



ELECTION 2024

Trump hosts world stage eager for his ear

Central to many talks is Ukraine, where he and Biden sharply diverge

BY JOSH DAWSEY, MARIANNE LEVINE AND MICHAEL BIRNBAUM

In March, Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban went to Mar-a-Lago, arguing to Donald Trump that Russia would grind Ukraine down and eventually win their war — and that the United States should accept that reality. Then the two spent hours in a ballroom listening to a cover band play Rolling Stones hits.

Several weeks later, British Foreign Secretary David Cameron made a very different pitch to Trump. Over steaks at Mar-a-Lago, he warned Trump that he needed to continue providing military aid to Ukraine since Russia would not stop until it had taken over the entire country.

And at dinner inside Trump Tower the past week, Polish President Andrzej Duda brought up the war in Ukraine and encouraged Trump to keep funding the Ukrainians if elected president. Trump told him Europe needed to do more to help Ukraine, a message the former president shared on social media the next day.

As he pursues a return to the White House, Trump is speaking regularly with foreign officials looking to influence his thinking on a range of issues. Central to many of the discussions is the future of the war in Ukraine — an area where Trump and President Biden hold different views — according to people with knowledge of the talks, who like some others spoke on the condition of anonymity to describe private conversations. The meetings have also touched on other topics, from the future of NATO to tariffs.

After the Jan. 6, 2021, attack on the U.S. Capitol by a pro-Trump mob and mounting criminal charges against him, many foreign emissaries and leaders

SEE TRUMP ON A5

“I’m finishing and I’ll never look back. I finish my time here with a terrible taste in my mouth.”

Rotem Weiss, Columbia University



JABIN BOTSFORD/THE WASHINGTON POST



MIKE KAI CHEN FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

“When I think about what I really want to be doing on this campus, where my passions align, where my heart aligns, it’s with these people.”

Yousuf Abubakr, University of California at Berkeley

What students have to say about college campus protests

BY MONICA CAMPBELL, ALISA SHODIYEV KAFF AND CHRISTOPHER HOFFMAN

As pro-Palestinian protests spread to college campuses across the country, the lives of many students have been upended. ¶ Some have jumped into protesting for the first time, while others are watching on the margins, their own thoughts about the war in Gaza still evolving. ¶ Many say feelings of unease and fear have settled in as bucolic campuses are transformed into ideological battlegrounds. Some are wary about what students and civil rights leaders have decied as an overly aggressive police response. Others are concerned that the protests have emboldened antisemitic viewpoints. ¶ Here are the stories of six students in the middle of a spring of upheaval.

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At Columbia: Graduation rituals unfold in the shadow of a sprawling pro-Palestinian encampment. A9

Hostage video: The footage released by Hamas shows two men, one a dual U.S. citizen. A18

A threat from a man in crisis — and its consequences

Mired in political news and mental health issues, he found a foe in Marjorie Taylor Greene

BY RUBY CRAMER

ENDICOTT, N.Y. — The night he made the threat, Joe Morelli was exactly where he is now two years later, on his couch.

The couch is blue and beginning to sag. It sits in the living room of his small apartment in south-central New York. Since Morelli, 52, also sleeps on the couch every night, he keeps a piece of plywood beneath the cushions, because the softness of the cushions makes his back hurt. At the foot of the couch, he stores a few stacks of old family photos, including several of his two children, and he looks at the photos sometimes when he is feeling lonely, which is not all the time, but does happen, because he lives alone and has not spoken to his



CELIA TALBOT TOBIN FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

Joe Morelli at home with his cat Ignatius. During a five-hour span in 2022, he sent Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene seven voice mails.

children in more than 20 years. When he wakes up on the couch each morning, he walks to the kitchen to make a pot of coffee and then returns to the couch, where most everything else that he needs is on the table in front of him. His pills, which he uses to treat his bipolar disorder. His gum, his glasses, his phone, and his remote, which he picks up now to turn on the television and watch the news, which is what he had been doing the night he got so angry that he made the threat.

He opens YouTube on his smart TV. His usual channels appear on the screen, most of them left-leaning talk shows.

Morelli’s life since the threat has come with conditions, mandated by a judge, including men-

SEE THREAT ON A14

FDA bid on ecstasy shows it’s hard to test psychedelics

BY DAVID OVALLE AND DANIEL GILBERT

The first attempt to win government approval of a psychedelic drug for mental health treatment is generating skepticism about its clinical trials, a case that reveals the unique challenges of bringing mind-altering, illegal drugs into mainstream medical care.

A recent independent analysis questioned the integrity of patient studies that are being used to support the Food and Drug Administration application for MDMA — also known under the street name ecstasy — to treat post-traumatic stress disorder, citing a host of problems.

Among the most difficult to overcome: Subjects in the pla-

cebo arm of the trials — who got dummy MDMA — knew they didn’t get the real drug because they didn’t experience distortions in consciousness, according to the draft report by the non-profit Institute for Clinical and Economic Review. In other words, the trial was not “blinded” for purposes of comparing the drug’s effect, which undermines the results.

ICER researchers also said trials may have been skewed by therapist participants who are boosters of MDMA as a mental health treatment, as well as large numbers of subjects who had previous experience taking MDMA. The report cited concerns that some participants that received MDMA felt “pressured

SEE PSYCHEDELICS ON A13

ARTS & STYLE

Anna Bailey, 97, helped desegregate Las Vegas. She’s still got the moves.

BUSINESS

Buying a house? In this economy? These people pulled it off.

BOOK WORLD

“The Demon of Unrest” vividly captures the fight for Fort Sumter.

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Puerto Rico’s southern coast is the island’s best-kept secret.

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