

TIME

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Three biological parents.

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A SPECIAL REPORT

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baby born in the U.S.
to a mother with a
transplanted uterus*





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A gas flare in May 2018 burns off excess gas in Midland, Texas, part of the Permian Basin, where an oil boom has remade the landscape

Photograph by Benjamin Lowy—Getty Images

ON THE COVER:
Photograph by Brent Humphreys for TIME

Conversation

WHAT YOU SAID ABOUT...

TIME'S 2018 Person of the Year selection of “The Guardians and the War on Truth”—representing journalists who pursue truth despite threats to their freedom and even their lives—drew a strong reaction from readers even before it was announced. Hundreds had written to urge TIME to choose slain *Washington Post* contributor Jamal Khashoggi; his inclusion made him the first individual ever to be posthumously named Person of the Year. The free flow of information remains under threat. Within a week of TIME's announcement, Reporters Without Borders announced that the U.S., for the first time in 23 years, had made the nonprofit's annual list of the deadliest places to practice journalism. Diane M. Foley—mother of murdered American journalist James W. Foley and president of a foundation in his name that advocates for the safe return of hostages—hopes TIME's choice helps raise awareness of the issue, and of those journalists “who have laid down their lives to keep us free.” Here's a sampling of the response so far:

‘Unflinching in the face of violence and harassment. Committed to freedom and truth. This is more than a magazine cover. It’s a beacon.’

ROBERT COSTA,
Washington Post political reporter

‘Kudos to TIME ... Despotism is the enemy of the people. The free press is the despot’s enemy, which makes the free press the guardian of democracy.’

JEFF FLAKE,
Arizona Senator

“Thanks for an excellent choice that reminds us of the immense sacrifices of journalists who protect us sometimes in subtle ways.”

VIRGINIA H. SONGSTAD,
Columbus, Ohio



“I hope that young people considering a career in journalism will be inspired to become our future guardians at every level—local, county, state, national and international.”

PAUL FEINER,
Greenburgh, N.Y.

*‘Bravo, @time.
#WeAreAllKhashoggi’*

CHRISTIANE AMANPOUR,
chief international anchor at CNN

‘Journalism—solid, thoughtful, deep, brave, urgent, empathetic—is more essential than ever. Do we meet all criteria all the time? Certainly not. Do we need to aim there, and higher? Absolutely.’

HOWARD FINEMAN,
NBC/MSNBC news analyst

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Katowice Rulebook: the Historic Success of Climate Policy at COP24

The global UN climate conference COP24, which took place on the first two weeks of December 2018 in Katowice, ended successfully. Negotiators from 196 countries and the European Union worked for two weeks on the Katowice Rulebook, implementing the Paris Agreement. In the capital of Upper Silesia, the most industrialised region of Poland, numerous heads of state, heads of government and nearly 100 ministers of the environment and foreign affairs from around the world were present at COP24. Thanks to the consensus of the Parties, Katowice, after Kyoto and Paris, has become yet another milestone on the road towards a sustainable global climate policy. Twelve days of intense work have resulted in the completion of specific areas of the implementation rules of the Paris Agreement. During this time, a wide range of issues were discussed - some fundamental, others very detailed and technical – which gave birth to a complex and difficult document. Finance, transparency and adaptation are some of its aspects. In the Katowice Rulebook, the interests of all Parties were taken into account in a well-balanced, fair way. Thanks to it, a great step will be taken towards realising the ambitions expressed in the Paris Agreement. Ambitions that will make our children look back on our legacy and recognise that their parents made the right decisions at an important, historical moment.

Stopping climate change requires cooperation and joint coordinated action by all Parties to the Convention. Therefore, the goal of Poland as the presidency of the summit was to maintain the global character of the Katowice Rulebook and to shape a joint global climate policy, taking into account the possibilities and specific conditions of individual countries. The Paris Agreement has presented a vision of striving to balance the human-induced emissions of greenhouse gases. The realisation of this vision is to be achieved thanks to the sovereignly defined so-called national contributions - NDC, taking into account the national economic, social, and environmental conditions of individual countries, as well as their development goals. The policies planned and implemented in this way will not only foster climate protection, they will also take into

account the specificity of national economy and the developmental stage of each of the Parties to the agreement. Thanks to the implementation of the Katowice Rulebook, these efforts will be tailored to the capabilities of individual countries and will ensure a balance of obligations between states. The methods of reporting, common measures and a system containing data on emissions reduction were also adopted. In this way, the world has obtained at the global level all the necessary tools for the operationalisation of climate policy implemented by individual states.

Another important element of the Katowice Rulebook is to determine the shape of the Global Stocktake, which is expected to occur in 2023. The Global Stocktake of Climate Policy is to form the basis for the preparation of reduction plans after 2030. The main provisions of the Rulebook are complemented by the establishment of a Committee analysing and assessing the implementation of emission reduction targets by individual countries. The Committee may discipline - though not punish - states that do not fulfil their obligations, not only in the area of reduction, but also reporting systems or the possible inactivity of the Parties in the Global Stocktake.

The success achieved in Katowice shows that Poland is an effective ambassador of a sustainable approach to counteracting climate change. We have ambitions to shape principles in a spirit of solidarity and multilateralism, taking into account the sovereign determination of national commitments as a cornerstone of the effectiveness of global efforts. Our joint activities were not only about the production of texts or defending national interests. In creating the Katowice Rulebook, we were conscious of our responsibility to people and commitment for the fate of Earth, which is our home and the home of future generations who will come after us. Under these circumstances, each step forward was a great achievement. And I thank you, the entire international community, for that. We can be proud of ourselves.

Michał Kurtyka, COP24 President

For the Record

4 billion

Approximate number of miles between Earth and Ultima Thule, the farthest object ever explored by spacecraft; NASA's New Horizons probe flew by it at 12:33 a.m. New Year's Day

'We're in a pause situation.'

LINDSEY GRAHAM, U.S. Senator (R., S.C.), telling reporters that the withdrawal of some 2,000 U.S. troops from Syria, which President Trump ordered on Dec. 19, will be a gradual process



112

Age of Richard Overton of Austin, believed to have been the oldest American veteran of World War II, when he died Dec. 27

'THE PRESIDENT HAS NOT RISEN TO THE MANTLE OF THE OFFICE.'

MITT ROMNEY, 2012 Republican presidential nominee and the new U.S. Senator from Utah, denouncing Trump's overall "conduct" in the first two years of his presidency, in a Jan. 1 *Washington Post* op-ed

'Military people don't walk away.'

JOHN KELLY, White House chief of staff who stepped down on Jan. 2, responding to a question about why he stayed for 17 months in what he called a "bone-crushing hard job"

'If the United States continues to break its promises and misjudges our patience ... and pushes ahead with sanctions ... then we may have to seek another way to protect our country's sovereignty and interests.'

KIM JONG UN, North Korean dictator, warning the U.S. against further sanctions, in his annual televised New Year's Day address

'FOR SHAME.'

CHELSEA CLINTON, former First Daughter of the U.S., tweeting her response after New York Republican Congressman Peter King said that "only" two migrant children dying in custody was "an excellent record" for U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement



36

Number of World Cup slalom championships won by 23-year-old U.S. skier Mikaela Shiffrin as of Dec. 29, establishing her as the most successful female slalom skier in the circuit's history

Red pandas
Two captured after 15 hours on the lam from their Seattle zoo enclosure



Giant pandas
Two released into the wild in China's Sichuan province after being bred in captivity

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The Brief

INVISIBLE MAN
Victor Boyarkin,
center, was a
key conduit
between Paul
Manafort and
Oleg Deripaska,
a Putin ally



INSIDE

TRUMP'S INTRANSIGENCE ON
THE GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN

SEVEN PREDICTIONS FOR THE
YEAR AHEAD

MIGRANTS IN TIJUANA FACE
TEAR GAS

TheBrief Opener

WORLD

Russian ex-spy pressured Manafort over debts to an oligarch

By Simon Shuster/Rhodes, Greece

WHEN THE U.S. GOVERNMENT PUT OUT ITS latest sanctions list on Dec. 19, the man at the top did not seem especially important. Described as a former Russian intelligence officer, he was accused of handling money and negotiations on behalf of a powerful Russian oligarch. The document did not mention that the man, Victor Boyarkin, also had a connection to the 2016 campaign of President Donald Trump.

A months-long investigation by TIME found that Boyarkin, a former arms dealer with a high forehead and a very low profile, was a key link between a senior member of the Trump campaign and a wealthy ally of Russian President Vladimir Putin.

In his only interview with the media about those connections, Boyarkin told TIME last fall that he was in touch with Trump's then campaign chairman, Paul Manafort, in the heat of the presidential race. "He owed us a lot of money," Boyarkin says. "And he was offering ways to pay it back."

The former Russian intelligence officer says he has been approached by the office of special counsel Robert Mueller, who is investigating possible collusion between Russia and the Trump campaign. Boyarkin's response to those investigators? "I told them to go dig a ditch," he says. Peter Carr, the spokesman for the Special Counsel's Office, declined to comment. Through his spokesperson, Manafort likewise declined to comment on his alleged ties to Boyarkin.

But those connections could be important to the special counsel's inquiry. They would mark some of the clearest evidence of the leverage that powerful Russians had over Trump's campaign chairman. And they may shed light on Manafort's history of entanglements in Eastern Europe in the decade before he went to work for Trump.

WHEN HE JOINED the Trump campaign in the spring of 2016, Manafort was nearly broke. The veteran political consultant had racked up bills worth millions of dollars in luxury real estate, clothing, cars and antiques. According to allegations contained in court records filed in the U.S. and the Cayman Islands, he was also deeply in debt to Boyarkin's boss, the Russian billionaire Oleg Deripaska, who was demanding money from



Manafort, Trump's former 2016 campaign chair, will be sentenced in February

Manafort over a failed business deal in Ukraine and other ventures.

Boyarkin says it fell to him to collect the debt from Manafort. "I came down on him hard," he says. To that point, the American had been elusive. In a petition filed in the Cayman Islands in 2014, lawyers for Deripaska, a metals tycoon with close ties to the Kremlin, complain that Manafort and his then partner had "simply disappeared" with around \$19 million of the Russian's money.

When he reappeared in the headlines around April 2016, Manafort was serving as an unpaid adviser to the Trump campaign. He wanted his long-time patron in Moscow to know all about it.

In a series of emails sent that spring and summer, Manafort tried to offer "private briefings" about the presidential race to Deripaska, apparently, as one of the emails puts it, to "get whole." Reports in the *Atlantic* and the *Washington Post* revealed those emails in the fall of 2017. Among the questions that remained unanswered was the identity of Manafort's contact in Moscow, the person referred to in one of the emails as "our friend V."

Even after TIME learned his full name in April, Boyarkin proved a difficult man to find. His online presence amounted to digital scraps: one photo of him at a conference in Moscow; a few benign quotes in the Russian media from his years selling arms for state-linked companies; and some vague references in U.S. government archives to someone by that name, "Commander Viktor A. Boyarkin," serving in the 1990s as an assistant naval attaché at the Russian embassy in Washington, D.C.—a job sometimes used as cover for intelligence agents.

Only in early October was a TIME reporter able

to track Boyarkin down. In the company of a senior Russian diplomat and two young assistants from Moscow, he attended a conference in Greece that was organized by one of Putin's oldest friends, the former KGB agent and state railway boss Vladimir Yakunin. "How did you find me here?" Boyarkin asked, repeatedly, when confronted about his ties to Manafort during a coffee break at that conference.

Once he agreed to discuss their relationship, it was mostly to confirm the basic facts, often with a curt, "Yes, so what." (Boyarkin did not respond to numerous requests for comment after his name appeared on the U.S. sanctions list on Dec. 19.)

THE OUTLINES of Boyarkin's career suggest a life spent at the intersection of Russian espionage, diplomacy and the arms trade. Having served at the Russian embassies in the U.S. and Mexico in the 1990s, dealing primarily in military affairs, he says he turned his focus to the arms trade in the early 2000s. His specialty was the export of small and medium-size warships and other naval vessels that were produced in Soviet-era shipyards across Russia. This business kept him in touch with military buyers from around the world, including various parts of Africa. By the late 2000s, Boyarkin had put this expertise in the service of Deripaska, whose global mining and metals empire often involved making deals with despots in the developing world.

As Boyarkin tells it, his acquaintance with Manafort goes back to the late 2000s, when both of them were working for Deripaska in Eastern Europe. Manafort has long been open about his work for the oligarch. "I have always publicly acknowledged that I worked for Mr. Deripaska and his company," he said in a statement to reporters in the spring of 2017.

It remains unclear whether Manafort owes debts to Deripaska and, if so, how much. A court in Virginia convicted Manafort in August on eight charges of bank and tax fraud related to his lobbying work in Ukraine; he is due to be sentenced in February.

When TIME met him in Greece, Boyarkin insisted that he has not worked for Deripaska since the end of 2016. But the U.S. government differs on that point: the Dec. 19 press release from the Treasury Department said Boyarkin "reports directly to Deripaska and has led business negotiations on Deripaska's behalf."

Those negotiations, involving mining deals in Africa and factories in Europe, were of secondary concern to U.S. investigators when they contacted Boyarkin last year, he says. Instead, they wanted to know about his links to Manafort, and the "private briefings" he had offered to Boyarkin and his boss. "They asked about all of that, yes," Boyarkin recalls. Once again, he says he told them to get lost. —*With reporting by* TESSA BERENSON/WASHINGTON □

NEWS TICKER

Elizabeth Warren to run for President

Senator Elizabeth Warren announced on Dec. 31 that **she would form an exploratory committee to consider running for President in 2020.** The next day she announced plans to visit Iowa, the first state to vote in the Democrats' 2020 nominating contest.

Netflix blocks criticism of Saudi Arabia

Netflix removed an episode of the comedy show *Patriot Act With Hasan Minhaj* that was critical of Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman. Netflix said it received a **"valid legal request" to comply with local cybercrime laws.** The episode is still available on YouTube in Saudi Arabia and on Netflix elsewhere.

Women enter Hindu shrine in protest

Two Indian women entered a Hindu shrine in the state of Kerala on Jan. 2 in protest over rules that said **women of "menstruating age" could not enter because they were "unclean."** That ban had been overruled by the Supreme Court in September, but women attempting to enter were barred by angry protesters.

THE BULLETIN

The sticking points in the government shutdown

Like a New Year's hangover, the partial government shutdown that began Dec. 22 has lingered into 2019. A new Congress was slated to be sworn in Jan. 3, when Democrats take control of the House of Representatives. But party leaders appear no closer to resolving a standoff with President Donald Trump over his demand for funding to build a wall on the border with Mexico. Here's what each side is looking for:

Trump has asked for \$5 billion to build about 200 miles of wall on the southern border. He's convinced the issue is a political winner. "The intensity level with Republicans and conservatives and Trump supporters," says Matt Schlapp, chairman of the American Conservative Union, "is through the roof" on immigration. So the President is determined to reassure his conservative base that he is fighting hard for his signature campaign promise.

House Democrats, led by Nancy Pelosi, want to block funding for a project they say is ineffective and immoral, while pinning the blame for the shutdown on the President. With polls showing that much of the public opposes the wall and blames Trump for the impasse, House Democrats plan to pass a bill to reopen the government, which would not include wall money. There's no sign the President would support it.

The Senate Republican majority mostly wants this problem to go away. The Senate previously voted unanimously to temporarily fund the government at existing levels, and Senate Democratic boss Chuck Schumer has offered the White House \$1.6 billion for border security. Now GOP Senate leader Mitch McConnell says he'll allow votes only on a deal Trump supports. The buck, in other words, stops at the Oval Office. —*Ryan Teague Beckwith, with reporting by Alana Abramson and Brian Bennett/Washington*

The Brief Year Ahead

Most weeks, we focus on the news of recent days. As a new year begins, we instead asked influential people from a variety of fields to guess what milestone moments or significant changes 2019 will bring.



The divided U.S. government will unite

By Orrin Hatch

AS UNLIKELY AS IT MAY sound, with Democrats controlling the House and Republicans controlling the Senate, I believe our government will secure a number of legislative victories for the good of the country.

This is not without precedent. I had what was arguably my most productive Congress during President Obama's final two years in office. While things may have appeared acrimonious on cable news, Democrats and Republicans worked late nights and weekends to secure a number of substantive bipartisan victories, from historic trade legislation to a comprehensive legislative package to address our nation's opioid crisis (which we did again last year). True, tensions ran high. But from

tension was born some of the most meaningful bipartisan work of the past decade.

And that Congress was no anomaly. One of my proudest achievements as a Senator was when I collaborated with Teddy Kennedy on the Children's Health Insurance Program—under a Democrat President, a Republican House and a Republican Senate.

The House will no doubt leverage its subpoena power, and the President will no doubt tweet his disdain for liberal legislators. But on the issues that matter most, Republicans and Democrats will come together. Because the nation depends on it.

Hatch was the longest-serving Republican in the Senate when he retired in December

More companies will combine—or vanish

By Andre Iguodala

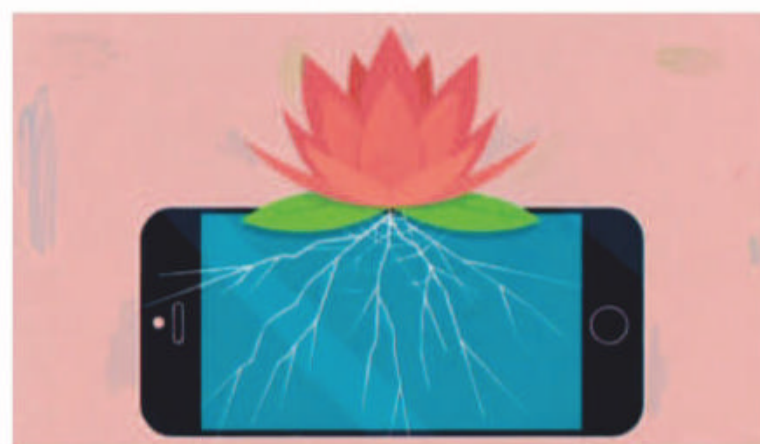
With the decline in market growth, we'll see more mergers and acquisitions, especially in the consumer space. The fashion industry will change forever, as the mid-market will be wiped out.

Iguodala, an NBA champion with the Golden State Warriors, was a style director at an online clothier

We'll take a mindful approach to our phones

By Marie Kondo

In 2019, I believe that there will be a greater shift toward mindfulness in the culture. As someone who has devoted herself to the business of tidying for more than a decade, I'm witnessing the shift firsthand. Tidying is the most basic chore, but interest in it is at an all-time high. In my tidying method, you choose what to keep based on how it makes you feel. People are starting to realize that happiness isn't something that you achieve from the outside—through technology or the newest fad—but, rather, from



within. I predict people will tune in to their inner voices and identify what sparks joy in all aspects of their lives, from their homes to their work and relationships. This mindful approach will also affect purchasing decisions

(Why am I buying this?) and reduce smartphone usage (Does this habit really bring me joy?).

Kondo is the author of The Life-Changing Magic of Tidying Up; her Netflix show Tidying Up With Marie Kondo launched on Jan. 1

ILLUSTRATIONS BY PETE RYAN FOR TIME

Non-Russia scandals will grab our attention

By Kevin M. Kruse

The Mueller probe has understandably attracted a great deal of attention over the past year, but there are also a large number of other controversies swirling around nearly a dozen Cabinet secretaries and agency heads in the Trump Administration. In any other era, one of these scandals would have paralyzed a presidency; several at the same time would have ended it. Despite widespread accounts of misconduct by department heads and Administration officials, few have faced any consequences. Over the past two years in the minority of the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Democrats watched in frustration as Republicans blocked over five dozen subpoenas. But with Democrats in charge and a new chairman, Representative Elijah Cummings, the committee will surely pursue these subpoenas and more. Officials who have managed to steer clear of the Trump-Russia furor these past two years will soon find themselves at the centers of their own scandals.

Kruse is a professor of history at Princeton and a co-author of the book Fault Lines

Genetic science will face greater control

By Jennifer Doudna



IN 2019, WE CAN EXPECT accelerating scientific research and practical advances using CRISPR-Cas9—a tool that allows scientists to easily change an organism’s DNA—toward cures for genetic diseases, enhanced drug development, reprogrammed immune cells to fight cancer, improved transplant organs and even more nutritious crops.

But the scientific community will also redouble efforts

to define high ethical, scientific and safety standards for anyone using the technology. This recently became more critical. After my colleagues and I first described the creation of CRISPR-Cas9 technology in 2012, we called for a moratorium on using it to alter human embryos—a principle endorsed by standard-setting groups worldwide. The practice has been banned in many countries. But in late 2018, a

scientist in China announced the birth of the first CRISPR-edited babies—a radical break from fundamental norms. There must be consequences to ignoring the criteria scientists and lawmakers set.

Already, CRISPR-Cas9 technology is entering legitimate clinical trials that could lead to cures for sickle cell disease and blindness in individuals, and 2019 will likely see an acceleration of this amazing progress. Though we should be mindful not to overregulate and negatively impact important research, the global community should work together to ensure that such advances come as safely and quickly as possible while respecting ethical boundaries.

Doudna, a co-inventor of CRISPR-Cas9, is a professor at the University of California, Berkeley, and a co-author of A Crack in Creation

Behind-the-scenes diversity will bloom

By Nana Kwame Adjei-Brenyah

In books, I think there will be changes not just with which authors are published, but in editorial staff, as companies become more inclusive. And it won't just be publishing. The door's open; it's time to get in—and once you're in, then you can help to change the culture.

Adjei-Brenyah is the author of Friday Black and a National Book Foundation "5 Under 35" honoree

... and someone, somewhere, will enjoy a burrito

By Rachel Bloom



I predict that on Aug. 5, 2019, a man named Mark in Topeka, Kans., will eat a bean and cheese burrito for the first time in his life. On Aug. 6, 2019, Mark will then tell his young cousin, "Hey, bean and cheese burritos aren't bad, I finally tried one." That cousin will grow up to become the U.S. Secretary of Education. This career path will have absolutely nothing to do with his cousin Mark's bean and cheese burrito.

Bloom, an actor and comedian, co-created and stars in Crazy Ex-Girlfriend

TheBrief TIME with ...

Maine Republican **Susan Collins** is one of the last centrists in the Senate

By Tessa Berenson

JUST OFF THE SOARING, TOURIST-FILLED rotunda of the U.S. Capitol building, down a chandeliered hallway, up a few floors in what feels like the world's tiniest elevator, in a narrow, echoing corridor, lies the hideaway of Senator Susan Collins. The private office, a perk doled out by seniority, is appointed in creams and florals and feels warm but not exactly homey. Most of all, it is secluded—no staff, no uninvited visitors, no constituents. And it was in this hidden space in late September that the Republican from Maine weighed one of the most divisive decisions of her 21-year career in Congress: whether to vote to confirm Brett Kavanaugh to the U.S. Supreme Court.

Months later, artifacts of that episode are still visible. Two newspapers with reports on Kavanaugh's contentious confirmation hearings sit on the wooden desk: a copy of the *New York Times*, with an image of Kavanaugh's now infamous high school calendar on the front page, and the *Washington Post* from the following day, showing Kavanaugh and Christine Blasey Ford, who accused the judge of sexual assault, testifying before the Senate Judiciary Committee, both of them near tears.

In those jagged weeks, Collins faced an onslaught of pressure from the left to oppose the conservative judge's nomination. There were the coat hangers: 3,000 of them mailed to her office, meant to evoke the era of back-alley abortions. (She donated most of them, including 400 she sent to a thrift store in Maine.) There were phone calls from people threatening to slit her throat, she says, or telling her staffers they should have abortions and then bleed out and die. There was a ricin threat and an anthrax scare. A young female staffer in Maine quit because of the constant harassment.

None of it daunted Collins, who has spent decades as a pivotal swing vote in the Senate. Recalling the episode on a cold November afternoon, Collins says she was "baffled" that activists thought they could threaten her into voting their way. "I would never be intimidated by that," she says, sitting up straighter in her burgundy leather chair.

In the end, Collins cast one of the decisive votes for Kavanaugh, announcing her decision with a speech that shredded any illusions that she was

unsure about her choice. Her vigorous defense of Kavanaugh, coming from one of the Senate's last remaining moderates, showed just how polarized the chamber has become in the Trump era. And it highlighted how difficult it is to be a centrist when everyone else has retreated to hyperpartisan corners. In this moment in American politics, Collins can seem like the last of her kind.

COLLINS CAME TO THE SENATE in 1997, the latest in a long tradition of moderate Maine Republicans. The other Senator from Maine when she arrived, Olympia Snowe, was from a similar mold: conservative on fiscal policy and national security but a supporter of gay rights and abortion rights. And it wasn't just Maine. Two decades ago, there were 10 Republicans representing New England in Congress.

Today those moderate Northeastern Republicans are all but extinct. As of 2019, Collins is the only one left in either chamber. Over her career, a chasm has widened between the two political parties. And Collins' own voting record tracks the shift. In 2017, Trump's first year in office, she voted along party lines 87% of the time, according to a CNN analysis—more than any other year she's been a Senator. At the same time, she was also the Republican Senator most likely to break ranks. "I'm very worried about that," Collins says. "The center is diminishing."

It was in this environment that Collins emerged as the target of Kavanaugh's opponents. Amid the coat hangers and the threats, there was only one instance in which Collins says she was truly afraid. Late one night, Collins arrived home in the pouring rain. It was dark, the streets around her Washington townhouse were deserted, and her hands were full with her briefcase and a bag of dry cleaning. A man was waiting for her. As she approached her front door, he shone a light in her face and screamed anti-Kavanaugh screeds. "Stop harassing me!" she yelled back at him, shielding herself with her bags as she fumbled with her keys. She made it inside, safe but shaken.

As Collins considered her decision on Kavanaugh, she knew that half the country would hate whatever she did. But if anything, the protesters may have had the opposite of their intended effect, making Collins dig in her heels. "It is certainly obvious to me," she says, "that my life would have been a lot easier if I had voted the other way." She announced her vote to confirm Kavanaugh in a nearly hour-long speech on the Senate floor on Oct. 5. It was a vociferous defense of the judge and a searing indictment of a confirmation process that she said "looks more like a caricature of a gutter-level political campaign than a solemn occasion." The Senator delivering that speech was not someone waffling in

COLLINS QUICK FACTS

Senior Senator
Collins first joined the chamber in 1997. She's now the 12th longest serving member and the most senior Republican woman.

Liberal target
Democratic activists have already raised more than \$3 million to fund the 2020 campaign of her challenger.

Trump skeptic
Collins announced in 2016 that she wouldn't vote for Trump for President, but she has rarely broken party lines since.



the middle; she was a woman voting confidently, granting a generational win to conservatives and dashing any liberal hopes of sinking Kavanaugh. If there is a center in the Senate anymore, Collins wasn't in it that day.

COLLINS' OWN LIFE has mostly gone back to normal, and she's had some time to ponder the state of a country that seems to have lost its ability to come together. "We've seen a coarsening of conversation, a lack of dialogue and an absence of respect for those who disagree with us," she says. "Instead, there's now vehement ill will toward people who simply have a different viewpoint on an issue."

Collins is up for re-election in 2020. In these circumstances, does she really want to run again? "That is my intention," she says, although she has not announced a final decision. In a re-election campaign, Collins could get hammered from both sides, with Democrats still irate over the Kavanaugh vote and the GOP upset by her occasional willingness to go against the party, as when she voted against the repeal of the Affordable Care

In this moment in American politics, Collins can seem like the last of her kind

Act in 2017 or voted against some Trump Cabinet nominees. According to one tracking poll, Collins' approval rating in Maine dropped 9 percentage points overall after her vote on Kavanaugh, to 45%, and her approval rating among Democrats dropped a whopping 25 percentage points.

Collins says she remains optimistic about the Senate's ability to make progress. "There are still more issues that unite us than divide us," she insists. The Senate just passed a sweeping bipartisan criminal-justice reform bill, which Collins co-sponsored. She wants to pass a comprehensive infrastructure bill and legislation to lower prescription-drug prices, two issues with some support on both sides of the aisle.

Here in Collins' hideaway, where the crumpled, emotional faces of Kavanaugh and Ford still stare out from the front pages on her private desk, a rebirth of bipartisanship feels like a fantasy. Still, for at least the next two years, Collins will keep operating from the center of a Congress pulling away from her, trying to do the work she cares about. Even if half the country hates the way she votes. □