

ried detailed maps of the towns and military bases that they targeted. **A1**

◆ **Rep. Steve Scalise** withdrew from contention for House speaker after clinching the Republican Party's nomination but failing to win over a stubborn bloc of critics who stood between him and the gavel. **A1**

◆ **The U.S. hit two oil tankers** and their owners with blocking sanctions and said they had carried Russian oil above the West's price cap of \$60 a barrel, the first time the Biden administration has punished market participants for violating the rules. **A11**

◆ **Sen. Bob Menendez** was indicted on a new charge of conspiring to act as an illegal foreign agent of Egypt, adding a new criminal count to the bribery case the New Jersey Democrat already faces. **A6**

◆ **Social Security's** cost-of-living adjustment will be 3.2% in 2024, after bigger increases in the past two years, bringing the average monthly check for retirees' to \$1,906. **A2**

◆ **New Mexico Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham's** ban on firearms in parks and playgrounds remains in effect after a federal judge declined to block it. **A7**

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Scalise Quits Race For House Speaker

WASHINGTON—Rep. Steve Scalise withdrew from contention for House speaker late Thursday, after clinching the Republican Party's nomination but failing to win over a stubborn bloc of critics who stood between him and the gavel, the latest dramatic turn in the party's leadership fight.

*By Siobhan Hughes,
Kristina Peterson,
Katy Stech Ferek
and David Harrison*

The party has been trying to move quickly to fill the absence created by the ouster of Rep. Kevin McCarthy (R., Calif.) that was engineered by Republican rebels, but the intraparty splits on display last week have only grown deeper.

Scalise, the House majority leader, narrowly won the party's speaker nomination Wednesday over Rep. Jim Jordan (R., Ohio) in a 113-99 tally, a narrow margin that did little to persuade many Jordan supporters to unify behind Scalise. He made the announcement at a GOP conference meeting Thursday evening.

"It wasn't going to happen today, it wasn't going to happen tomorrow," an emotional Scalise said. "It needs to happen soon."

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Scalise Quits Race For Speaker

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Scalise's exit from the race thrust the party into a new phase of uncertainty. GOP lawmakers planned to gather again early Friday to talk about a path forward, potentially moving to nominate Jordan or an alternative for the role, and then trying once again to get that nominee over the finish line. While Jordan would now appear to be the front-runner, some lawmakers said backing him for the job would effectively reward the divisive behavior of the holdouts.

"All I have to say is: heartbroken," said Rep. Ann Wagner (R., Mo.), who had tried to line up votes for Scalise. Asked what she thought of Jordan, she said: "nonstarter."

A speaker needs to win a majority of the full House, meaning any nominee has little wiggle room in the 221-212 chamber, as all Democrats are expected to back their pick, Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries of New York. Getting there took McCarthy 15 rounds of balloting in January, and forced him to make pledges to GOP holdouts that they later

accused him of breaking.

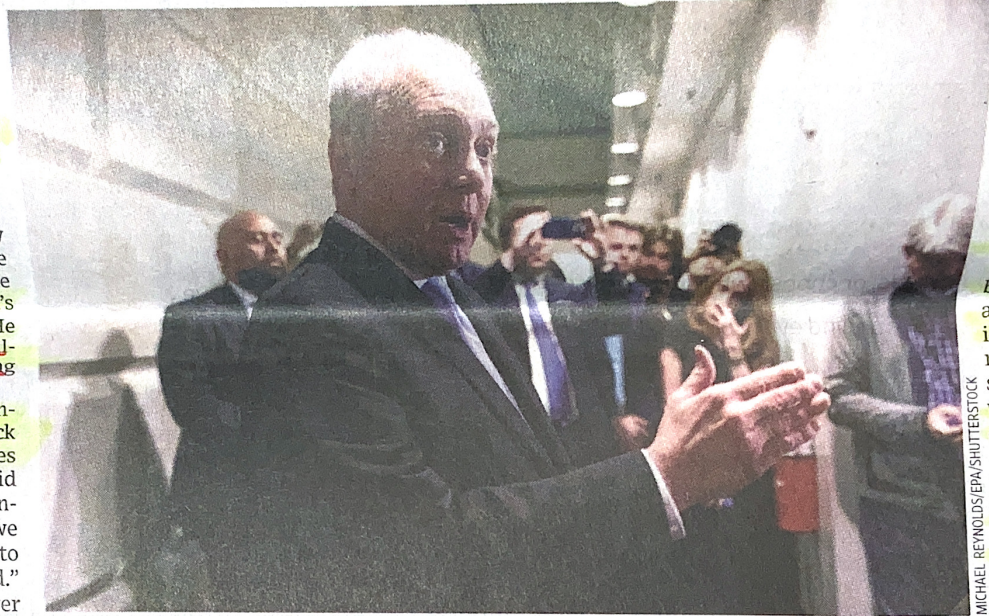
"We will achieve 217. Who that will be, I do not know," said Rep. Mark Alford (R., Mo.) after Scalise withdrew. "Look, this is a troubling time for our conference."

Rep. Mike Garcia (R., Calif.) said he anticipated the party was "going to have the same problem with Jordan that we had with Scalise. So I think it's a math problem frankly." He also said the party had a cultural problem with removing its speakers.

Meanwhile, Jeffries highlighted another option—to pick a speaker who could win votes from both parties. He said House Democrats have "continued to make clear that we are ready, willing and able to fly a bipartisan path forward."

Scalise's efforts to win over the holdouts had stalled Thursday, when a nearly three-hour meeting he called ended in an impasse and later efforts to sway his opponents came up short. Although the Louisiana Republican is well-liked within his party, some hard-line Republicans objected to promoting a figure they viewed as an extension of the status quo.

It wasn't immediately clear what the next steps would be for a chamber that has been effectively frozen for more than a week. More Republicans had been openly discussing Thursday the possibility of giving Speaker Pro Tempore



Steve Scalise (R., La.) had the House GOP nomination for speaker but couldn't persuade holdouts.

Rep. Patrick McHenry (R., N.C.) more power to bring legislation to the House floor, a move that would likely require a vote by the full House.

House Republicans met earlier Thursday in the basement of the Capitol to hash out their differences, but the closed-door meeting turned into a session for airing grievances—one lawmaker called it a "struggle session"—and left nothing resolved.

Scalise, 58 years old, who survived a 2017 shooting and is undergoing treatment for a blood cancer, used the gather-

ing to try to assuage concerns about his health, lawmakers said, while also rejecting speculation that he would cut side deals to win the speakership.

While only about a half-dozen members spoke up against him, lawmakers said, Republicans left the meeting frustrated at the impasse and uncertain about the path ahead. Scalise continued conversations with groups of GOP lawmakers into the evening.

As an indicator of Scalise's uphill climb, McCarthy on Thursday told reporters that while it was possible Scalise

could get the votes, ahead of the conference vote "he had told a lot of people he was going to be at 150, and he wasn't there."

In his own speaker fight, McCarthy had the support of 188 Republicans in the conference vote, before struggling to win on the House floor.

Congress faces pressing deadlines. A short-term spending law that funds the government is due to expire in mid-November, and little progress on spending negotiations can occur while the House is paralyzed with no speaker. The re-

cent fighting in Israel and Gaza has also added more urgency to restoring House operations, lawmakers said.

Republicans described a situation so rudderless that no one could come up with a strategy for breaking the impasse. Supporters of Scalise called for settling matters on the floor with a vote to force all members to take a public stance, but a bloc supporting Jordan promised to stop Scalise from winning. Scalise's performance on subsequent ballots would be worse than on an initial round of voting, they said.

Fueling the flames was the defeat a day earlier of a proposed rules change that would have forced the matter to be settled inside the GOP conference, by voting over and over until a single member had 217 votes. Scalise instead won with a simple majority.

"They tried to steamroll it, and that's not a good direction to go," said Rep. Chip Roy (R., Texas), who backs Jordan and had proposed the rules change.

With the House speakership vacant for a ninth day, lawmakers began to openly wonder how long the fight could last. Rep. Byron Donalds (R., Fla.) said he thought it could only stretch through the weekend, because "then it gets problematic" once the Senate returns next week.

—Lindsay Wise
contributed to this article.

MICHAEL REYNOLDS/EPA/SHUTTERSTOCK

Scalise Departs Speaker's Race As G.O.P. Feuds

By LUKE BROADWATER

WASHINGTON — Representative Steve Scalise of Louisiana withdrew on Thursday from consideration for the speakership he was on the cusp of claiming after hard-line Republicans balked at rallying around their party's chosen candidate, leaving the House leaderless and the G.O.P. in chaos.

After being narrowly nominated for speaker during a Wednesday closed-door secret-ballot contest among House Republicans, Mr. Scalise, their No. 2 leader, found himself far from the 217 votes needed to be elected on the House floor. Many supporters of his challenger, Representative Jim Jordan of Ohio, the right-wing Republican endorsed by former President Donald J. Trump, refused to switch their allegiance.

With no clear end in sight to the G.O.P. infighting that has left one chamber of Congress paralyzed at a time of challenges at home and

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Politics Made

By TRIP GABRIEL

Steve Huckins, a native of Oregon, was preparing to m across the country when he w on Facebook to post a goodbye ter of sorts to his home state.

"I had planned to die here," Huckins, 59, wrote. "It's a beautiful state. The mountains, lakes, the rivers, the beaches. are overshadowed by the soci and political climate."

Mr. Huckins and his wife, ger, were leaving Portland, one of the most progressive c in the United States. They Portland's tolerance of home encampments, along with open use of hard drugs and r crime, had filled them with spair. So they headed 2,000 east, to deep-red rural Misso

Driving around their hometown in June, about an outside St. Louis, they adr the old Victorians and a tract fying the minimum speed lir a state road.

"One thing I do like about souri, there's lots of Ame flags," Mr. Huckins said steered around a traffic where the Stars and S flapped crisply on a pole. "In

Scalise Withdraws From Race for Speaker Amid Republican Infighting

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abroad, Mr. Scalise said he would step aside in hopes that someone else could unite the fractious party.

“I just shared with my colleagues that I was withdrawing my name as a candidate for speaker-designee,” Mr. Scalise said. “If you look at where our conference is, there’s still work to be done. Our conference still has to come together, and it’s not there. There are still some people that have their own agendas.”

His abrupt exit left Republicans back at square one, as fractured as ever over who should lead them and trading recriminations about the disarray in which they found themselves.

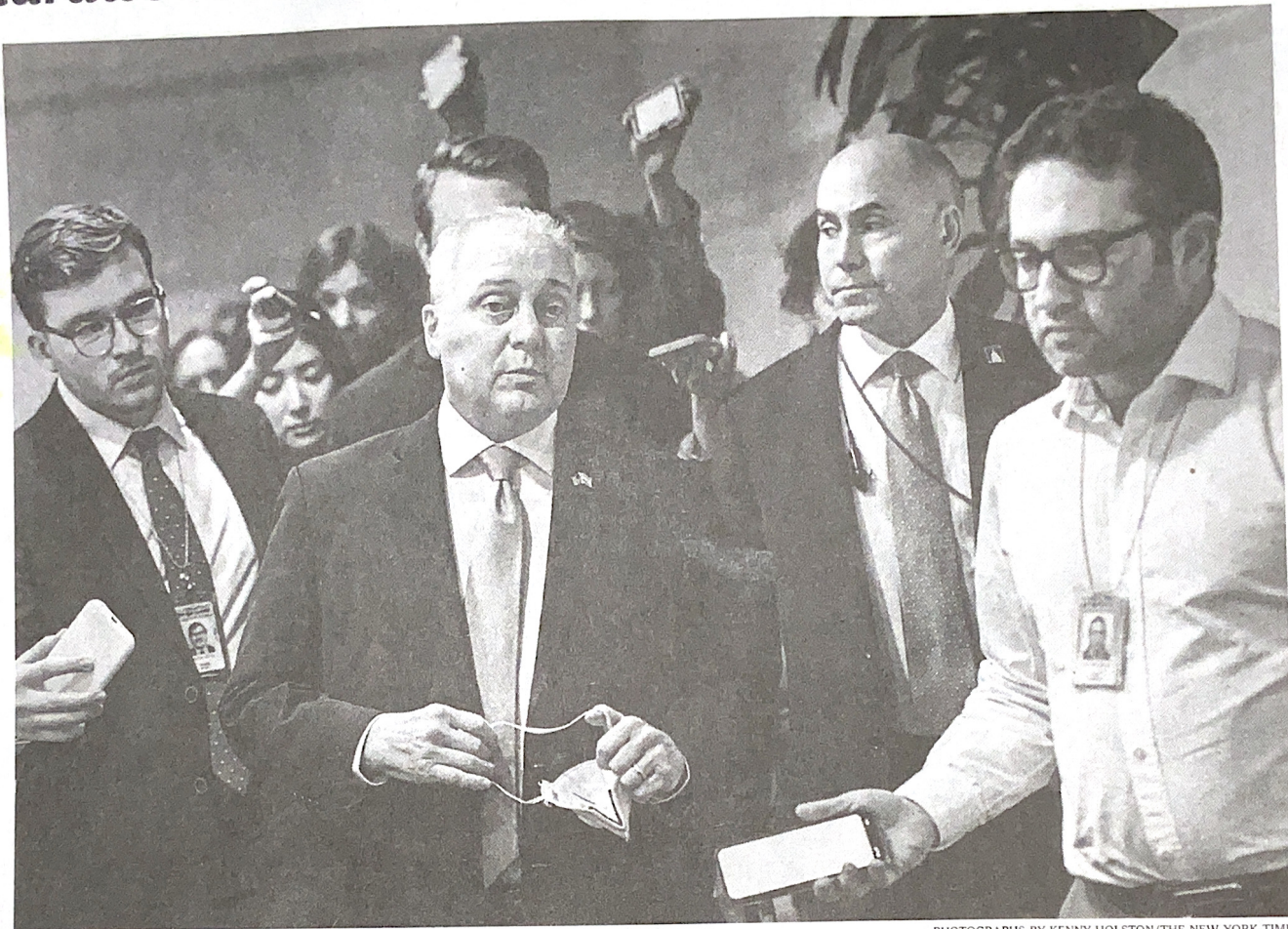
It came after an extraordinary few days on Capitol Hill that put Republican divisions on vivid display. Mr. Scalise surpassed Mr. Jordan during the internal party contest by just 14 votes. But rather than consolidate his narrow base of backers, Mr. Scalise almost immediately began hemorrhaging supporters, as lawmakers from several factions publicized that they did not intend to fall into line behind him.

Then Mr. Trump weighed in on Thursday against Mr. Scalise, arguing that the Louisianian was unfit for the speakership because he has blood cancer.

“Steve is a man that is in serious trouble, from the standpoint of his cancer,” Mr. Trump said on Fox News Radio, adding later, “I just don’t know how you can do the job when you have such a serious problem.”

Other top House Republicans refrained from publicly rallying around Mr. Scalise, allowing the resistance to fester. Mr. Jordan never made a full-throated endorsement of Mr. Scalise, despite indicating his support. And Representative Kevin McCarthy of California, the ousted former speaker who has an icy relationship with Mr. Scalise, said the Louisiana Republican had overestimated his backing and might be unable to recover.

After Mr. Scalise’s withdrawal, Mr. Jordan’s supporters immediately began endorsing him as next in line, and he was expected to



PHOTOGRAPHS BY KENNY HOLSTON/THE NEW YORK TIMES

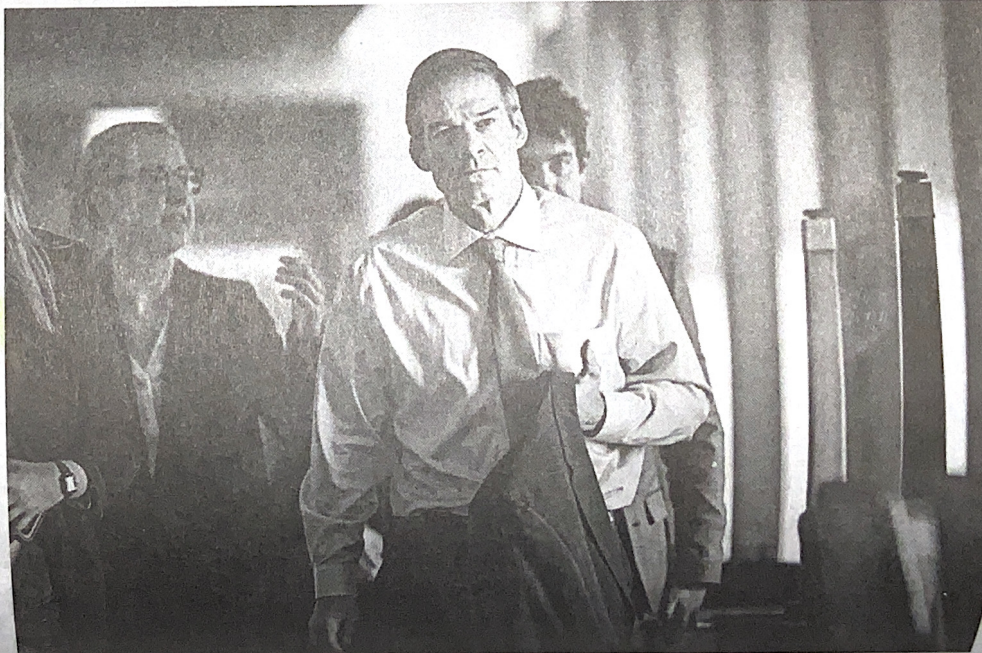
Representative Steve Scalise, above, found himself short of the 217 votes needed to be elected on the House floor, as many supporters of his challenger, Jim Jordan, who was endorsed by former President Donald J. Trump, refused to switch their allegiance.

pursue the speakership. But he is likely to encounter opposition from the party’s more moderate members. —Jordan

“I hope now he’s the obvious choice. He barely came in second place to Steve Scalise,” said Representative Jim Banks of Indiana, who backs Mr. Jordan.

Mr. McCarthy did not rule out a return to the speakership as well, saying he would “let the conference decide” whether to reinstate him from the job he was ousted just last week.

It was the latest remarkable turn in a struggle that has been marked by whiplash, shifting alli-



ances and petty grudges. The situation has highlighted major changes in the nature of the House Republican conference, whose members once dutifully lined up in support of their chosen leaders but increasingly appeared to be pursuing a strategy of every member for themselves.

The range of complaints against Mr. Scalise ran the gamut, crossing ideological and regional lines and reflecting the many competing factions among House Republicans. But some were merely petty and personal.

“There’s some folks that really need to look in the mirror over the next couple of days and decide: Are we going to get back on track, or are they going to try to pursue their own agenda?” Mr. Scalise said. “You can’t do both.”

The uncertainty has hobbled the House, as it confronts multiple crises, with U.S. allies Israel and Ukraine at war and a government shutdown looming next month without a congressional spending agreement.

Representative Mark Alford of Missouri said the conference was in disarray: “There is some deep mistrust. There’s some communication problems. Some things are jacked up.”

But he believed that fellow Republicans would work out their differences. “We will get to 217,” he said of the votes needed. “Who that is, I don’t know.”

Mr. Scalise has served in House leadership since 2014, and overcame great personal hardship to become the choice of a majority of Republicans to lead the chamber.

He is undergoing intense treatment for his blood cancer, which has prompted him to wear a mask to vote on the House floor and at news conferences. And in 2017, during a practice for a congressional baseball game, an anti-Trump extremist shot and seriously wounded Mr. Scalise. He still walks with a limp from the incident.

It was not clear whether Mr. Scalise could keep his post as majority leader after his failed attempt to win the top job, though Mr. McCarthy expressed confidence that he could. And Mr. Scalise indicated he would try.

“I’m the majority leader of the House. I love the job I have,” Mr. Scalise said. “I’ve had many challenges in my life. I’ve been tested in ways that really put perspective on life.”