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A migrant snapping a selfie while passing through the Darién Gap, the perilous stretch of jungle connecting Colombia and Panama.

FEDERICO RIOS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

POLITICAL MEMO

Trump’s End? Liberal Hopes Are Tempered.

By REID J. EPSTEIN

WASHINGTON — For as long as Donald J. Trump has dominated Republican politics, many Democrats have pined for a magical cure-all to rid them of his presence.

There was the Mueller investigation into Mr. Trump’s 2016 campaign and its ties to Russia, which began four months into his presidency. Then came the first impeachment. Then, after Mr. Trump lost the 2020 election and his supporters stormed the Capitol, the second impeachment.

Each time, Democrats entertained visions in which Mr. Trump would meet his political downfall. Each time, they were disappointed.

This year, liberal hopes have sprung anew, with federal and state prosecutors bringing 91 felony charges against Mr. Trump in four criminal cases.

Then, on Tuesday, came what appeared to be an out-of-the-blue act of deliverance from Denver. Colorado’s top court ruled that Mr. Trump should be disqualified from holding office on the grounds that he incited an insurrection on Jan. 6, 2021, a decision that is likely to end up at the U.S. Supreme Court.

Once again, Democrats find themselves looking toward American institutions to stop Mr. Trump, whom they view as a mortal threat to democracy. For many, it may be more pleasant to think about a judicial endgame that stops Mr. Trump than envisioning the slog of next year’s likely rematch against President Biden.

And this time, with Democrats now well aware of how easily Mr. Trump can bend the country’s fragile guardrails — and of the Supreme Court’s conservative majority, which includes three Trump appointees — their optimism is tinged with trepidation.

“Like many people, I assumed every impeachment, every indictment, every criminal count would be the end of him,” said Robert B. Reich, a former labor secretary who for a time hosted a podcast called “The Resistance Report.”

Mr. Reich said he did not be-

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Migrants Become Influencers on Grueling Trek

By JULIE TURKEWITZ

ACANDÍ, Colombia — Manuel Monterrosa set out for the United States last year with his cellphone and a plan: He’d record his journey through the dangerous jungle known as the Darién Gap and post it on YouTube, warning other migrants of the perils they’d face.

In his six-part series, edited entirely on his phone along the way, he heads north with a backpack, leading viewers on a video-selfie play-by-play of his passage across rivers, muddy forests and a mountain known as the Hill of Death.

He eventually made it to the United States. But to his surprise, his videos began attracting so many views and earning enough money from YouTube that he de-

Social Media Reshapes the Human Flow in the Darién Gap

cided he no longer needed to live in America at all.

So, Mr. Monterrosa, a 35-year-old from Venezuela, returned to South America and now has a new plan altogether: trekking the Darién route again, this time in search of content and clicks, having learned how to make a living as a perpetual migrant.

“Migration sells,” Mr. Monterrosa said. “My public is a public that wants a dream.”

For more than a decade, cell-

phones have been indispensable tools for people fleeing their homelands, helping them research routes, find friends and loved ones, connect with smugglers and evade the authorities.

Now, cellphones and social media platforms like Facebook, YouTube and TikTok are drastically changing the equation once again, fueling the next evolution of global movement.

Today, migrants are the producers of an enormous digital almanac of the trek to the United States, documenting the route and its pitfalls in such detail that, in a few stretches, people can find their way on their own, without smugglers.

And as migrants stream their

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ANDREAS SOLARO/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE — GETTY IMAGES

Pope Francis’ decision this week to bless same-sex couples was a result of a decade-long evolution.

Quiet Talks, Loud Defiance and the Pontiff’s Gift

By JASON HOROWITZ

ROME — In March 2021, as stunned L.G.B.T.Q. Roman Catholics grappled with a Vatican document approved by Pope Francis that ruled against blessing same-sex unions, one of his confidants, who is gay, says they spoke on the phone.

Juan Carlos Cruz, a sexual abuse survivor who had befriended the pope over years of conversations, says that Francis, who had just returned from Iraq,

The Same-Sex Blessing’s Long Path to Fruition

gave him the sense that the Vatican “machine” had gotten ahead of him in the ruling; it stated that God “cannot bless sin.”

But he says Francis “acknowledged that the buck stops with him.”

“I got the impression that he wanted to fix it,” Mr. Cruz said.

For Mr. Cruz, who visited Francis for his 87th birthday over the weekend, and for many L.G.B.T.Q. Catholics, Francis did just that this week. He signed off on a major declaration by the same Vatican office on church doctrine that had issued the negative ruling two years before.

The new rule allows priests to bless same-sex couples as long as the blessing is not connected to the ceremony of a same-sex union, to avoid confusion with the

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Gaza Invasion Hasn’t Snared Oct. 7 Plotters

Senior Hamas Leaders Evade Hunt by Israel

By BEN HUBBARD

ISTANBUL — Fluttering down from the skies over Gaza on a recent day were clouds of fliers dropped by the Israeli military asking for tips on the whereabouts of top Hamas leaders.

“The end of Hamas is near,” the fliers proclaimed in Arabic, promising hefty bounties to anyone who helped bring about the arrest of those who had “brought destruction and ruin to the Gaza Strip.”

The Hamas leader in Gaza, Yahya Sinwar, headed the list in exchange for a reward of \$400,000 — more than 1,500 times Gaza’s average monthly wage.

Israel’s stated goal in the war is to destroy Hamas, the armed Palestinian group that rules Gaza and set off the war there by attacking Israel on Oct. 7. But despite a military campaign that has caused nearly 20,000 deaths in Gaza and reduced entire neighborhoods to rubble, Israel has yet to locate Mr. Sinwar and other senior Hamas figures considered key plotters of the attack 10 weeks ago.

Israel considers Mr. Sinwar central to the Oct. 7 attack, which killed roughly 1,200 people, with some 240 others taken back to Gaza as captives, Israeli officials say. Now in his 50s, he was a founding member of Hamas in the late 1980s and developed a harsh reputation for punishing Palestinians suspected of spying for Israel.

“He is a very tough guy, a brutal guy,” said Mkhaimar Abusada, an associate professor of political science at Al-Azhar University in Gaza who is now in Cairo.

Mr. Sinwar’s die-hard commitment to his organization’s Islamist ideology makes it unlikely he will go down easily.

“If he is killed, he is going to go to heaven. He doesn’t really care much about his life,” Mr. Abusada said, describing Mr. Sinwar’s mentality. “Israel would be mistaken if it thought that he was going to surrender or that Sinwar was going to raise a white flag.”

Israel is also seeking Mr. Sinwar’s brother and confidante, Mohammed. He has not been seen since the war began, although the Israeli military this week released a Hamas video captured in Gaza that it said showed him riding in a car through an underground tunnel in Gaza.

The fliers dropped over Gaza offered \$300,000 for information leading to his capture.

Also named in the fliers were Rafi Salameh, a Hamas military commander, and Mohammed

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THE WEATHER

Today, sunshine, a few clouds, dry, high 38. Tonight, mostly cloudy, dry, low 34. Tomorrow, mostly cloudy, a shower in spots by the evening, high 44. Weather map is on Page B10.

U.S. SET TO BACK U.N. RESOLUTION ON AID FOR GAZA

VOTE MAY COME FRIDAY

Talks Have Centered on Inspections to Prevent Arms Smuggling

By FARNAZ FASSIHI and MICHAEL LEVENSON

After nearly a week of intense negotiations, the United States said on Thursday night that it was ready to support a United Nations Security Council resolution that would call for more desperately needed aid to enter the Gaza Strip. A vote was not expected until Friday at the earliest.

Linda Thomas-Greenfield, the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, told reporters that the United States had “worked hard and diligently over the course of the past week” with the countries that had proposed the resolution, Egypt and the United Arab Emirates, to ensure that “we put a mechanism on the ground that will support humanitarian assistance and we’re ready to vote for it.”

“I won’t share how I will vote,” she said, but added that if the reso-



FATIMA SHBAIR/ASSOCIATED PRESS

Lining up for a meal in southern Gaza, where food is scarce.

lution were put forward as written, it would be one “we can support.”

Earlier on Thursday, a U.S. official, speaking on the condition of anonymity given the sensitivity of the talks, said that high-level negotiators from Washington and Cairo had been seeking common ground on who would inspect the aid for weapons and other contraband before it entered Gaza.

The draft text of the resolution that circulated before the ambassador spoke dropped a call for the “suspension of hostilities” from an earlier version, instead calling for “urgent steps” to allow unhindered humanitarian access and the creation of “conditions for a sustainable cessation of hostilities.”

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Army Said Blasts Were Safe. Man’s Struggles Raise Doubt.

By DAVE PHILLIPPS

Christian Beyer worked around the ground-shaking blasts of one of the Army’s most powerful weapons — the M1 Abrams tank — for 23 years. And for nearly all that time, he was a model soldier, given awards for meritorious service and promoted all the way up to master sergeant in charge of training young tank crews.

Then in 2020, at age 38, he started to fall apart.

He couldn’t sleep. His family noticed that his balance had turned unsteady and he began to slur his speech. He would weep about small things and dwell on imagined conspiracies.

He grew mean, then dangerous. One night late in 2021, according to Army documents, he shoved his wife during an argument and then grabbed for a kitchen knife when a

Brain Injury Risks and Heavy Weapons

senior sergeant tried to calm him down.

As Sergeant Beyer’s struggles were beginning, the military was just starting to recognize that firing heavy weapons could lead to brain damage. Under a mandate from Congress, it began to set up programs to track and limit exposure, announced its first safety threshold for blast intensity to avoid “adverse brain health outcomes,” and drew up a list of 14 weapons that might pose a significant risk.

But the M1 Abrams was not on the list. Tests of the tank’s 4,000-pound main gun found it to be well

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INTERNATIONAL A4-13

A School Shooting in Prague

At least 15 people were killed, and 20 more wounded, in a rare shooting spree in the Czech Republic. PAGE A6

Russian Funds to Aid Ukraine?

The U.S. and Europe are weighing the consequences of using \$300 billion in frozen assets to help Kyiv. PAGE A4

NATIONAL A14-19

More Questions at Harvard

Claudine Gay, the university’s president, has faced criticism of not only her response to antisemitism on campus but also her scholarship. PAGE A15

G.O.P. Rivals Keep Gloves On

Despite Donald Trump being declared an “insurrectionist,” most of his challengers are skirting the chance to use the issue as a point of attack. PAGE A16

Giuliani Seeking Protection

A day after a judge ordered him to start paying \$148 million in damages to two former election workers, Rudolph Giuliani filed for bankruptcy. PAGE A19

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Public Expression Reined In

In China, a chef’s video was attacked as a jab at Mao Zedong’s dead son. But what if a recipe for egg fried rice was just a recipe for egg fried rice? PAGE B1

Why Redstone May Eye a Sale

Shari Redstone fought to keep control of her family’s sprawling empire. Now, with financial pressures escalating, she’s considering an exit. PAGE B1

The Cost of ‘Phantom Debt’

In the U.S., buying goods on installment plans has propped up spending, but economists worry that such loans could put some people at risk. PAGE B1



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Now They Have a Name

A vital exhibition uncovers historical records of the unidentified Black people depicted in artworks. PAGE C1

A Longing for the Impossible

As a man alienated from himself and seeking answers, Andrew Scott makes “All of Us Strangers” sing. PAGE C1

SPORTS B6-10

Smarting Over a Snub

Florida State’s exclusion from the college football playoffs could precipitate a break with the A.C.C. PAGE B6

Soccer’s Super League

The European Court of Justice said the sport’s governing bodies wrongfully blocked a new competition. PAGE B7

OPINION A22-23

Pamela Paul

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