



ADRIANA ZEHBRAUSKAS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

A soldier in Santa Teresa, N.M., at the southwestern border with Mexico, is one of thousands of combat troops who are now searching for migrants and smugglers.

Border Buildup
Trump Ordered
Keeps Growing

By ERIC SCHMITT and HELENE COOPER

DOUGLAS, Ariz. — In the past four months, the Pentagon has sent thousands of active-duty combat troops and armored Stryker combat vehicles to the southwestern border to confront what President Trump declared on his first day in office was an “invasion” of migrants, drug cartels and smugglers.

That’s not all. The military has also dispatched U-2 spy planes, surveillance drones, helicopters and even two Navy warships to surveil the borders and coasts round the clock.

The buildup of forces underscores how Mr. Trump is breaking with his predecessors’ practice of mostly limiting deployments along the U.S.-Mexico border to small numbers of active-duty soldiers and reservists. About 2,500 active-duty troops were on the border at the end of the Biden administration. Now there are about 8,600.

In a recent visit with troops in Arizona, New Mexico and Texas, the border was fairly calm. Crossings, which decreased sharply in the waning months of the Biden administration, have plummeted even further since the Trump administration declared its goal to obtain “100 percent” operational control of the boundary with Mexico. In April, about 8,000 people

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NATIONAL GUARD The Department of Homeland Security wants to use 20,000 troops. PAGE A11

Pledge to the Middle East: No More ‘Lectures’

By VIVIAN NEREIM

RIYADH, Saudi Arabia — When President Trump declared from the stage of an opulent ballroom in Saudi Arabia that the United States was done nation-building and intervening, that the world’s superpower would no longer be “giving you lectures on how to live,” his audience erupted in applause.

He was effectively denouncing decades of American policy in the Middle East, playing to grievances long aired in cafes and sitting rooms from Morocco to Oman.

Playing to Grievances,
President Sets Aside
Decades of Policy

“In the end, the so-called nation builders wrecked far more nations than they built,” Mr. Trump said on Tuesday, during a sweeping address at an investment conference in the Saudi capital of Riyadh. “And the interventionists were intervening in complex societies that they did not even understand.”

He urged the people of the region to chart “your own destinies in your own way.”

Reactions to his speech spread swiftly on mobile phone screens in a Middle East where the American invasions of Iraq and Afghanistan — and more recently, U.S. support for Israel as it intensifies its war in Gaza, which is on the brink of starvation — are ingrained in public consciousness and criticized by monarchists and dissidents alike.

Sultan Alamer, a Saudi academic, joked that Mr. Trump’s remarks sounded like they came from

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SAHER ALGHORRA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Strikes Kill Dozens in Gaza

The territory’s health ministry said many more were hurt in the attack, the latest in a series of recent Israeli airstrikes. Above, searching for victims in a destroyed building in Jabaliya. Page A6.

As White House Steers Justice Dept., Bondi Plays TV Messenger

By GLENN THRUSH

WASHINGTON — Pam Bondi, the attorney general of the United States, circled the Roosevelt Room in late February, handing out bulky white binders labeled “Epstein Files: Phase 1” to a conclave of Trump-allied influencers summoned to the White House for their first visit.

That Ms. Bondi, the nation’s top

law enforcement official, would prioritize a case of importance primarily to conspiracy theorists was telling. Anxious to appease the restive MAGA base, she hyped the disclosure as “breaking news” on Fox the night before, part of an effort to fulfill President Trump’s campaign promise to reveal new details on the financier Jeffrey Epstein’s misdeeds and death.

It was a dud. There were “no

Following Trump’s Lead
With Little Fuss

bombshells,” she said, according to one of those invited.

Later, activists on the right lashed out at Ms. Bondi. She responded by blaming others, and then dispatched F.B.I. agents and

prosecutors from the Justice Department’s national security division to scour the archives, officials familiar with the situation said. They found little. No one knows when Phase 2 is coming. But it is not likely to amount to much, those people said.

Ms. Bondi earned a reputation as a hard-charging prosecutor known for combating opioids and

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Trump’s Road
To a Welcome
For Afrikaners

This article is by Zolan Kanno-Youngs, Erica L. Green, John Eligon and Edward Wong.

WASHINGTON — It was May 2019 and national security officials were in the Situation Room discussing Iran when President Trump abruptly changed the subject. He wanted to talk about granting asylum and citizenship to white South African farmers.

Mr. Trump had floated the idea before, claiming that the farmers were a persecuted minority group being displaced from their land, according to John R. Bolton, his national security adviser at the time, who was at the meeting.

Mr. Bolton said he thought little of Mr. Trump’s wish. The president had embraced fringe ideas and false narratives pushed by white Afrikaner activists, Mr. Bolton said.

“It never amounted to anything, so I just put it as typical Trump,” Mr. Bolton recalled in a recent interview. “Some random person tells him something and he’s obsessed with it.”

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Custom Gene-Editing Treatment
Helps Baby in World’s First Case

By GINA KOLATA

Something was very wrong with Kyle and Nicole Muldoon’s baby.

The doctors speculated. Maybe it was meningitis? Maybe sepsis? They got an answer when KJ was only a week old. He had a rare genetic disorder, CPS1 deficiency, that affects just one in 1.3 million babies. If he survived, he would have severe mental and developmental delays and would eventually need a liver transplant. But half of all babies with the disorder die in the first week of life.

Doctors at Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia offered the Muldoons comfort care for their baby, a chance to forgo aggressive treatments in the face of a grim prognosis.

“We loved him, and we didn’t



MULDOON FAMILY

KJ Muldoon was born with a rare disorder, CPS1 deficiency.

want him to be suffering,” Ms. Muldoon said. But she and her husband decided to give KJ a chance.

Instead, KJ has made medical history. The baby, now 9½ months old, became the first patient of any

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ICE Targets Prized Kona Fields

The Trump crackdown has reached Hawaii, where immigrants are crucial to cultivating a rare coffee. PAGE A9

F.D.A. Looks to Curb Fluoride

The agency moved to pull from the market supplements that are given to children to prevent cavities. PAGE A14

INTERNATIONAL A4-8

Political Life After Populism?

Poland’s government is a centrist parliamentary coalition. To undo its predecessor’s democratic backsliding, it needs the presidency. PAGE A4

Ukraine Peace Talks Still On

The negotiations were rescheduled for Friday, after being delayed amid posturing and accusations. PAGE A8

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Designed G.M.’s Muscle Cars

William L. Porter helped create the exuberant shape of the Pontiac GTO and the Trans Am. He was 93. PAGE B12



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Offices for Rent . . . To Live In

The developer transforming a former Pfizer tower into apartments hopes tenants don’t mind Midtown. PAGE B1

Tesla Chair’s Stock Windfall

Robyn Denholm made \$198 million from selling shares in recent months, as the company’s profit fell. PAGE B1

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Her Leadership Is Nod to Dad

Natalie Nakase is guided by the tough-love lessons on hard work imparted by her father with a tilt of his head as she coaches the W.N.B.A.’s newest team, the Golden State Valkyries. PAGE B7

N.F.L. Schedule Release

Are the Giants doomed? Did the 49ers catch a break? The opening of pro football’s 2025 season is almost four months away, and not all schedules are created equal. PAGE B8

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W.J. Hennigan PAGE A22



WEEKEND ART C1-10

Blue Sky Vision for America

At the Whitney, Amy Sutherland’s color-drenched paintings of neighbors and dreamers and a kid on a slide challenge the conventions of portraiture. PAGE C1

