WANTED: More immigrant workers

‘People got scared. Now that the work came back, they are short of people’

By Eduardo Porter

The New York Times

Four years after the housing bust and then the deportations, some of Robert Mueller’s investigators have told associates that Attorney General William Barr failed to adequately portray the findings of their inquiry and that they were more troubling for President Donald Trump than Barr realized, according to government officials and others familiar with their simmering frustrations.

At stake in the dispute — the first evidence of tension between Barr and the special counsel’s office — is who shapes the public’s understanding of one of the most consequential government investigations in American history. Some members of Mueller’s team are concerned that Barr should have included more of their work in the report, and some team members believe Barr did not adequately portray the findings of their inquiry.

“We just don’t know yet,” said one of Mueller’s former investigators.

Barr has said he would meet soon to release the nearly 400-page report but has not said when.

The stream of newly minted IPO payouts from tech unicorns — and soon, other tech unicorns — may have Bay Area home sellers dreaming of bigger payouts and buyers wary of even hotter mortgages.

But Bay Area real estate veterans and economists say the IPOs’ impact on home prices may be more subtle than expected.

“Fifteen years ago, a big IPO like Google may have had a similar effect on home prices,” said Tim Ellis, chief economist for realtor.com. “And the influx of cash to a few thousand investors is not the same as the influx of cash that would come from a high-speed tech IPO. It may be worth a few hundred thousand dollars to each of the investors involved, but it is not going to raise home prices by that amount.”

And it could fire up confidence for buy-now-lease-later.

The news to be only one of factors on home market?

What effect will IPO payouts have on home market?

New cash to be only one of factors contributing to steady momentum

By Louis Hansen

The New York Times

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By Michel Ferrand, Michael E. Schmidt and Mark Mazzetti

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**Fish**

Katie Troxel, research director at the Center for Community Economics, says: "The open-ocean effort in the West Coast groundfish fishery isn't working, and the data show that. It's time to look at other approaches." The Center, which is currently examining the feasibility of alternative approaches to managing the fishery, has recently launched a new project called Positively Groundfish, a program that aims to work with fishermen and researchers to develop innovative solutions.

"We need to find a way to incentivize fishermen to catch more desirable species, and we need to work with the government to implement changes that will benefit both the fishery and the communities that depend on it," says Troxel. "We need to think creatively about how we can use data and science to inform management decisions and create opportunities for fishermen to earn a living from the ocean.

**Homes**

Many homeowners across the country are facing the challenge of finding a place to call home, as the price of homes continues to rise. According to the National Association of Realtors, the median home price in the United States was $315,900 in the fourth quarter of 2018, a 10.7% increase from the same period in 2017. This increase has been driven by a number of factors, including low interest rates, strong consumer demand, and a limited supply of homes for sale.

**Workers**

The labor market remains tight, with unemployment rates at historically low levels. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the unemployment rate in December 2018 was 3.9%, the lowest rate since December 1969. This has led to an increase in wages, with the average hourly wage for all employees in private industry up 3.1% in 2018 compared to 2017.

However, the tight labor market is also leading to increased competition for talent, with companies offering higher salaries and benefits to attract and retain employees. This has been particularly evident in the technology sector, where companies such as Google, Facebook, and Amazon are offering six-figure salaries and unlimited vacation days to attract top talent.

**Business**

The business climate remains strong, with corporate profits continuing to rise and economic growth forecasted to remain steady. According to the Bureau of Economic Analysis, the real gross domestic product (GDP) grew at a rate of 2.7% in the fourth quarter of 2018, up from 2.3% in the third quarter. This growth is being fueled by increased consumer spending and business investment.

Despite the strong economy, there are some concerns about the sustainability of this growth. The Federal Reserve has been raising interest rates in an effort to prevent inflation from rising, which could slow economic growth. Additionally, the trade war between the United States and China continues to cast a shadow over the global economy.

**Politics**

The political landscape remains divided, with control of Congress split between the two parties. The Democratic Party controls the House of Representatives, while the Republican Party holds a majority in the Senate. This has led to gridlock on key issues, such as healthcare and immigration.

President Donald Trump has been a vocal advocate for a variety of policies, including tax cuts, deregulation, and infrastructure spending. However, his policies have faced challenges in Congress and in the courts, and it remains to be seen whether he will be able to achieve his goals.

Overall, the year 2018 was marked by both progress and challenges, with the economy continuing to expand and political discourse remaining polarized.