

Financial Daily Dose 2.13.2020 | Top Story: Britain Investigates Ties Between Jeffrey Epstein and Barclays CEO Staley

UK regulators are probing ties between disgraced financier Jeffrey Epstein and Barclays CEO Jes Staley. The bank's board is so far standing 100% with Staley, who has expressed "regret" over his relationship with Epstein – Bloomberg and NYTimes and WSJ

Meanwhile, in an effort to push Facebook and other social media giants toward self-policing, a separate set of UK regulators announced plans to transform the country's media watchdog into an internet content regulator. The agency, called Ofcom, "would take on new responsibilities . . . and would have the power to issue penalties against companies that did not do enough to combat "harmful and illegal terrorist and child abuse content." The announcement again shows a divergence between American and Europe over their visions for the internet and privacy – NYTimes

Essential Products, a consumer electronics startup helmed by former Google exec Andy Rubin, is closing its doors, just years after its valuation had topped \$1 billion. Rubin attracted plenty of buzz and outside funding from investors excited about his role in developing Google's Android smartphone software, but Essential's own premium smartphone did not sell well upon release in 2017, and the company was "dogged by news" about Rubin's departure from Google amidst allegations of "sexual misconduct with an employee" – NYTimes and WSJ

A consideration of what this week's approval of the Sprint/T-Mobile merger means for the telecommunications and broader American business landscape – NYTimes and Bloomberg

Boeing has fired a "midlevel executive in charge of pilots" whose internal emails—disclosed to lawmakers in January—"embarrassed the aerospace company as it struggles to get the 737 Max jetliner flying again" – WSJ

Just a week or so after SEC commissioner Hester Pierce announced her plans for a crypto safe harbor, the Treasury Department announced plans for its own approach to cryptos in the form of coming regulations "intended to crack down on their use in facilitating money laundering and other illicit activities" – NYTimes

Nissan as sued former chair Carlos Ghosn in Japan (the country he fled “before his trial on charges of financial wrongdoing”) seeking \$90 million it alleges would “cover the monetary damages it says Mr. Ghosn inflicted on the company through misconduct and fraud.” Ghosn continues to deny any wrongdoing – NYTimes

Ghosn’s also dealing with legal charges in Tennessee by an American pension fund – Law360

We’ll be watching the Senate confirmation hearings of White House Federal Reserve nominee Judy Shelton with interest today. Shelton, a controversial choice based on her past criticism of the central bank and interest in returning to the gold standard (a move that would “fundamentally change the nature of the central bank), is viewed by some economists as “as a potential threat to the Fed’s prized independence” – NYTimes and Bloomberg

N.D. California Judge Edward Davila has narrowed the criminal case against former Theranos founder Elizabeth Holmes and top exec Sunny Balwani, ruling that he would “dismiss any counts that accused Ms. Holmes and Mr. Balwani of defrauding doctors or nonpaying patients, such as those who were covered by insurance” – WSJ and Law360

McClatchy Co., the second-largest newspaper publisher in the U.S., has filed for bankruptcy protection. It has secured \$50 million in DIP financing that will allow its papers to keep operating through the bankruptcy process – MarketWatch

Looks like Jeffy didn’t waste much time in putting those billions from his Amazon stock sales to work in some new digs – WSJ and Bloomberg

Some very helpful advice for the Gen Z investors-in-training out there (or hey, any of us who could use a refresher. No judgments here) about how to get started in the markets – NYTimes

MDR