

# Seeming to Pivot, Rubio Says U.S. Will Not ‘Run’ Venezuela



Maduro supporters responded to a call from his son to gather on Sunday in Caracas, capital of a nation of about 30 million people.

## Venezuelans in Colombia Rejoice, but Aren’t Ready to Rush Home

**By MAX BEARAK**

CÚCUTA, Colombia — The dream of returning had grown distant for millions of Venezuelans who had fled their government’s crushing of dissent and an economy in free fall.

“If I speak from my heart, I had utterly lost hope,” said Jorge Colmenares, 50, who left seven years ago. For him, selling caramel candy at red lights on the streets of a Colombian border city was a step up from living out of cardboard boxes on the streets of his own homeland with his wife and young children.

But even if he knew the road to returning remained uncertain after an American attack deposed

Venezuela’s autocratic leader, Nicolás Maduro — whom he called “the head of the gang of our torturers” — Mr. Colmenares wept Saturday night. So did many other Venezuelans in exile. Their tears were brought on both by hope that going home might be close at hand and by the pain from the years of privation and tragedy that had befallen them.

“When I think of my land, the beaches,” Mr. Colmenares said, before he broke down in sobs as he spoke in Cúcuta, along Colombia’s border with Venezuela. “My parents who died and I couldn’t see them, my brothers and my son who crossed the Darién.”

In recent years, hundreds of thousands of Venezuelans have

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Venezuelans in Cúcuta, Colombia’s busiest border crossing with Venezuela, on Saturday celebrated Nicolás Maduro’s capture.

## Path to Revoke Adams Orders Is a Tightrope

*This article is by Liam Stack, Sally Goldenberg, Nicholas Fandos and Jeffery C. Mays.*

Mayor Zohran Mamdani knew he faced a dilemma, even as the confetti rained down on the jubilant crowd at his inauguration on Thursday.

Among the tasks left for him by his predecessor, Eric Adams, was a raft of executive orders that Mr. Mamdani would have to immediately reaffirm or revoke — including two politically delicate measures related to Israel and anti-semitism.

Mr. Mamdani, a staunch critic of Israel and its treatment of Palestinians, knew from the moment he won the election that he would not extend the Israel-related orders, according to three people involved in the deliberations. But his team also believed rescinding them would upset some Jewish groups that Mr. Mamdani had spent months trying to reassure.

His lawyers laid out a few options in recent days, including canceling all of Mr. Adams’s orders from 2025 or taking them one by one, according to one of the people involved with the decision-making. Mr. Mamdani chose a

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**OBJECTION** The mayor of New York broke with the president on the Venezuela raid. PAGE A14

## How Putin’s War Machine Brutalizes Its Soldiers

*This article is by Paul Sonne, Anton Troianovski, Milana Mazaeva, Nataliya Vasilyeva and Alina Lobzina.*

President Vladimir V. Putin of Russia has built a war machine in Ukraine with an insatiable demand for men.

Underpinning that machine is a pattern of brutality and coercion in which commanders dole out abuse as punishment while exploiting soldiers — even the gravely ill or injured — to keep them on the battlefield, an investigation by The New York Times has found.

### Rampant, Even Lethal Abuse, in Thousands of Complaints

Mr. Putin has hailed the troops fighting his war of attrition as sacred heroes, and Russian society as the most important weapon in his forces’ advance on the battlefield. But more than 6,000 confidential complaints about the war reviewed by The Times show that anger and discontent simmer be-

neath the surface as the Russian leader’s methods for sustaining the war destroy countless military families.

“We’ve been living in fear for three years, keeping silent about everything,” the wife of a soldier from Saratov, a city in southwestern Russia, wrote in one complaint. “I’m being torn apart on the inside from the injustice!”

Thousands of those petitioning the Russian government struggle to get answers about their missing or imprisoned loved ones. More than 1,500 of them describe

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Soldiers’ graves in Russia’s Murmansk region. Complaints were inadvertently made public online.

## America Enters a Risky New Era of Control

**By DAVID E. SANGER and TYLER PAGER**

President Trump’s declaration on Saturday that the United States planned to “run” Venezuela for an unspecified period, issuing orders to its government and exploiting its vast oil reserves, plunged the United States into a risky new era in which it will seek economic and political dominance over a nation of roughly 30 million people.

Speaking at his Mar-a-Lago private club just hours after Nicolás Maduro, the leader of Venezuela, and his wife were seized from their bedroom by U.S. forces, Mr. Trump told reporters that Delcy Rodríguez, who served as Mr. Maduro’s vice president, would hold power in Venezuela as long as she “does what we want.”

Ms. Rodríguez, however, showed little public interest in doing the Americans’ bidding. In a national address, she accused Washington of invading her country under false pretenses and asserted that Mr. Maduro was still Venezuela’s head of state. “What is being done to Venezuela is a barbarity,” she said.

Mr. Trump and his top national security advisers carefully avoided describing their plans for Venezuela as an occupation, akin to what the United States did after defeating Japan, or toppling Saddam Hussein in Iraq. Instead, they vaguely sketched out an arrangement that sounded like a mix of economic coercion and a guardianship over the country: The United States will provide a vision for how Venezuela should be run and will expect the interim government to carry that out in a transition period, under the threat of further military intervention.

By Sunday morning, with Mr. Trump’s repeated declaration that the administration would “run” Venezuela ricocheting around foreign capitals, Marco Rubio, the secretary of state and national security adviser, complained that people were “fixating” on the president’s declaration.

“It’s not ‘running,’” he said, clearly distancing himself from Mr. Trump’s words. “It’s running policy, the policy with regards to this.”

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## Oil ‘Quarantine’ Will Keep Grip on Caracas

**By EDWARD WONG**

WASHINGTON — Secretary of State Marco Rubio on Sunday appeared to pivot away from President Trump’s assertion a day earlier that the United States would “run” Venezuela, emphasizing instead that the administration would keep a military “quarantine” in place on the country’s oil exports to exert leverage on the new leadership there.

When asked how the United States planned to govern Venezuela, Mr. Rubio did not lay out a plan for a U.S. occupation authority, like the one that the George W. Bush administration put in place in Baghdad during the Iraq war, but instead spoke of coercing a Venezuelan government run by allies of the jailed leader Nicolás Maduro to make policy changes.

U.S. forces will continue to prevent oil tankers on a U.S. sanctions list from entering and leaving the country until the government opens up the state-controlled oil industry to foreign investment — presumably giving priority to U.S. companies — and makes other changes, he said on “Face the Nation” on CBS News.



Secretary of State Marco Rubio described U.S. “leverage.”

“That remains in place, and that’s a tremendous amount of leverage that will continue to be in place until we see changes, not just to further the national interest of the United States, which is No. 1, but also that lead to a better future for the people of Venezuela,” he said.

And in a testy exchange later on “Meet the Press” on NBC News, Mr. Rubio complained that people were “fixating” on Mr. Trump’s declaration at a news conference in Florida on Saturday that the U.S. government would run Venezuela. He added that “it’s not running.”

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### CONGRESSIONAL MEMO

## Is There a Way for Lawmakers To Push Back? Is There a Will?

**By CARL HULSE**

WASHINGTON — Congress learned some hard lessons about the limits of its power during the first year of the second Trump administration, when Republican leaders in both chambers largely declined to check a president unconstrained by law or custom.

President Trump barreled ahead with scant deference to the House and Senate. He abruptly changed the name of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, summarily withheld funds from congressional priorities, claimed broad tariff power that the Constitution invests in Congress, and launched military attacks in the Caribbean and Venezuela without authorization from the legislative branch.

Now, with midterm elections that will decide control of Con-

gress less than a year off and with lawmakers hearing from anxious constituents about high prices and economic distress, Congress must decide whether to try to assert itself more and reclaim some of the power it has ceded to the president, or to continue to accept a shrinking role and diminished status.

“The president would be better off if the Republican House pushed back more,” said Representative Don Bacon, a Nebraska Republican who has sometimes opposed Mr. Trump’s policies and approach. “I think his tariff policy would be better. I think it would be better on Ukraine. I think we could push him in a much better direction if he was open to it.”

“But,” added Mr. Bacon, who

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Unrivaled, a women’s league, enters its second season, with some old stars out and new ones taking the court. PAGE D6

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A thoroughly modern player entered the eclectic world of purists who play with obsolete hickory clubs. PAGE D1



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In Crans-Montana, where at least 40 people died, residents struggled to make sense of the disaster. PAGE A5

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How President Trump has rapidly reshaped America’s climate and energy landscape in the past year. PAGE A18

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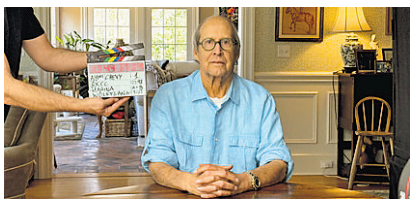
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As the Trump administration lifts regulations, deal making is heating up. Bank executives are looking at hedge-fund-level compensation. PAGE B1

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Steep import taxes have raised prices and affected U.S. businesses, but not quite as much as expected. A new report offers some reasons. PAGE B1

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The opera star Marina Viotti was a heavy-metal singer and has a master’s in literature and philosophy. PAGE C1

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The prickly comedian found a sympathetic adversary in the director of a CNN documentary about him. PAGE C1



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Diane Crump, 77, was the first female jockey to compete in the first jewel of horse racing’s Triple Crown. PAGE B5

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Pamela Colman Smith hand-painted around 80 illustrations for the Rider-Waite tarot deck. Overlooked. PAGE B6

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