

Trump Wooing  
A Voting Group  
He Stereotypes

Modest Gains Among  
African Americans

This article is by Maggie Haberman, Michael Gold and Shane Goldmacher.

He has repeatedly accused three Black prosecutors investigating him of “reverse racism.” He told a gathering of Black Republicans that Black people like him because he, too, has been charged by the criminal justice system. And he has suggested that Black people relate to his mug shot.

There’s a fundamental tension in Donald J. Trump’s attempts to woo Black voters — or peeling some from President Biden and toward a third-party or independent candidate such as Cornel West or Robert F. Kennedy Jr. — and it is part of his math for 2024. Public polling shows him faring better with Black voters than any Republican presidential candidate has in decades.

His campaign is relying on achieving modest gains with Black voters — or peeling some from President Biden and toward a third-party or independent candidate such as Cornel West or Robert F. Kennedy Jr. — and it is part of his math for 2024. Public polling shows him faring better with Black voters than any Republican presidential candidate has in decades.

Mr. Trump receives nearly four times the support from Black voters in polling than the 6 percent who actually voted for him in 2016, according to Pew Research Center data. He is vying for wins in states with major cities that have large Black populations, including Michigan, Wisconsin, Pennsylvania and Georgia. The margins of victory are expected to be small in those four states, where Mr. Trump hopes to offset his potential weaknesses with independent voters and suburban women.

Still, to the concern of Democrats, Mr. Trump’s economic and cultural pitch to Black voters, whom he has often called “the Blacks,” has shown some early resonance.

“The polling is coming out and they say ‘Wait a minute, there must be a mistake here. Black people really like Trump. There must be a mistake,’” Mr. Trump said at a Black Conservative Federation event last month, a pre-

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DOUG MILLS/THE NEW YORK TIMES

Donald J. Trump says Black voters relate to his mug shot.

Alaska Airlines Plane Was Set  
For Safety Check Before Blowout

By MARK WALKER and JAMES GLANZ

A day before the door plug blew out of an Alaska Airlines flight on Jan. 5, engineers and technicians for the airline were so concerned about the mounting evidence of a problem that they wanted the plane to come out of service the next evening and undergo maintenance, interviews and documents show.

But the airline chose to keep the plane, a Boeing 737 Max 9, in service on Jan. 5 with some restrictions, carrying passengers until it completed three flights that were scheduled to end that night in Portland, Ore., the site of one of the airline’s maintenance facilities.



HAIYUN JIANG FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Robert K. Hur, who investigated President Biden, said on Tuesday that he had done his work “fairly, thoroughly and professionally.”

A ‘Red Line’  
Can Be More  
Of a Smudge

By DAVID E. SANGER

WASHINGTON — When President Biden declared over the weekend that he was drawing a “red line” for Israel’s military action in Gaza, he appeared to be trying to raise the potential cost for Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu as their relationship

plummets to new depths. But he never said what would happen, exactly, if Mr. Netanyahu ignored him and continued Israel’s military operation by invading the southern city Rafah, a step that Mr. Biden has said — repeatedly — would be a major mistake. It is unclear whether he hesitated because he did not want to signal what response he might be preparing, or because he did not want to be criticized if he backed away from whatever action he is contemplating.

Or perhaps, given his long experience in the Senate and the White House, he remembered that drawing red lines turned out badly for Barack Obama when it came to Syria, and for George W. Bush when it came to North Korea and Iran. American allies in the Middle East were stunned by Mr. Obama’s reversal. Mr. Bush was later judged to have invaded a country that had no nuclear weapons — Iraq — while

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Russians Seize Advantage in Electronic Warfare

By THOMAS GIBBONS-NEFF and YURII SHYVALA

DONETSK REGION, Ukraine — The Ukrainian soldier swore and tore off his headset. His video monitor had gone blurry at first, the landscape of shattered trees and shell craters barely visible, before blacking out completely. The Russians had jammed the signal of his drone as it was flying outside the town of Kreminna in eastern Ukraine.

“Some days everything goes smoothly, other days the equipment breaks, the drones are fragile and there is jamming,” said the soldier, who goes by the call sign DJ and was speaking from his underground outpost a few miles from the front line.

For a while, the Ukrainians enjoyed a honeymoon period with

Equipment Is Jamming  
Signals Ukraine Uses  
to Operate Drones

their self-detonating drones that were used like homemade missiles. The weapons seemed like an effective alternative to artillery shells for striking Russian forces.

Now, the bad days are starting to outweigh the good ones: electronic countermeasures have become one of the Russian military’s most formidable weapons after years of honing their capabilities.

Electronic warfare remains a hidden hand in much of the war, and like Ukraine’s disadvantage in troop numbers and ammunition supplies, Ukraine suffers in this area in comparison to Russia.

Russia has more jamming equipment capable of overpowering Ukrainian signals by broadcasting on the same frequencies at higher power. It exhibits better coordination among their units.

With Western military aid looking far from certain and artillery ammunition running low, the pressure on Ukraine’s unmanned air capacity has only grown, leaving Kyiv’s forces in an increasingly perilous position.

Interviews with Ukrainian soldiers, commanders and military analysts say that Russia’s jamming capabilities are straining Ukraine’s limited supplies of off-

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ADMIRAL FIRED The Kremlin ousted its naval chief after a series of attacks by Ukraine. PAGE A7



DAVID GUTTENFELDER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Ukrainian soldiers DJ, left, and Tomas at a drone outpost among farmhouse ruins near Kreminna.

With Lackluster Growth, Dating Apps Are in Need of a Spark

By J. EDWARD MORENO

As online dating became as easy as swiping a finger across your phone screen, the companies that own apps like Tinder and Bumble became Wall Street darlings. But about a decade later, those platforms are struggling to live up to expectations, and investors have grown frustrated and eager for something new.

Match Group and Bumble — which make up nearly the entire industry by market share — have lost more than \$40 billion in market value since 2021. Even in an age when the apps are a staple on people’s smartphones, the two companies are laying off workers and reporting lackluster revenue growth.

Both companies have recently brought on leaders who have

Plenty of Fish in the Sea  
Are Not Down to Pay

vowed to experiment with new features, hoping to capture the growth investors crave. But they face one critical obstacle: Not enough young people are willing to pay for subscriptions to dating

THE WEATHER Today, dry, sunny, high 67. Tonight, partly cloudy, temperatures above average, low 52. Tomorrow, clouds and sun, near-record temperatures, high 70. Weather map is on Page B7.

SPECIAL COUNSEL  
DEFENDS CLAIMS  
ON BIDEN LAPSES

HEATED HOUSE HEARING

Under Attack From Both  
Parties, Hur Denies  
Political Motives

By GLENN THRUSH and LUKE BROADWATER

WASHINGTON — Robert K. Hur, the special counsel who investigated President Biden, on Tuesday fiercely defended the disparaging assessment of the president’s mental state included in his final report — and his decision not to charge Mr. Biden with a crime.

Mr. Hur, appearing before the House Judiciary Committee to answer questions about his polarizing 345-page report, cast himself as an impartial arbiter. He said he had expressed concerns about Mr. Biden’s memory because he needed to justify not bringing a case against Mr. Biden after some evidence showed that the president had willfully retained sensitive material from his vice presidency.

“I resolved to do the work as I did all my work for the department: fairly, thoroughly and professionally,” he said in his opening statement.

Mr. Hur, a registered Republican who has been slammed by Mr. Biden’s allies for including his politically damaging assessment of Mr. Biden’s memory, showed little emotion during the hearing, but reacted angrily when a Democrat suggested he had “smeared” the president to bolster Mr. Trump.

“Partisan politics played no part whatsoever in my work,” said Mr. Hur, 51, a former Trump Justice Department official whose appointment was lauded by some Democrats who praised his work as a prosecutor in Maryland.

About an hour before Mr. Hur testified, Democrats on the congressional panel released a lightly redacted transcript of the five-hour interview Mr. Hur and his team conducted with Mr. Biden. It offered a more nuanced portrayal than the special counsel’s damning description of the 81-year-old president as “a sympathetic, well-meaning, elderly man with a poor memory.”

While the 258-page transcript showed that on several occasions the president fumbled with dates and the sequence of events, he otherwise appeared clearheaded, with the kind of gaps in recollection not uncommon among people interviewed about events that transpired years earlier. But Mr. Biden did have difficulty recalling specific dates, most strikingly when he fumbled in remembering the day his son Beau — who succumbed to cancer in 2015 — died.

On Tuesday, it was Mr. Hur’s turn to answer tough questions.

For more than four enervating hours, he sat at the witness table as alternating Democrats and Republicans pelted him with angry questions, pausing only to berate one another, or to deliver high-volume partisan speeches as Mr. Hur perched on the edge of his chair.

The political dynamics of the hearing were basic, brutal and binary: Democrats defended Mr. Bi-

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India Enacts Citizenship Law

The act, criticized as anti-Muslim, is timed for Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s re-election campaign. PAGE A4

Social Media and the Crown

Britain’s younger royals initially embraced social media as a way to bypass the media they reviled. PAGE A10

NATIONAL A11-17

A Netflix Viewer’s Calling

During the pandemic, Jessica Jacobs binge-watched true crime shows. Inspired, she helped a lawyer win the exoneration of two inmates. PAGE A11

Nebraska Clean-Needle Bill

Legislators failed to override the governor’s veto of a bill to provide drug users with access to clean needles. PAGE A16

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A Slugger’s Homecoming

After 17 seasons with the Reds, Joey Votto, a native of Canada, is making a fresh start with the Blue Jays. PAGE B6



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‘Accidental Icon’ of Style

With nearly a million followers on social media, Lyn Slater, 70, has been upending traditional notions of aging. PAGE C5

Welcoming Back the Crowds

Covid brought live shows to a halt. Now the audiences have come roaring back, at least for some events. PAGE C1

BUSINESS B1-5

Surprising E.V. Success

BMW and Toyota went against conventional wisdom on electric vehicles, but they are making big profits and posing a real challenge for Tesla. PAGE B1

OBITUARIES B11-12

Frontman of the Raspberries

Eric Carmen sang on the power-pop group’s 1972 breakout track, “Go All the Way.” His solo soft-rock hits included “All by Myself.” He was 74. PAGE B11

OPINION A18-19

Peter Wehner

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FOOD D1-8

Cabbage Takes the Spotlight

This stolid supporting player has slowly risen to a starring role on the menus of some restaurants. Some diners, however, may need a little coaxing. PAGE D8

