windy, high 53. Tonight, cloudy, di-

minishing winds early, low 39. Tomorrow, clouds, some sun, breezy, high 59. Weather map, Page B12.

\$4.00

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By RAJA ABDULRAHIM

turned to Syria recently for the

first time in 12 years, Kazem To-

gan asked the passport control

agent to check whether he "had a

name" — meaning that he was

among the millions of citizens

named on wanted lists under the

the man told him, smiling as he de-

livered the news. "The intelli-

worked for opposition Syrian me-

dia when the old government was

in power, said he was thrilled.

"You're wanted by branch 235,"

Mr. Togan, a journalist who

ousted Assad dictatorship.

gence branch."

ALEPPO, Syria - When he re-

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At passport offices, Syrians can check whether their names were included on wanted lists — a status that once filled many with fear.

Syrians Want to Be Wanted by the Assad Regime | State No. 51?

Proud of Being on an

Ousted Dictatorship's

Lists of Targets

"Today, every Syrian asks as a

matter of routine, 'Was I wanted?'" he said. "Anyone who

 $was\,detained\,by\,the\,Assad\,regime$ 

or wanted by the Assad regime,

For more than five decades, the

dictator Bashar al-Assad and his

father before him ruled Syria by

terror. Anyone wanted by any of

the regime's numerous intelli-

there is a measure of pride."

gence, military

branches was named on lists that

could be checked at airports, bor-

der crossings or police stations

and risked disappearing into the

This was known in Syria as

Those who spent their entire

lives terrified by the prospect of

having a security file are now

openly asking officials about their

status under the former govern-

ment and bragging about it openly

in conversation or on social me-

dia. To have been wanted by a gov-

ernment that tortured or killed

millions of its own citizens to hold

Continued on Page A6

on to power is a badge of honor

prison system.

"having a name."

FRIDAY, MARCH 21, 2025

Prices in Canada may be higher

G.O.P. Assault

Aims to Hobble

The Democrats

Donation Platform and Lawyers Are Targets

By KENNETH P. VOGEL

and SHANE GOLDMACHER

Investigations of Democratic fund-raising and organizing platforms. Ominous suggestions that nonprofits aligned with Demo-crats or critical of President

Trump should have their tax ex-

Mr. Trump and his allies are ag-

gressively attacking the players

and machinery that power the left,

taking a series of highly partisan

official actions that, if successful,

will threaten to hobble Demo-

crats' ability to compete in elec-

So far, the attacks have been dif-

fuse and sometimes indiscrimi-

nate or inaccurate. But inside the

administration, there are moves

to coordinate and expand the as-

A small group of White House officials has been working to iden-

tify targets and vulnerabilities in-

side the Democratic ecosystem,

taking stock of previous efforts to

investigate them, according to

two people familiar with the

group's work who requested ano-

Scott Walter, president of the

conservative watchdog group

Capital Research Center, which

monitors liberal money in politics,

recently briefed senior White

House officials on a variety of do-

nors, nonprofit groups and fund-

raising techniques. The White

House group is said to be explor-

ing what more can be done within

It is not unusual for partisans in

Congress or their outside allies to

push for investigations into politi-

cal groups on the other side of the

But using the levers of govern-

ment to target the opposition has

long been considered an abuse of

power, sometimes leading to pros-

ecution. Mr. Trump himself was

impeached in 2019 for pressuring

the Ukrainian government to in-

Mr. Trump's continued willing-

ness to defy that norm — includ-

ing in a grievance-filled speech at

the Justice Department on Friday,

during which he name-checked a

ntany of critics and called them

"horrible people," "thugs" or

"scum" - has Democrats sound-

tor of Americans Against Govern-

ment Censorship, a coalition of

progressive groups and labor un-

ions created last year to defend

'The breadth is breathtaking," said Cole Leiter, executive direc-

vestigate the Bidens.

ing the alarm.

nymity to describe it.

tions for years to come.

emptions revoked.

Executive actions intended to cripple top Democratic law firms. PRESIDENT SIGNS

A Separation of Powers Is

This article is by Michael C. Bend-

WASHINGTON - President Trump on Thursday instructed Education Secretary Linda Mc-Mahon to begin shutting down her agency, a task that cannot be completed without congressional approval and sets the stage for a seismic political and legal battle over the federal government's

Surrounded by schoolchildren seated at desks in the East Room of the White House, Mr. Trump signed a long-awaited executive order that he said would begin dismantling the department "once and for all." The Trump administration has cited poor test scores

"We're going to shut it down, and shut it down as quickly as possible," Mr. Trump said.

The department, which manages federal loans for college, tracks student achievement and supports programs for students with disabilities, was created by an act of Congress. That means, according to Article I of the Constitution, that only Congress can shut it down. That clear delineation of power, a fundamental component of democracy from the inception of the United States, underscores why no other modern president has tried to unilaterally

But Mr. Trump has already taken significant steps that have limited the agency's operations and authority. Since Mr. Trump's inauguration, his administration has slashed the department's work force by more than half and eliminated \$600 million in grants. The job cuts hit particularly hard at the department's Office for Civil Rights, which enforces the country's guarantee that all students have an equal opportunity to an

Mr. Trump's order contains potentially contradictory guidance for Ms. McMahon. On the one nand, the order directs her to ia cilitate the elimination of the agency. On the other, she is also mandated to rigorously comply with federal law. The order offers no guidance on how to square

Mr. Trump said Thursday that the department would continue to provide critical functions that are required by law, such as the ad-

#### gressively defending Canada's against an anticipated Republican sovereignty, economy and honor, assault. Taken together, Mr. Leiter Continued on Page A11 Continued on Page A14

# Tallow, Panned by Experts, Is Back in the Fryer

# ORDER TO SCRAP EDUCATION DEPT.

#### LEGAL OBSTACLES LOOM

# Clear for an Agency **Congress Created**

er, Erica L. Green and Alan Blinder.

role in the nation's schools.

as a key justification for the move.

shutter a federal department.

education.

those two points.

ministration of federal student

# Continued on Page A9

#### By CAROLINE HOPKINS LEGASPI

Not Canada,

'Captain' Says.

By VJOSA ISAI

bled and salt trucks spewed de-ic-

ing pellets onto Toronto's streets,

barely visible under two feet of

snow. A stocky man brandished a

comically small red shovel as he

helped dig out a car trapped at an

by Doug Ford, the premier of On-

tario, Canada's most populous

province and its largest economy,

who came to the rescue of drivers

trapped in the January 2022 snow-

storm, even giving a few of them

Some residents criticized the

gesture as having the patina of a

public relations stunt, but the "lit-

tle red shovel" moment captured

Mr. Ford's essence: the Everyman

who, despite lacking some of the

Mr. Ford has lately been leading

the charge against a different kind

of storm that has rolled into Cana-

da: President Trump's threats to

the country's economy and his de-

Mr. Ford, 60, has thrust himself

into the public spotlight, ag-

sire to make it the 51st state.

gets the job done.

The helping hand was provided

intersection.

TORONTO - Snow plows rum-

Will Burgess thinks his French fries taste better now that he fries them in beef tallow. But he isn't using the animal fat for its taste.

Mr. Burgess, 36, who owns a small restaurant that serves tacos and street food in Middletown, R.I., said he felt a "moral and ethical obligation" to change his menu earlier this year. He came to that conclusion after reading that seed oils, like the canola oil he used to cook his fries and tortilla chips, carried potential harms.

Tallow, he said, made for a healthier, more "natural" frying

Beef tallow, a type of rendered fat, was a staple in America's home and fast-food kitchens for much of the 20th century before falling out of favor because of its high levels of saturated fat. Now, it's making a comeback.



Beef tallow, a type of rendered fat, used to be a kitchen staple.

In a Fox News segment on March 11, the health secretary, Robert F. Kennedy Jr., celebrated the Midwest-based food chain Steak 'n Shake for committing to frying its onion rings, chicken tenders and fries in 100 percent

beef tallow. Upscale grocers stock products like tortilla chips and protein bars made with beef tallow. On social media, influencers render beef tallow in their kitchens, make tallow chocolates and even rub it on their faces.

But doctors and nutrition experts widely agree that using beef tallow in place of vegetable oil is

misguided. Fats like beef tallow (and its pork-based equivalent, lard) were once America's go-to cooking oils, said Kevin Klatt, a nutrition scientist and dietitian at the University

of California, Berkeley. That started to shift after the introduction of refined vegetable oils in the early 1900s, which were cheaper to mass produce than tal-

But it wasn't until the 1980s and 1990s that fast-food chains pivoted to vegetable oils, largely be-

cause of new knowledge that diets

Continued on Page A18

NATIONAL A10-18

#### Congestion Pricing Reprieve

The Trump administration extended the deadline by 30 days for New York to end its tolling program.

Treasures of the New Frick

**By SUI-LEE WEE** 

and CAMILLE ELEMIA

been advertised for weeks. For-

mer President Rodrigo Duterte of

the Philippines was going to a

rally in Hong Kong during the sec-

ond weekend in March. But as

soon as it began, the trip took on a

tantalizing element of intrigue:

To many Filipinos, it appeared

that Mr. Duterte was trying to out-

run justice. The International

Was he ever coming back?

BANGKOK - The visit had

#### The MetroCard Bows Out

The transition to a tap-and-go system in New York City is set to save the M.T.A. at least \$20 million annually. PAGE A10



# **INTERNATIONAL A4-9**

The upgraded museum offers views of "Doge Giovanni Mocenigo," above, and much more. Page C1.

The Tense Pursuit of the Philippines' Ex-President

Duterte Unable to Elude

International Court

Criminal Court, a sudden swirl of

speculation in the Philippines pos-

ited, was about to seek his arrest,

years after it started investigating

the deadly antidrug campaign he

had overseen as president and as

mayor of Davao. By being in Hong

Kong, the theory went, Mr.

Duterte would remain free be-

#### Sushi Soothes a Frontline Town

For residents of Sloviansk, a Ukrainian city in Russian cross hairs, a popular dish provides a sense of normalcy that is akin to a wartime necessity. PAGE A4

#### Taming Hungary's Egg Prices

Prime Minister Viktor Orban is seeking to vanquish inflation, and a political rival, by capping what supermarkets charge for essential foods.

#### New Round of Fighting in Gaza

Israel's military expanded its offensive in Gaza with raids in the north and south, and Hamas fired rockets at Israel for the first time in months.

#### **BUSINESS B1-6**

cause China is not a member of the

Soon after Mr. Duterte, 79,

landed in Hong Kong on March 7,

the I.C.C. issued a sealed warrant

for him. But wind of the move

Kong, his entourage — which in-

cluded his partner, Honeylet

Avanceña, and daughter Sara

Duterte, the current vice presi-

dent — debated whether to stay in

Chinese territory or return home,

Continued on Page A8

Over that weekend in Hong

court.

reached him.

#### A Top Musk Lieutenant

Elon Musk has likened his acolyte at the Department of Government Efficiency to chemotherapy: lifesaving or lethal, depending on the dose. PAGE B1

## Fed's Job Might Get Tougher

President Trump's plans risk stoking inflation and denting growth, an undesirable combination. PAGE B1

### OBITUARIES A19, 22

Maverick in Architecture David Sellers believed architects could design better buildings if they built them themselves. He was 86. PAGE A22

# SPORTS B7-12

### Referees Lagging Behind

Women's basketball is more popular than ever, but one referee said the officiating was at "a crisis moment." PAGE B7

#### I.O.C. Elects Woman in a First

Kristy Coventry, below left, a former Olympic swimming champion, faces a raft of urgent issues. PAGE B12



#### WEEKEND ARTS C1-10

#### It's Beethoven to the Rescue

When a star dropped out of an orchestra's Carnegie Hall performance, a classic substitute was needed. PAGE C1

#### In a Dark but Tuneful Future

Sadie Sink, of "Stranger Things" fame, plays a talented teenager in "O'Dessa," a postapocalyptic musical.

OPINION A20-21

Julius Krein

PAGE A20