



SAHER ALGHORRA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

An ‘Abhorrent’ Handover of Remains

Hamas with a coffin bearing the photo of Kfir Bibas, an Israeli infant who was taken hostage with his parents and brother. Page A11.

HOCHUL DECLINES
TO EXPEL ADAMS

Seeking Strict Oversight
of Mayor’s Office

This article is by Benjamin Oreskes, Nicholas Fandos and Emma G. Fitzsimmons.

Gov. Kathy Hochul of New York announced on Thursday that she would not exercise her authority to remove Mayor Eric Adams from office for now, but would seek to impose strict new guardrails on his administration of New York City.

While Ms. Hochul’s actions, if enacted by state and city legislators, would fall far short of the removal some have demanded, they would curtail Mr. Adams’s independence as he battles accusations that he entered a corrupt agreement with the Trump administration to drop federal bribery charges against him.

In remarks at her Manhattan office, Ms. Hochul said she understood why New Yorkers were outraged by the actions of Mr. Adams, a fellow Democrat she has considered an ally for years. She framed her approach as part of a broader fight to protect the city from President Trump’s influence.

“The Trump administration is already trying to use the legal jeopardy facing our mayor to squeeze and weaken our city,” Ms. Hochul said. “I call it the Trump revenge tour, and I have to stand in its way.”

The governor then laid out a suite of new oversight measures designed to empower other state and city officials to keep careful watch over Mr. Adams’s team at City Hall and potentially challenge Mr. Trump if the mayor would not.

The proposed changes included creating a new state deputy inspector general focused on New York City’s operations; establishing a fund for the city comptroller, public advocate and City Council speaker to hire outside counsel to sue the federal government if the mayor is unwilling to do so; and granting additional funds for the state’s comptroller to scrutinize city finances.

The governor said she also wanted a legal change to bar the mayor from firing the head of the city’s Department of Investigation without the approval of the state inspector general. The

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New Worry in Bucha, Site of Russian Massacre

By KIM BARKER

BUCHA, Ukraine — Andrii Pobihai wore his army uniform to the funeral in Bucha, even though he’s retired. He was one of about 40 people to brave the freezing temperatures and air-raid sirens on Wednesday to say goodbye to his friend, who had died of a heart attack at the age of 48 after serving more than 10 years in the military.

Mr. Pobihai, who held a red carnation in his weathered hand, said he was disgusted by what President Trump had said only hours earlier: that this war with Russia was somehow Ukraine’s fault. He wondered what those comments portended, after a day of negotia-

A Question for Trump:
‘How Can You Talk to
These Jackals?’

tions on ending the war that included high-level representatives from the United States and Russia, but none from the country the Russians invaded.

“I’m very, very angry,” said Mr. Pobihai, 66, who retired as a commander in the rifle company of the 11th Separate Motorized Infantry Battalion in 2019, three years before Russia launched its full-scale invasion. He had led 54 men near

Mariupol, but since then, he said, the Russians have killed all those Ukrainian soldiers — the last just four days earlier.

“The best guys are dying,” Mr. Pobihai said. “How can you talk to these jackals?”

Bucha, a suburb of 37,000 about 20 miles northwest of the capital, Kyiv, has become a notorious symbol of Russian brutality. The Russians took it over within days of invading in February 2022, and in the month that followed, they killed more than 400 civilians, Ukrainian officials say, leading to global accusations of war crimes.

Images from that time ricocheted around the world: The

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RACHEL WISNIEWSKI FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

The S.S. United States is the largest such ship built in the U.S., over 100 feet longer than the Titanic.

The S.S. United States Is Going Down for Good

By ISABELLE TAFT
and JOEL WOLFRAM

The ocean liner that ferried four presidents across the Atlantic Ocean, hosted Duke Ellington and Sylvia Plath, and captured the world’s imagination in the mid-20th century has begun its final voyage. Leaving Philadelphia, where it has been rusting for decades, the ship, the S.S. United States, is bound this time for the bottom of the sea.

Famed Ship to Become
Huge Artificial Reef

Many supporters — including former passengers who traveled on the ship before it docked largely for good in 1969 — had hoped to see the ship restored and opened to visitors. Instead, it is on its way to become the world’s largest artificial reef, off the coast of the Flor-

ida Panhandle.

But first, the 990-foot-long ship, nicknamed the Big U, will make a 14-day journey to Mobile, Ala. There, workers will remove hazardous materials, including the fuel still sitting in its tanks, so the ship can be sunk safely. Because it can no longer move under its own power, five tugboats are taking it out of the Delaware River and Bay on Wednesday. Once the ship is in the open waters of the Atlantic,

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NEWS ANALYSIS

Europe Fears
Peril to NATO
From Within

Alarm as Trump Takes
Putin’s Side on Ukraine

By DAVID E. SANGER

BERLIN — In his first term, President Trump episodically threatened to pull out of NATO, removing the United States as the linchpin of the most successful military alliance in modern times. In his second term, he is trying a different approach: hollowing it out from within.

Mr. Trump’s decision to reverse three years of unity in aiding Ukraine against Russia’s invasion and open negotiations with President Vladimir V. Putin has forced NATO leaders to confront a fundamental question: If Mr. Putin decided to pick off a member of the alliance, is there any reason to assume Mr. Trump would come to that country’s defense, the key to its strength?

“We have to assume not,” a senior member of the German government said at the Munich Security Conference, declining to speak on the record because of the huge sensitivity of his conclusion. In one short month as president, he and others contended, Mr. Trump has undercut the trust that sits at the center of the 75-year-old defense pact, that an attack on one member of the alliance would bring a response by all, led by the United States.

That fear has only accelerated this week, since Mr. Trump began echoing Mr. Putin’s talking points, falsely accusing Ukraine of provoking the invasion of its own territory and casting Russia as the aggrieved party rather than the aggressor. It is a rewriting of modern history that has left the NATO allies stunned and questioning the viability of an alliance with Washington at the center.

European officials knew when Mr. Trump was elected that the fundamental precepts of the post-World War II order would be threatened. They had been alarmed during the campaign when he said he would “encourage” the Russians “to do whatever the hell they want” to NATO members that did not contribute enough, in his view, to the alliance. They knew that even if the United States remained, on paper, the nuclear-armed behemoth at the center of NATO, Mr. Trump’s public musings could corrode the institution from

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TRUMP IS ERODING
EFFORTS TO FIGHT
MEDDLING IN VOTE

A RISE IN FOREIGN SWAY

Staff Cuts Ease Focus on
Election Propaganda
and Cyberattacks

This article is by Steven Lee Myers, Julian E. Barnes and Sheera Frenkel.

The Trump administration is targeting government officials who had been flagging foreign interference in U.S. elections, despite continuing concerns that adversaries are stoking political and social divisions by spreading propaganda and disinformation online, current and former government officials said.

The administration has already reassigned several dozen officials working on the issue at the Federal Bureau of Investigation and forced out others at the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency, part of the Department of Homeland Security, they said.

The cuts have focused on people who were not only combating false content online but also working on broader safeguards to protect elections from cyberattacks or other attempts to disrupt voting systems. In last year’s election, the teams tracked and publicized numerous influence operations from Russia, China and Iran to blunt their impact on unsuspecting voters.

Experts are alarmed that the cuts could leave the United States defenseless against covert foreign influence operations and embolden foreign adversaries seeking to disrupt democratic governments.

Arizona’s secretary of state, Adrian Fontes, a Democrat, warned in a letter to President Trump that the cuts were comparable to shutting down the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration ahead of hurricane season.

“This decision undermines Arizona’s election security,” he wrote, “at a time when our enemies around the world are using online tools to push their agendas and ideologies into our very homes.”

Mr. Trump and other officials have said that in the guise of fighting misinformation and disinformation, the government had infringed on free speech rights of Americans. Tricia McLaughlin, an assistant secretary at the Depart-

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Face of Germany’s Far Right
Is a Study in Contradictions

By CHRISTOPHER F. SCHUETZE

BERLIN — When Vice President JD Vance criticized his German hosts last week for sidelining far-right parties, he did not mention by name the Alternative for Germany, known as the AfD.

But soon after his speech at the Munich Security Conference, in which he stunned the room by comparing democracy in today’s Europe to Soviet-era totalitarianism, Mr. Vance met with Alice Weidel, the leader of the AfD.

A former investment analyst who is raising two sons with her Sri Lankan-born wife in Switzerland, Ms. Weidel, 46, has become the unlikely face of the AfD. Her nationalist party campaigns on a platform that is anti-immigrant and defines family as a father and a mother raising children.

A favorite of the new American administration — receiving an endorsement from Elon Musk — she has been essential to the AfD’s effort to break into the mainstream, helping to vault the party into a



FABRIZIO BENSCH/REUTERS

Alice Weidel, the leader of the Alternative for Germany party.

comfortable second place ahead of Sunday’s national election.

Ms. Weidel, whose turtleneck sweaters or open-collared shirts and pearl necklaces have become signatures, has lent a more cosmopolitan image to a party that has been linked to neo-Nazis and plots to overthrow the state.

But her AfD is no less extreme. “With Alice Weidel at the helm,

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INTERNATIONAL A4-12

Trump and Canada’s Politics

Pierre Poilievre, the Conservative leader, is facing voters worried about the president’s vow to annex Canada. PAGE A4

Worries Over Chinese Embassy

Britain appears ready to approve what would be the largest diplomatic outpost in Europe, but some fear spying. PAGE A7

BUSINESS B1-5

Testing Fed’s Independence

A Trump directive calling for oversight of the bank’s regulatory and supervisory responsibilities raises alarm. PAGE B1

Musk and His Other Business

Elon Musk, one of President Trump’s main advisers, has not outlined a plan to reverse falling sales at Tesla. PAGE B1

OBITUARIES A23

An Oklahoma Leader

David L. Boren, 83, was governor and a powerful voice on national intelligence in the Senate before becoming president of the University of Oklahoma.



NATIONAL A13-22

McConnell Says He’ll Retire

Senator Mitch McConnell, the Kentucky Republican and longest-serving Senate leader, won’t seek re-election. PAGE A15

Taking On Trump Over Tolls

Janno Lieber has been congestion pricing’s biggest booster. Now he must face a challenge from D.C. PAGE A21

SPORTS B6-10

At Work (and at Bat) in the Lab

With a reinvigorated hitting laboratory at their spring training complex, the Mets are collecting data and learning how to use it to spur development at all levels in the organization. PAGE B6

‘Relationship of Dependence’

The man who coaches Elena Rybakina, the 2022 Wimbledon women’s singles champion, was barred from the WTA Tour for a year after an investigation discovered “abusive conduct.” PAGE B8

OPINION A24-25

Margaret Renkl

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WEEKEND ARTS C1-10

Cherishing a California Legacy

The Black culture of the fire-ravaged city of Altadena is receiving a new look. Above, the artist Kenturah Davis, who lost her home in the inferno. PAGE C1



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