

WHITE HOUSE MEMO

If Not Heaven, Mt. Rushmore Or a New Coin

Trump Mulls Eternity Amid Life of Scandal

By PETER BAKER

WASHINGTON — A few weeks ago, President Trump momentarily dropped the bombast and the playground insults and the self-congratulation to muse about his eternal soul. “I want to try and get to heaven, if possible,” he said. “I’m hearing I’m not doing well. I am really at the bottom of the totem pole.”

Prodded by a reporter last month to elaborate, he repeated the lament without much more explanation. “I’m being a little cute,” he said. But he went on: “I don’t think there’s anything that’s going to get me into heaven. I think I’m not maybe heaven-bound.”

Mr. Trump is hardly the first 79-year-old to dwell on what may come after he departs this mortal coil — or to wonder whether he has earned entry into the pearly gates. But it is so unlike Mr. Trump to express self-doubt that his public rumination has raised questions. What is on his mind lately that makes him fear his fate in the hereafter? What sins might he be regretting?

He has not clarified his thinking, at least not on camera, nor for that matter has he shown any public signs of repentance for scandals that he may believe hold him back from grace. And yet the president’s curious contemplation comes at a time when Mr. Trump seems to be seeking a form of immortality. If absolutism is out of reach, perhaps there are more achievable ways of living beyond his natural time on this earth.

And so, the man who over a long career in business slapped his name on buildings around the world now seems intent on leaving his mark in even more grandiose fashion. He demolished the East Wing of the White House last month to make way for a

Continued on Page 16

UNCERTAINTY Despite judicial orders, food assistance will probably still be interrupted. PAGE 23



At 103, He Has Stayed on the Job

Five Japanese age 100 or older, including Seichi Ishii, explained why they’re still working. Page 10.

Frazzled Burglars Left Clues at the Louvre

By CATHERINE PORTER

PARIS — Holly Barker and her husband, Jake, were third in line at the Louvre the morning of Oct. 19.

The couple from Indianapolis had a plan — head straight for the Mona Lisa, before the crowds, then shoot toward Delacroix’s “Liberty Leading the People” and a famous painting of Napoleon by Jacques-Louis David. Fourth stop was a place they had heard was a mini version of Versailles’ Hall of

Mirrors: the Apollo Gallery, with its collection of royal jewels.

It was 9:32 when Ms. Barker stepped inside the gilded hall and took a photo. As Ms. Barker stopped to admire a wedding gift that Napoleon had given his second wife — a necklace glittering with 32 emeralds and more than

1,100 diamonds — she heard the first of three loud bangs. It was 9:34, and masked thieves were about to barge through the window.

The room froze, suspended for a moment of confusion, according to her husband, who locked eyes with her. Then they heard a piercing sound from the balcony outside: The thieves were firing up a disc grinder that could cut through reinforced glass.

“The attendant said ‘Everyone

Continued on Page 8

Cuomo Is Betting ‘Our City’ Has Not Changed

By MATT FLEGENHEIMER

Andrew M. Cuomo, tieless but never casual, was making a familiar point in an unfamiliar place.

“You know, government is supposed to function,” Mr. Cuomo, the 67-year-old candidate for mayor of New York City, told Logan Paul, the 30-year-old influencer-wrestler-bro, seated recently in a luxury hotel room between at least six bottles of Paul-branded energy drinks and two Paul-branded snack packs. “It’s not a debating society.”

The host had something to add. “EYOOOOOOOOOO.”

Suddenly Mr. Paul was shouting, transition-less, at his great many podcast listeners, smash-cutting to a prerecorded ad break about professional wrestling merch.

Thirty-two seconds later, Mr. Cuomo had the floor again.

“There was a great senator, Ted Kennedy, God rest his soul . . .”

There was a governor, Andrew Cuomo, God rest his decade ruling Albany, who would have sooner traveled the state by Winnebago with Bill de Blasio, his sworn nem-



Andrew M. Cuomo, pressing, pleading and seeing what sticks.

esis, than submit to the sundry humiliations of the modern underdog campaign.

Now, straining to catch Zohran Mamdani, the Democratic nominee, in the closing stages of this mayoral race, Mr. Cuomo has shown far more hustle than he did in his languid primary bid — sitting with seniors and shock-jocks, semi-smiling for cellphone selfies,

play-grabbing the shoulders of men with silver hair who said they remembered his father.

He has embraced schlocky A.I.-generated advertising to depict Mr. Mamdani as a secondary character from the Austin Powers franchise; adopted a high-pitched voice to play the role of New Yorker Grateful for Andrew Cu-

Continued on Page 20

Housing Work Helped Shape Mamdani’s Vision

By MIHIR ZAVERI

Assemblyman Zohran Mamdani has managed a State Senate campaign. He’s been a tutor and a rapper. And in 2016, he helped his mother, the director Mira Nair, with the music in her movie, “Queen of Katwe.”

But his first and only full-time job outside of politics involved counseling struggling homeowners at a small nonprofit in Queens.

Mr. Mamdani’s work at the nonprofit, the Chhaya Community Development Corporation, has mostly been an aside in this year’s mayoral campaign, occasionally mentioned by his opponents to criticize his comparatively thin résumé.

But a closer look at his year there, based on accounts from current and former co-workers and his past statements, shows how Chhaya laid the path for his rise and sharpened his politics into a message of empathy that has resonated with New Yorkers amid the worst housing shortage in nearly 60 years.

Housing is a top issue in the mayor’s race. The focus of both



Zohran Mamdani spent time at a nonprofit fighting foreclosures.

leading candidates, Mr. Mamdani, 34, and former Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo, 67, has mostly been on renters, who make up roughly two-thirds of New York City residents. Mr. Mamdani’s rallying cry to “freeze the rent” helped propel him to a decisive victory in the Democratic primary.

Still, some three million New Yorkers live in homes that are

owned and not rented. Many city leaders, including Mayor Eric Adams and Adrienne Adams, the City Council speaker, have spoken about the need to do more to help

Continued on Page 21

SUPPORT Barack Obama praised Zohran Mamdani’s run and vowed to be a “sounding board.” PAGE 21

INTERNATIONAL 4-12	ARTS & LEISURE	SUNDAY STYLES	ONLINE	SUNDAY OPINION
A Belarusian Love Story	Rosalía and Her Rhythms	Nice Phone. Now Put It Down.	World Series Game 7	The Editorial Board
Two journalists, both in detention, remain committed to each other and their work despite President Aleksandr Lukashenko’s repression. PAGE 4	The Spanish musician talks about her new album, “Lux,” a labor of love exploring the feminine divine and the brutalities of romance. PAGE 13	The Lamp Club is one of many “neo-Luddite” groups across the country that encourage people to transform their relationship to technology. PAGE 7	For coverage of Saturday’s decisive Dodgers-Blue Jays matchup, log on to nytimes.com/theathletic. Monday’s print edition will have further coverage.	PAGES 6-7

Regent

SEVEN SEAS CRUISES

EXPERIENCE THE UNRIVALED

ADVERTISEMENT

black FRIDAY BONUS

UP TO 40% SAVINGS on select suite categories PLUS \$500 SHIPBOARD CREDIT*

VISIT RSSC.COM/BLACK-FRIDAY-BONUS TO LEARN MORE

*For applicable sailings and full Terms and Conditions, visit RSSC.com/legal