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The New York Times

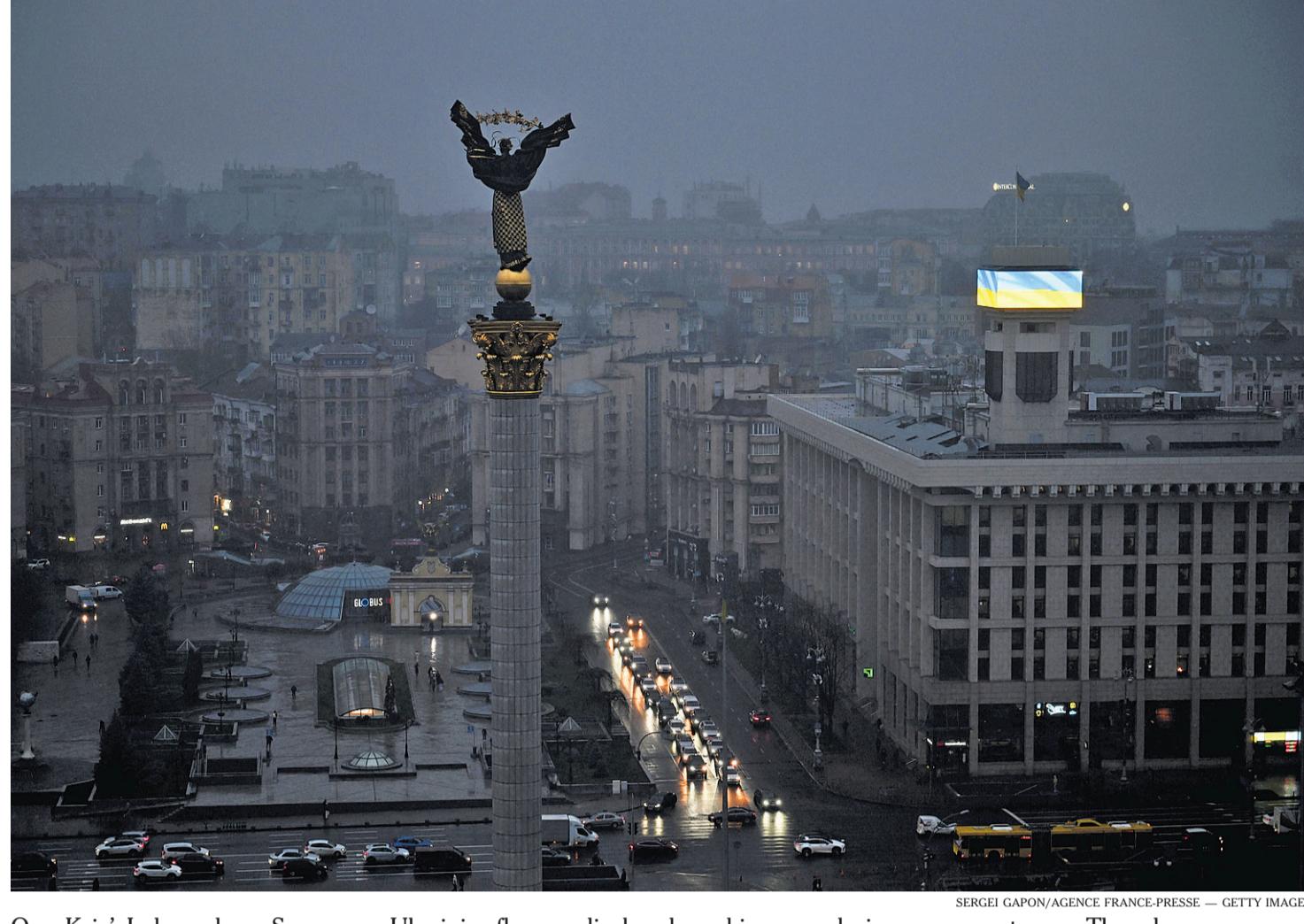
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Prices in Canada may be higher

\$4.00



Over Kyiv's Independence Square as a Ukrainian flag was displayed on a big screen during a power outage on Thursday.

Can Zelensky Beat the Odds Once Again?

By CASSANDRA VINOGRAD and ANDREW E. KRAMER

KYIV, Ukraine — It is another make-or-break moment of wartime leadership for President Volodymyr Zelensky of Ukraine.

Late last week, the Trump administration delivered to Mr. Zelensky a 28-point peace plan that many Ukrainians and their Western allies have called a wish list for Russia, a reward for its aggression and a betrayal of Ukraine. The Ukrainian leader was given seven days to either accept it or potentially watch the United States walk away from any remaining support.

President Trump appears to be doubling down on his statement earlier this year that Ukraine doesn't "have the cards" to keep fighting, with Mr. Zelensky's gov-



OZAN KOSE/AFP — GETTY IMAGES
President Volodymyr Zelensky of Ukraine on Wednesday.

ernment now under pressure from battlefield losses and a major corruption scandal. But through nearly four years of war, analysts say, Mr. Zelensky has often played weak hands wisely.

While he has publicly acknowledged that the American proposal poses one of the gravest challenges ever to Ukraine, it has also inadvertently strengthened Mr. Zelensky at home, at least for the time being. The 28-point plan has shifted the focus away from a graft scandal that has reached his inner circle and threatened to paralyze his government, allowing Mr. Zelensky to reprise his most successful role: as rally-er in chief.

"When Zelensky is cornered, he tends to go on the offensive," said Viktor Shlinchak, the head of the Institute of World Policy, an analytical research group.

Perhaps in his tightest corner yet, Mr. Zelensky must decide

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Focus on Patel In SWAT Use For Girlfriend

This article is by Alan Feuer, Adam Goldman and Glenn Thrush.

When Alexis Wilkins, an aspiring country singer dating the F.B.I. director, Kash Patel, sang "The Star-Spangled Banner" at the National Rifle Association's annual convention in Atlanta in the spring, she arrived with a formidable protective posse — a SWAT team from the bureau's local field office.

The two agents, members of a specialized unit trained to storm barricaded buildings and rescue hostages, had been sent there on Mr. Patel's orders.

But seeing that the event at the Georgia World Congress Center had been secured, and that Ms. Wilkins was in no apparent danger, they left before the event was over, according to six people with knowledge of the incident.

She noticed. So did her boyfriend.

Soon after, Mr. Patel ripped into the team's commander, saying that his girlfriend had been left without taxpayer-funded defenders, and slamming what he saw as failure to communicate their movements up the chain of command during her time on the convention floor — where she sang and chatted with attendees, the people said.

He was concerned that Ms. Wilkins, a high-profile conservative, might be attacked by people who had threatened her online.

Mr. Patel's heavy use of taxpayer-funded resources during his first nine months on the job has contributed to growing questions inside the administration about whether it exceeds the bounds of standard practice. This includes an intense use of security to protect himself and his girlfriend.

He has also used a government jet for some of his recreational travel, such as a golf trip with buddies to a private resort in Scotland over the summer.

Directors must fly on government aircraft for their travel because of required access to secure communications equipment. But using government jets for business trips, or to return home if they have left settled lives in other parts of the country to serve in Washington, requires planning and coordination.

Government security protection for Ms. Wilkins to attend events or performances has

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NEWS ANALYSIS

A MAGA Gladiator's Journey From the Arena Into Exile

By ROBERT DRAPER

WASHINGTON — Marjorie Taylor Greene arrived in Washington in January 2021 as a lusty warrior for the recently defeated Donald J. Trump. Less than five years later, she appears to have lost all appetite for fighting.

On Friday, even her close associates were stunned after the three-term Georgia congresswoman posted a 10-minute video on X announcing that she would be vacating her office on Jan. 5, one year before her term expires. One associate said that she did not inform her inner circle until

about 20 minutes before her video went up.

In it, Ms. Greene insisted that her decision had everything to do with her disillusionment with the current sorry state of politics and was not a politically calculated "4-D chess game" on her part.

Few believed her. The question, "What is going on with MTG?" has consumed Washington in recent weeks.

The answer, according to interviews with friends and associates, is that she did not inform her inner circle until

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lations in 2023 and agreed to pay a \$4.3 billion penalty to the U.S. government after processing transactions for terrorist groups like Hamas and Al Qaeda. Last year, it declared that the crypto industry was "an extremely unwelcoming place to bad actors."

At the same time, Mr. Trump has made crypto a cornerstone of his family business and ended a regulatory clampdown on the industry. Shortly before the 2024 election, he and his sons founded World Liberty Financial, a crypto start-up that is poised to generate tens of millions of dollars a year from the business deal involving

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On Farms, Black and White South Africans Fight Crime Together

By JOHN ELIGON

BRITS, South Africa — The last straw for Michael Mogale and Peet Van Staden came on a brisk, clear morning in mid-April when they found themselves standing over a dead body.

Splayed on the edge of a wheat pasture two hours north of Johannesburg, the victim had bloodstains on his face after being beaten to death with wooden sticks. His cheeks, eyes and lips were swollen to a pulp.

Mr. Mogale, who is Black, and Mr. Van Staden, who is white and Afrikaner, arrived at this dreadful moment from different backgrounds, but found common ground in the need to stop the violence afflicting South Africa.

With a murder rate about six times that of the United States, Africa's largest economy has a serious crime problem; that is not in dispute. But in the months leading up to this murder in a rural community near the town of Brits, President Trump had been misrepresenting the violence to support his immigration policy.

Mr. Trump has suggested that Afrikaners, who descend from European colonizers, are being targeted in a "genocide," though police statistics show that to be untrue. He has used the claim to justify punishing South Africa with high tariffs, cutting aid to the country and making Afrikaners virtually the only group allowed to seek refugee status in the United States.

He then boycotted the Group of 20 summit in Johannesburg this



Peet Van Staden on his farm at the edge of Brits, South Africa, where he discovered a dead body.

past weekend because of the Afrikaner issue.

None of the politics mattered to the two men standing over the body. Mr. Van Staden, a third-generation farmer, owned the farm where the killing happened; the victim, a Black father from neighboring Malawi, worked there as a security guard. Mr. Mogale, a mining consultant, lived across the road in an all-Black settlement of mostly tin shacks, where the com-

munity had grown fed up with crime and feared they could suffer the same fate as the security guard.

Residents along this stretch of vegetable farms surrounded by heaping granite mines say crime affects everyone — Black and white, rich and poor — and all they wanted was for the perpetrators to be caught and handed over to the police.

South Africa's national police

force is stretched so thin that officers struggle to monitor rural areas like Brits. It can take hours to respond to emergencies. Citizen-led community groups often step in to fill the void.

Groups made up mostly of Afrikaner farmers usually patrol the vast network of farms in their pickup trucks, while Black residents typically monitor their settlements on foot. But Mr. Mogale

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INTERNATIONAL A4-10

Bolsonaro's Ankle Monitor

Shortly before he was expected to start serving a 27-year sentence, Brazil's former president took a soldering iron to his tracking device.

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COP30 Climate Summit Ends

The final agreement, with no direct mention of the fossil fuels dangerously heating Earth, was a victory for oil-producing countries.

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Claiming a Legacy in Finland

Sanna Marin became prime minister at 34. Two years after leaving office, she is trying to turn a dancing video scandal into a battle cry.

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BUSINESS B1-6

Tariffs That Can Cause Agita

Some Italian pasta makers, accused of dumping their product in the U.S., face duties of over 100 percent.

PAGE B1

Chinese Influence in A.I. Race

Silicon Valley executives paint China as the enemy, but they rely on workers from there for U.S. research.

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Nicole Gelinas

SPORTS D1-8

Bullish on His N.F.L. Team

The hedge fund titan David Tepper, who bought the Carolina Panthers in 2018 for a record-setting price and has been unpopular since, sees hope despite some rocky recent times.

PAGE D1

A Winner With Baggage

Will Wade, a college basketball coach who was embroiled in scandal at Louisiana State, has received another chance at North Carolina State. "Let's see if it works," he told the school.

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THE WEATHER

Today, breezy with sun and some afternoon clouds, high 52. Tonight, mostly cloudy, low 41. Tomorrow, cloudy with some rain late in the day, high 53. Weather map, Page D8.

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