, who were outscored 50-7 in the first quarter through the first five games.

The Bearcats took advantage of a Temple mistake when Jadon Blue’s muffed punt was recovered by Ja’von Hicks at the 13. Two plays later, Alec Pierce caught a 9-yard touchdown pass for a 10-0 lead. Pierce had six catches for 93 yards.

“I know he’s a guy who I can trust to go up and get the ball,” Ridder said. “We’ve had a great connection and it’s starting to

show up in games.”

Ford had an 8-yard touchdown run to help Cincinnati build a 17-3 lead at halftime.

On the first snap of the second half, Ford found a gaping hole and sprinted 75 yards for a touchdown that made it 24-3.

“It was an inside zone play,” Ford said. “I saw a lot of space, then nobody around and it was just a foot race. The O-line was moving guys around tonight.”

The Owls muffed another punt and the Bearcats cashed in with Tyler Scott’s 38-yard catch-and-run touchdown that made it 31-3.

“Sometimes special teams is about being opportunistic,” Fickell said. “It’s tough being on the road. It makes it tough for a defense, especially against an offense like ours.”

No. 22 Arizona State 28,

Stanford 10: Deandre Pierce scored a 27-yard touchdown on a lateral off an interception and the Sun Devils rode their explosive run game to a win over the visiting Cardinal.

Arizona State (5-1, 3-0 Pac-12) exploited one of the nation’s worst run defenses, racking up 255 yards and three touchdowns on the ground. Jayden Daniels provided the balance, throwing for 175 yards and running for 76 more, including a 51-yard touchdown.

Stanford (3-3, 2-2) had no answer for the Sun Devils’ ground game and became one dimensional offensively after falling behind, limited to 9 yards rushing on 20 carries.

Tanner McKee threw for 356 yards and a touchdown, but had his first three interceptions of the season for the Cardinal.

NFL rebukes Gruden for racist comment in old email

Associated Press

A report that Jon Gruden used a racist comment about NFL Players Association leader DeMaurice Smith in an email 10 years ago drew a strong and quick rebuke Friday from the NFL.

A Wall Street Journal story noted that Gruden, then working for ESPN and now coach of the Las Vegas Raiders, referred in a racist way to Smith’s facial features.

“The email from Jon Gruden denigrating DeMaurice Smith is appalling, abhorrent and wholly contrary to the NFL’s values,” NFL spokesman Brian McCarthy said. “We condemn the statement and regret any harm that its publication may inflict on Mr. Smith or anyone else.”

The league is looking into the matter and a person familiar with that probe told The Associated Press that disciplinary action is possible for Gruden. The person spoke on condition of

anonymity because details of any league probe are not made public.

Gruden’s comment in an email to then-Washington Football Team President Bruce Allen came during the 2011 lockout of the players by the NFL. Gruden told the newspaper he was angry about the lockout during labor negotiations and he didn’t trust the direction the union was taking. He also apologized for the remark, the Journal reported.

“Dumboriss Smith has lips the size of michellin tires,” Gruden wrote in the email reviewed by the newspaper.

Raiders owner Mark Davis said in a statement Gruden’s email does not reflect the team’s standards.

“The content of an email regarding DeMaurice Smith from Jon Gruden when he worked for ESPN 10 years ago is disturbing and not what the Raiders stand for,” Davis said. “We were first made aware of the

email late yesterday by a reporter and are reviewing it along with other materials provided to us today by the NFL. We are addressing the matter with Coach Gruden and will have no further comment at this time.”

During a review of emails regarding workplace misconduct at the Washington Football Team that was completed during the summer, “the league was informed of the existence of emails that raised issues beyond the scope of that investigation,” McCarthy added.

“Over the past few months, at the commissioner’s direction,” he added of Roger Goodell, “senior NFL executives reviewed the content of more than 650,000 emails, including this email which was sent to a club employee. Earlier this week, the executives presented a summary of that review to the commissioner and are sharing with Raiders executives emails pertaining to coach Gruden.”

Smith told the newspaper: “This is not the first racist comment that I’ve heard and it probably will not be the last. This is a thick-skin job for someone with dark skin, just like it always has been for many people who look like me and work in corporate America.”

Gruden defended his resume on racial equality and inclusion while admitting his email went “too far.”

Gruden led the Raiders from 1998 until he was traded to Tampa Bay after the 2001 season. He immediately led the Buccaneers to a Super Bowl title — against the Raiders.

He lasted through the 2008 season in Tampa before being fired, then headed to the “Monday Night Football” booth.

The Raiders, then in Oakland, rehired Gruden in 2018 with a 10-year, \$100 million contract. The team moved to Las Vegas last year and has not made the playoffs since his return. But the Raiders are 3-1 in 2021.