

CALLING SUMMIT,  
ZELENSKY RESISTS  
U.S. MINERAL DEAL

TAPS EUROPEAN ALLIES

Ukraine Leader Offers to  
Quit if It Means Peace  
or a Spot in NATO

By **CONSTANT MÉHEUT**  
and **ANDREW E. KRAMER**

KYIV, Ukraine — President Volodymyr Zelensky pushed back on Sunday against demands from the Trump administration for billions in Ukrainian natural resources and for holding peace talks that exclude Ukraine, while announcing plans for a major summit of European leaders on Monday.

The Ukrainian leader’s efforts to shore up European support while pressing ahead on negotiations with the United States came despite ominous messages from President Trump in recent days belittling Mr. Zelensky and issuing threats if Ukraine does not soon agree to a minerals deal.

Mr. Zelensky suggested that in assailing Ukraine, Mr. Trump had chosen the wrong adversary.

“Peace through force, but toward Russia, not in the other direction,” Mr. Zelensky said of how he would like to see American efforts to end the war.

Mr. Zelensky, speaking at a news conference in Kyiv, said that he was willing to step down if it meant peace in Ukraine. His remark came days after Mr. Trump questioned his legitimacy and called him a “dictator without elections,” echoing a Kremlin talking point.

It was not immediately clear whether Mr. Zelensky is seriously considering the option of stepping down or was merely responding to the latest jabs from Washington and Moscow. He added that he would trade his departure for Ukraine’s entry into NATO — perhaps a tongue-in-cheek offer, since both Mr. Trump and President Vladimir V. Putin of Russia solidly oppose Ukraine’s joining the military alliance.

“If peace for Ukraine requires

*Continued on Page A9*



INA FASSBENDER/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE — GETTY IMAGES

Friedrich Merz, chairman of the Christian Democratic Union, has promised to never join with the far-right Alternative for Germany.

Anger at Town Halls Hints at Broader Backlash

By **ROBERT JIMISON**

TRINITY, Texas — Some came with complaints about Elon Musk, President Trump’s billionaire ally who is carrying out an assault on the federal bureaucracy. Others demanded guarantees that Republicans in Congress would not raid the social safety net. Still others chided the G.O.P. to push back against Mr. Trump’s moves to trample the constitutional power of Congress.

When Representative Pete Sessions, Republican of Texas, arrived at a crowded community center on Saturday in the small rural town of Trinity in East Texas, he came prepared to deliver a routine update on the administration’s first month in office.

Instead, he fielded a barrage of frustration and anger from constituents questioning Mr. Trump’s agenda and his tactics — and

Republicans Struggling  
to Defend Trump’s  
Policy Blitz

pressing Mr. Sessions and his colleagues on Capitol Hill to do something about it.

“The executive can only enforce laws passed by Congress; they cannot make laws,” said Debra Norris, a lawyer who lives in Huntsville, arguing that the mass layoffs and agency closures Mr. Musk has spearheaded were unconstitutional. “When are you going to wrest control back from the executive and stop hurting your constituents?”

Louis Smith, a veteran who lives in East Texas, told Mr. Sessions that he agreed with the effort to root out excessive spending, but he criticized the way it

was being handled and presented to the public.

“I like what you’re saying, but you need to tell more people,” Mr. Smith said. “The guy in South Africa is not doing you any good — he’s hurting you more than he’s helping,” he added, referring to Mr. Musk and drawing nods and applause from many in the room.

In Trinity and in congressional districts around the country over the past week, Republican lawmakers returning home for their first recess since Mr. Trump was sworn in faced similar confrontations with their constituents. In Georgia, Representative Rich McCormick struggled to respond as constituents shouted, jeered and booed at his response to questions about Mr. Musk’s access to government data. In Wisconsin, Representative Scott Fitzgerald was asked to defend the administration’s budget proposals as voters

*Continued on Page A13*

Truce in Gaza  
Is Under Strain  
Over Prisoners

By **ISABEL KERSHNER**

JERUSALEM — Israel and Hamas on Sunday accused each other of violating the already fragile Gaza cease-fire deal after Israel delayed the release of hundreds of Palestinian prisoners who were supposed to be exchanged for hostages.

The office of Israel’s prime minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, said the prisoners would not be freed until the release of further hostages “has been assured,” and Hamas committed to letting them go without “humiliating ceremonies.”

The growing tensions come after a week of mutual recriminations and strained nerves on both sides. The delay raised more questions about the future of the cease-fire for Gaza, with a temporary, six-week truce set to expire on March 1.

There is no clarity yet about a possible extension, or even whether serious negotiations have begun. Some members of Israel’s right-wing government are pressing for a resumption of the fighting after the initial phase of the cease-fire, which has provided

*Continued on Page A6*

After Trump’s Pardon, Picking Up the Pieces With a ‘J6’ Identity

By **DAN BARRY** and **ALAN FEUER**

On her 15th day of freedom as a pardoned participant in the Jan. 6 riot, Rachel Powell drove through western Pennsylvania’s gray winter to the county courthouse in Franklin. She needed to check off applying for a gun permit from her homecoming to-do list.

With her two youngest children trailing behind, Ms. Powell walked into the Venango County Sheriff’s Office, where a sign advised visitors to “Keep Calm and Carry.” She swept her long dark hair from her face and began filling out the concealed-carry application, only to stop short at the existential dilemma posed by Question G:

*Are you now charged with or have you ever been convicted of a crime punishable by imprisonment for a term exceeding one year?*

If she answered yes, her application could not be processed. If she answered no, she feared being charged again with breaking the law.

“Can I make a note that I answered this way because I have a presidential pardon?” asked Ms. Powell, who once owned an AK-47 rifle and a Glock pistol.

The two clerks there could provide little guidance, never having dealt with a presidential pardon. Neither could a deputy sheriff, who advised her to consult a lawyer because he did not want her to get into more trouble.

“Drumroll, please,” Ms. Powell finally said. “I’m marking no.”

She paid the \$20 fee, was told the office would be in touch and walked out of the courthouse, into her changed reality. Five years ago, she was home-schooling her children and selling organic goods at farmers’ markets. Now, on her left biceps, she sported a memento from prison that reflected her life’s newfound purpose:

A crude tattoo that said “J6.”

Ms. Powell, 44, was among the nearly 1,600 people to benefit last month from an act of self-interested mercy that augured what justice might look like in the second administration of Donald J. Trump. Within hours of returning to office, the president granted reprieves to everyone implicated in the mayhem of Jan. 6, 2021, when thousands of his supporters, motivated by his lies about a rigged election, stormed the Capitol and disrupted the electoral certification of his opponent, Joseph R. Biden Jr.

Mr. Trump’s sweeping gesture reflected a continuing effort to alter, if not erase, the record of a day when people died, officers were beaten, the Capitol was vandalized and elected officials ran for their lives. The president has reframed the riot as an expression of patriotic love, and the federal officials who conducted the investigations into Jan. 6 as corrupt villains.

Shortly before he was to honor

*Continued on Page A14*



MERIDITH KOHUT FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Though Rachel Powell expressed regrets in court, at times she is unremorseful. “We’re the people who love our country,” she said.

Floyd Killing Turned Trump  
Against 2 of His Top Generals

By **HELENE COOPER**

WASHINGTON — For the second time, the killing of George Floyd by a police officer has brought about a breakage between President Trump and the American military’s most senior leader.

In abruptly firing Gen. Charles Q. Brown Jr., the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in the Friday night purge at the Pentagon, Mr. Trump did not publicly give a reason. In fact, the four-star fighter pilot with 40 years of service was at the border tending to one of the president’s highest priorities when he was dismissed.

But privately, Trump advisers point to a video that General Brown recorded in the furious days after George Floyd, a Black man, was killed by a Minneapolis police officer in May 2020, an act that sparked a social justice movement. In the four-minute video,



KENNY HOLSTON/THE NEW YORK TIMES

Gen. Charles Q. Brown Jr. testifying before Congress.

General Brown reflected on his experiences as an African American pilot in the Air Force.

The killing of Mr. Floyd also blew up the relationship between Mr. Trump and General Brown’s predecessor, Gen. Mark A. Milley.

Days after Mr. Floyd’s death,

*Continued on Page A16*

INTERNATIONAL A4-10

**Congo’s Plan to Tame Rwanda**  
Congo’s president hopes to make minerals deals with the U.S. and the E.U. to counter Rwandan militias. PAGE A4

**Worldwide Prayers for Francis**  
The 88-year-old pontiff, who has been hospitalized for more than a week, is still battling pneumonia. PAGE A10



NATIONAL A11-17, 20

**Staff Is Urged Not to Comply**  
The F.B.I. director and the director of national intelligence told employees not to respond to a directive from Elon Musk to summarize their work. PAGE A17

**Global Right-Wing Joy**  
Emissaries of far-right parties, appearing at CPAC, described a resurgence buoyed by the U.S. president. PAGE A12

**OBITUARIES B7-8**  
**Synonymous With Pizza**  
Patsy Grimaldi’s coal-oven pizzeria in Brooklyn helped start an artisan-style movement. He was 93. PAGE B7

BUSINESS B1-6

**Time to Back Up Everything**  
Those worried about Elon Musk and his team having access to federal payment systems may want to consult a guide to protect their data. PAGE B1

**Tariff Worries Spur Gold Rush**  
The precious metal, considered a haven asset, is usually sought out by investors during times of increasing inflation fears and geopolitical tensions. PAGE B1

**Big Day for Crypto Goes South**  
Hours after Coinbase said the S.E.C. was dropping a lawsuit against it, a \$1.5 billion theft was reported at another cryptocurrency exchange. PAGE B1

SPORTS D1-8

**Shiffrin’s 100 World Cup Wins**  
Mikaela Shiffrin reached a milestone of Alpine skiing success, but she’s also leaving another legacy. PAGE D7

**Young Guard Finds His Focus**  
After learning how to quiet his mind, Portland’s Scoot Henderson has harnessed his power and speed. PAGE D1



ARTS C1-6

**Celebrating Creator of ‘Rent’**  
“The Jonathan Larson Project,” a years-in-the-making musical collage of Larson’s life, is now onstage. PAGE C1

**Doctors Are Big on ‘The Pitt’**  
The unusually accurate medical drama airing on Max has become the talk of real-life hospital break rooms. PAGE C1

**OPINION A18-19**  
**Zeynep Tufekci** PAGE A18

