

NEWS ANALYSIS

G.O.P. Gives Tax Cut Plan New Wrinkle

Lasting Only Until Trump Leaves Office

By ANDREW DUEHREN

WASHINGTON — The strategy is an old one for Republicans: Cut taxes for a few years, avoiding the need to account for their cost over the long term, and bet that the reductions become popular enough that Congress will later vote to continue them.

The tax bill that Republicans are now putting together on Capitol Hill takes the gambit to a whole new level.

Almost all of the new tax cuts that Republicans have included in the bill, which could evolve over the coming weeks, will last only until the end of 2028, just days before President Trump is set to leave office. That includes a \$500 increase to the child tax credit and a \$1,000 bonus to the standard deduction, as well as Mr. Trump’s pledges to not tax tips or overtime pay.

The effect would be to shower many Americans with hundreds of dollars per year, starting when they file taxes next year, a wind-fall that would dry up as Mr. Trump leaves office. Even babies could cash in, with children born during Mr. Trump’s term — but not before Jan. 1, 2025, or after Dec. 31, 2028 — each receiving a \$1,000 deposit to new “MAGA accounts” created under the bill.

For a president who put his name on the stimulus checks the federal government sent during his first term, the appeal of putting cash into Americans’ pockets is clear. But some analysts and many Democrats warn that any gains from the tax cuts, already concentrated among the rich, could be overwhelmed by the cuts to health care and food assistance that Republicans also intend to include in the legislation. And economists expect that the temporary cuts would, at best, provide a short sugar high to the economy overall.

“We should expect close to no

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Speaker Mike Johnson and House Republicans are drafting a tax and budget bill.

Once-Fringe Birthright Theory Is in Supreme Court’s Spotlight

By ABBIE VANSICKLE

WASHINGTON — Shortly after the Supreme Court announced in April that it would consider the nationwide freeze on President Trump’s executive order ending birthright citizenship, he gleefully spoke to reporters in the Oval Office.

Mr. Trump said that he was “so happy” the justices would take up the citizenship issue because it had been “so misunderstood.” The 14th Amendment, he said — long held to grant citizenship to anyone born in the United States — is actually “about slavery.”

“That’s not about tourists coming in and touching a piece of sand and then all of the sudden there’s citizenship,” Mr. Trump said, add-

Syria Exultant At Vow to Lift U.S. Sanctions

Trump Meets Leader With ‘Terrorist’ Tag

By BEN HUBBARD

DAMASCUS, Syria — Salaries would go up. Bread and gasoline would be cheaper. The electricity would come on for more than a few hours per day. The reconstruction of destroyed towns and cities would begin.

President Trump’s announcement in a speech in Saudi Arabia on Tuesday that he would lift U.S. sanctions on Syria unleashed hope across the country that life would improve after more than a decade of war and deprivation.

“It will put us at ease,” said Sami al-Hajj, a pharmacist. “Before, we were scared for the future, for us and our children. But this will open up opportunities.”

Analysts and many others in Syria see lifting U.S. sanctions as crucial to enabling the new government to rebuild an economy decimated by war. The sanctions effectively cut Syria out of the international banking system and isolated it from the global economy, blocking money transfers, restricting imports and barring activity by most international companies.

On Wednesday, Mr. Trump met with Syria’s president, Ahmed al-Shara, a former rebel leader who spearheaded the campaign that toppled the strongman Bashar al-Assad in December.

It was the first time in 25 years the leaders of the two countries had met. The conversation, which lasted about half an hour, granted another stamp of recognition to Mr. al-Shara, who is still designated as a terrorist by the U.S. government for his past affiliation with Al Qaeda.

In a social media post after the meeting, the White House press secretary, Karoline Leavitt, said that Mr. Trump had urged Mr. al-Shara to reach a peace accord with Israel, expel foreign terrorists, help the United States fight the Islamic State and take over detention centers that hold Islamic State militants in northeastern Syria. The secretary of state, Marco Rubio, was expected to meet with Mr. al-Shara’s foreign minister to discuss the details.

The Syrian government lauded the meeting in a statement as “historic,” and said it had addressed “avenues for Syrian-American partnership,” including in counterterrorism.

The United States has imposed sanctions on Syria for decades. But more were added during the war to punish Mr. al-Assad for his brutal efforts to suppress a popular uprising in 2011 and to quash the rebels who ended up overthrowing him.

By the time Mr. al-Shara and aligned groups took control,

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Trump Visit Helps Solidify Qatar’s Image Makeover



President Trump and Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani, the emir of Qatar, with executives of Boeing, left, and Qatar Airways, right.

President’s Opponents Getting Wise to His Ways

By DAVID E. SANGER

WASHINGTON — President Trump has long reveled in his reputation as a maximalist, issuing a huge demand, creating a crisis and setting off a high-pressure negotiation.

But increasingly often, he ends up backing down and simply declaring a win. His opponents appear to be catching on, sharpening their tactics based on Mr. Trump’s patterns and his unapologetically transactional attitude toward diplomacy.

The dynamic has played out repeatedly in recent weeks as Mr. Trump backed off, to varying degrees, on his plans to transform

A Pattern of Blustering Negotiating Tactics Ending in Retreat

Gaza into the “Riviera of the Middle East,” turn Canada into the 51st state and beat China into submission with tariffs.

Now, two very different tests are emerging. One is over where Mr. Trump stands, with America’s biggest allies or with President Vladimir V. Putin of Russia, on preserving Ukraine’s sovereignty and safety in any cease-fire deal. The other, with Iran, may deter-

mine whether he is really willing to stand aside and let Israel bomb Iran — or join in, despite the risks — if he cannot extract a better nuclear deal than what President Barack Obama got, and cut off Iran’s pathway to a bomb.

Both those negotiations lack the numeric symmetries of tariff negotiations. Thousands if not millions of lives are potentially at stake. Both involve decades of grievance, dating back to the Iranian revolution and the breakup of the Soviet Union.

And Russia and Iran appear to be honing their strategies after watching Mr. Trump in action. Emissaries from those countries

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EMIRATE GAINING CLOUT

Culmination of Efforts to Combat Claims of Ties to Terrorism

This article is by Michael D. Shear, Adam Rasgon and Tariq Panja.

JERUSALEM — President Trump’s visit to Qatar on Wednesday was the culmination of a successful charm offensive by the Gulf emirate, which included the promised gift of a luxury jetliner to Mr. Trump.

“We are very excited,” Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani, the emir of Qatar, told Mr. Trump as he greeted the president on Wednesday in a red-carpet ceremony in Doha. “I know that you want to bring peace to this region.”

The president, who has described the emir as a “great gentleman” and a “friend of mine,” marveled at the white marble construction, calling it “perfecto,” and praised the emir’s work to mediate the wars in the Middle East and between Russia and Ukraine.

“We’ve liked each other and worked with each other,” Mr. Trump said. “And now we can work in the highest capacity.”

As for the plane, neither leader mentioned it on Wednesday. But the president has said he would be “stupid” not to accept such a nice gift despite loud objections, not only from Democrats but from some of his most fervent MAGA supporters.

The presidential visit to Qatar — which was to culminate with a lavish state dinner Wednesday night — is a dramatic turnaround for a small Persian Gulf country that Mr. Trump derided eight years ago as “a funder of terrorism at a very high level.” At that time, he cooperated with Qatar’s bitter rivals in the region — who imposed a punishing embargo on

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So-called crime-free housing laws have spread in Illinois. Gail Diop was ensnared by one of them.

Evictions Follow the Merest Brush With the Law

By SIDNEE KING PINEDA

CHICAGO — Catherine Lang was evicted from her apartment outside Chicago after the police saw her swerving in traffic and charged her with driving drunk. A jury found her not guilty, but by then it was too late.

Dalarie Hardimon was evicted after the police chased a man speeding in her van through a residential neighborhood.

Anti-Crime Rules Leave Renters Few Options

The three women lived in Illinois cities that have adopted what are known as crime-free housing laws, local ordinances that empower the police and landlords to evict tenants who are accused of breaking the law.

The laws were promoted as a way to clear out violent criminals, drug dealers and nuisance tenants who made life miserable for their neighbors. But an investiga-

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Treaty as Bargaining Chip

A deal governing the shared use of the Columbia River is tangled in President Trump’s feud with Canada. PAGE B1

Success Story Targeted for Cuts

According to the E.P.A., its Energy Star system has saved people \$500 billion since 1992. Can it be rescued? PAGE B1

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Russia Plays Hardball

Moscow thinks it’s winning in Ukraine, and its demands reflect that. Washington sees incremental gains and an untenable negotiating position. PAGE A11

Refugees Called ‘Cowardly’

President Cyril Ramaphosa harshly criticized the white South Africans for fleeing to the United States. PAGE A12

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California Is Bracing for a Test

The state is facing what officials say is an unprecedented confluence of forces that will gauge its resilience. PAGE A13



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Preserving Memphis Memories

Curators are digitizing a photo archive that captures life in the city, with shots of both stars and everyday people. PAGE C1

Broadway Ticket Sales Soar

George Clooney and Denzel Washington have helped make the theater season’s box-office numbers shine. PAGE C1

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Hall’s Big Questions on Rose

With Pete Rose posthumously reinstated by M.L.B., voters must confront the ramifications of potential enshrinement in Cooperstown. PAGE B6

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Creator of the Hydrogen Bomb

Richard L. Garwin, who was 23 when he built the world’s first fusion bomb in the 1950s, and later served as an adviser to many presidents, was 97. PAGE A24

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George Saunders

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Matching Guns and Fitness

In the Tactical Games, a host of competitors spend two days sprinting, climbing, jumping, lifting barbells — and shooting firearms. PAGE D1

