



JARED HAMILTON FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Flash Floods Kill at Least 9
Coal Run, Ky., was among the communities in the region hit by flooding. In Kentucky, over 1,000 rescues were reported. Page A20.

Trump’s Proposal to Seize Gaza Hovers Over Rubio’s Israel Visit

By **EDWARD WONG** and **ISABEL KERSHNER**
WASHINGTON — Secretary of State Marco Rubio met with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel in Jerusalem on Sunday, where they discussed President Trump’s insistent proposals for the United States to seize the devastated Gaza Strip and force out its Palestinian residents, among other matters.
The trip is Mr. Rubio’s first to the region as secretary of state, and comes as uncertainty is rising over whether Israel and Hamas

can or are willing to turn a tenuous cease-fire in Gaza into a permanent end to their war.
But Mr. Trump’s controversial vision for transforming Gaza into an American-owned “Riviera of the Middle East” has overshadowed those high-stakes negotiations, and Mr. Rubio is sure to be pressed for more clarity about the proposal during his visits in the coming days to Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.
Mr. Trump has “been very bold about what the future for Gaza should be, not the same tired ideas of the past,” Mr. Rubio said in prepared remarks delivered along-

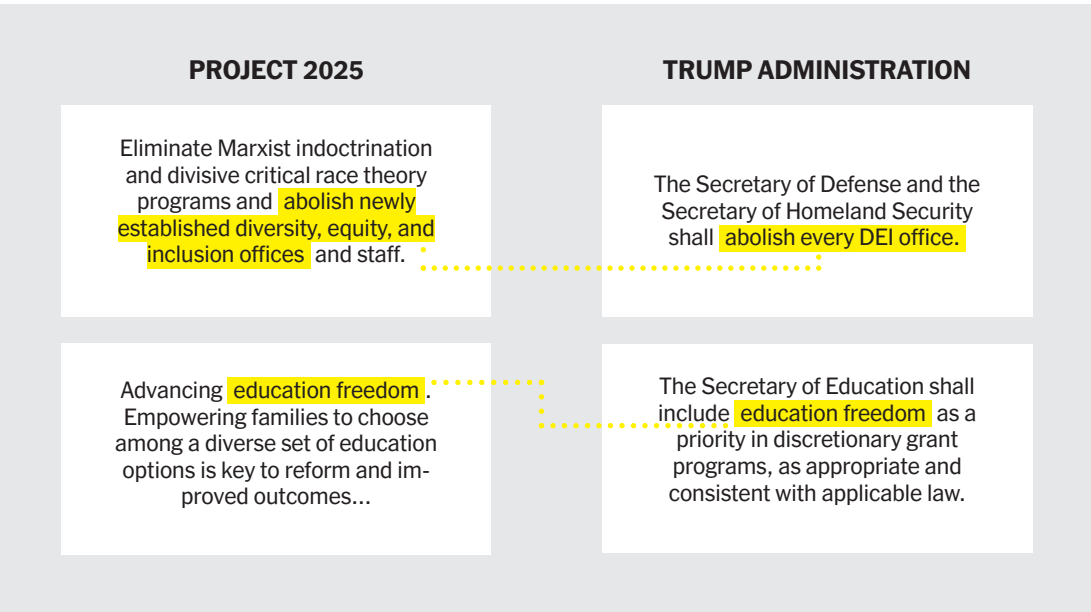
After Talks, Netanyahu Appears to Endorse Working on Plan

side Mr. Netanyahu on Sunday after the two met privately. “It may have shocked and surprised many, but what cannot continue is the same cycle where we repeat over and over again and wind up in the exact same place.”
Mr. Rubio also talked about the need to watch for any security threats arising from the new gov-

ernment in Syria, and the imperative to disarm Hezbollah in Lebanon. And he asserted that Iran is the “common theme in all of these challenges,” using more aggressive language to describe that nation than Mr. Trump typically does in calling it “the single greatest source of instability in the region.”
“Behind every terrorist group, behind every act of violence, behind every destabilizing activity, behind everything that threatens peace and stability for the millions of people who call this region home, is Iran,” Mr. Rubio said.
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Full of Dismay, Liberal Donors Pull Back Cash

This article is by **Lisa Lerer, Reid J. Epstein and Theodore Schleifer**.
The demoralization and fear gripping blue America in the early weeks of President Trump’s administration have left liberal groups and their allies struggling for cash, hurting their ability to effectively combat the right-wing transformation of the federal government.
The small-dollar online spigot that powered opposition to the first Trump administration has slowed to a trickle as shaken liberal voters withhold their donations.
Charitable foundations that have long supported causes like voting rights, L.G.B.T.Q. equality and immigrants’ rights are pulling back, devoting time to prepare for expected investigations from the Republican-led Congress.
And some of the country’s biggest liberal donors have paused giving, frustrated with what they see as Democrats’ lack of vision and worried about retaliation from a vengeful president. Some Democrats say a few of their reliable donors are now openly supporting Mr. Trump, or at least looking to curry favor with him.
Fund-raising slowdowns are common after a presidential defeat and before marquee midterm races fully begin. But interviews with more than 50 donors, strategists and leaders of activist organizations show that many Democrats believe this year is different.
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Echoes of Project 2025
President Trump has sought to distance himself from the right-wing blueprint to overhaul the federal government, but more than 60 of his directives so far mirror the authors’ proposals. Page A14.

How Dementia Derails Plans for Assisted Dying

By **STEPHANIE NOLEN**
CASTRICUM, The Netherlands — Soon, Irene Mekel will need to pick the day she dies.
She’s not in any hurry: She quite likes her life, in a trim, airy house in Castricum, a Dutch village by the sea. She has flowers growing in her back garden, and there is a street market nearby where vendors greet villagers by name. But if her life is going to end the way she wants, she will have to pick a date, sooner than she might like.

THE FINAL CHOICE
A Delicate Negotiation
“It’s a tragedy,” she said.
Ms. Mekel, 82, has Alzheimer’s disease. It was diagnosed a year ago. She knows her cognitive function is slowly declining, and she knows what is coming. She spent years working as a nurse, and she cared for her sister, who had vascular dementia. For now, she is managing, with help from her three children and a big

screen in the corner of the living room that they update remotely to remind her of the date and any appointments.
In the not-so-distant future, it will no longer be safe for her to stay at home alone. She had a bad fall and broke her elbow in August. She does not feel she can live with her children, who are busy with careers and children of their own. She is determined that she will never move to a nursing home, which she considers an intolerable loss of dignity. As a
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NEWS ANALYSIS

Western Allies Seem on Brink Of Fateful Rift

Europeans Fear Putin Wants to Split NATO

By **DAVID E. SANGER** and **STEVEN ERLANGER**
MUNICH — Many critical issues were left uncertain — including the fate of Ukraine — at the end of Europe’s first encounter with an angry and impatient Trump administration. But one thing was clear: An epochal breach appears to be opening in the Western alliance.
After three years of war that forged a new unity within NATO, the Trump administration has made clear it is planning to focus its attention elsewhere: in Asia, Latin America, the Arctic and anywhere President Trump believes the United States can obtain critical mineral rights.
European officials who emerged from a meeting with Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth said they now expect that tens of thousands of American troops will be pulled out of Europe — the only question is how many, and how fast.
And they fear that in one-on-one negotiations with President Vladimir V. Putin of Russia, Mr. Trump is on his way to agreeing to terms that could ultimately put Moscow in a position to own a fifth of Ukraine and to prepare to take the rest in a few years’ time. Mr. Putin’s ultimate goal, they believe, is to break up the NATO alliance.
Those fears spilled out on the stage of the Munich Security Conference on Saturday morning, when President Volodymyr Zelensky declared that “Ukraine will never accept deals made behind our backs.” He then called optimistically for the creation of an “army of Europe,” one that includes his now battle-hardened Ukrainian forces. He was advocating, in essence, a military
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TIT-FOR-TAT RATES SET WORLD STAGE FOR TARIFF HAVOC

RISK OF SUPPLY STRAIN

A Monumental Puzzle for Firms to Navigate at Home and Abroad

By **PETER S. GOODMAN**
The world economy was already grappling with a perplexing assortment of variables, from geopolitical conflicts and a slowdown in China to the evolving complexities of climate change. Then, President Trump unleashed a plan to uproot decades of trade policy.
In starting a process to impose so-called reciprocal tariffs on American trading partners, Mr. Trump increased volatility for international businesses. He broadened the scope of his unfolding trade war.
In basic concept, the argument for reciprocal tariffs is straightforward: Whatever levies American companies face in exporting their wares to another country should apply to imports from that same country. Mr. Trump has long championed this principle, presenting it as a simple matter of fairness — redress to the fact that many American trading partners maintain higher tariffs.
Yet in practice, calculating individual tariff rates on thousands of products drawn from more than 150 countries poses a monumental problem of execution for a vast range of companies, from American manufacturers dependent on imported parts to retailers that buy their goods from overseas.
“It’s potentially a herculean task,” said Ted Murphy, an international trade expert at Sidley Austin, a law firm in Washington. “For every widget, every tariff classification, you can have 150 different duty rates. You’ve got Albania to Zimbabwe.”
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With the Cost of Eggs Soaring, Breakfast Diners Feel the Pinch

By **JULIE CRESWELL**
Karen Huebner did not want to raise the price of omelets.
Even as she was paying more for eggs week after week, she held prices steady on over-easy dishes and breakfast burritos and other customer favorites at the Hot Grillz Diner, the small restaurant her family owns in Walton Hills, Ohio, about 15 miles southeast of Cleveland.
But last week, as shortages pushed the cost of her egg order to nearly \$1,000, from \$300 about a month ago, the moment had arrived.
“I said I wasn’t going to do it, but this is crushing me,” Ms. Huebner said. “My loyal customers would rather pay 50 cents more an egg right now than to see these doors close because I can’t pay my rent.”
As the wholesale price of eggs — what retailers and restaurants pay — rises, hitting a new high of \$8.11 a dozen, breakfast specials at some restaurants are getting more expensive.
Waffle House announced on Feb. 3 that it would add a temporary surcharge of 50 cents for each egg used in dishes. Across the country, smaller restaurant chains and bakeries that use a lot of eggs are either bumping prices up or adding temporary surcharges, trying to pass along some of the expense to inflation-weary customers.
“If you raise prices too much,
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DANIEL LOZADA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Egg wholesale prices hit a new high of \$8.11 a dozen last week.

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An Ideal Born in Blood
A president’s murder almost 150 years ago effectively gave birth to the nation’s nonpartisan civil service. PAGE A13

‘Rocket City’ Braces for Impact
In Huntsville, Ala., a city fueled by defense and aerospace, anxiety grows as federal jobs are slashed. PAGE A12



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Rescuing Women From ISIS
No international body is searching for Yazidi women and girls held captive by Islamist terrorists. Their fates depend on an army of activists. PAGE A9

Activist Turned Coup Plotter?
A woman who runs a pro-Ukraine group has been accused by Prime Minister Robert Fico of Slovakia of plotting to topple him. PAGE A4

Pope Remains Hospitalized
The 88-year-old pontiff, who has been battling health problems for years, is being treated for bronchitis at the Policlinico Agostino Gemelli. PAGE A7

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Duke’s Freshman Sensation
It was long ago accepted that Cooper Flagg would be the best player in college basketball this season. But could he be the best freshman ever? PAGE D1

Mayhem on the Ice
Team USA’s match against Canada in the N.H.L.’s 4 Nations Face-Off featured three fights in nine seconds. PAGE D3

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Lena Richard hosted a cooking show years before Julia Child did, exploring Southern flavors. Overlooked. PAGE B5

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Vance’s TikTok Problem
The vice president is in a tricky position as he looks for a deal to save the popular short-form video app. PAGE B1

Where China’s Exports Begin
A fast-growing industry is churning out cheap clothes and toys that are flooding the world duty-free. PAGE B1



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The Landscape of Sound
In a new show at the Whitney Museum, Christine Sun Kim measures sonic experience beyond the ear. PAGE C1

Meaningful Mentalist
For his show, Vinny DePonto says he is not so much into reading thoughts as he is into planting them. PAGE C1

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