



ALICE MARTINS FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

A Ukrainian armored vehicle is parked by a sign marking an entrance to the Donetsk area, part of the eastern Donbas region, in July.

In east Ukraine, land for peace is nonstarter

Kyiv is under pressure to cut a deal, but soldiers say it would feel ‘like losing a limb’

BY FRANCESCA EBEL
AND SERHII KOROLCHUK
IN POKROVSK, UKRAINE

As Russian forces advance through Ukraine’s eastern Donbas region, the pressure is increasing on Kyiv to sit down at the table with Moscow and start talking land for peace.

Even as Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky heads to the United States bearing a “victory plan” for President Joe Biden that he says will end the war in Ukraine’s favor, the future of U.S. leadership is on a knife-edge. Republican nominee Donald Trump and his running mate, Sen. JD Vance (Ohio), have made it clear that their plan for the end of the war would involve Ukraine ceding territory.

Any kind of “land for peace” deal would probably seal the fate of Donbas, which has been mired in conflict and separatism stoked by Moscow since the war there began a decade ago. Polling, however, shows that Ukrainians are not ready to give up their land, especially among those soldiers in Donbas who have been fighting for it for the past 10 years.

“There would be a coup d’état, because this idea would be promoted by those who sit in peaceful cities. ... No one here would support it — this land is now

sprinkled with our blood,” said Veronika, 23, a combat medic who resettled in Sloviansk after she fled Donetsk city with her family as a teenager, when Russian-backed separatists captured it in 2014. As with several others interviewed for this article, The Washington Post is not identifying Veronika by her full name in keeping with military rules.

An opinion poll by the Kyiv International Institute of Sociology conducted in May found that a third of Ukrainians are now prepared to make territorial concessions to Russia if this would bring a swift end to the war and preserve Ukraine’s independence. But more than half the population still rejects the idea of conceding land for peace.

Earlier polling by the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace found that nearly half of Ukrainians were ready to engage in negotiations with Russia, but the number plummeted if territorial concessions were put on the table. Nearly two-thirds, for instance, rejected a settlement that would freeze “the current front lines,” and 86 percent didn’t trust Russia not to attack even after signing a treaty.

And while only 7 percent said they would join an armed protest

SEE UKRAINE ON A20



Control data as of Sept. 4
Sources: Institute for the Study of War, AEI’s Critical Threats Project
LARIS KARKLIS AND ÁLVARO VALIÑO/THE WASHINGTON POST

Car that put girl in hospital had \$19,770 in tickets

Repeated offenses have troubled D.C., where new traffic law is on the way

BY RACHEL WEINER

Most afternoons, Paisley Brodie calls her mother when she gets to the public library four blocks from her middle school on Capitol Hill. On Sept. 9, the call came when Deirdre Allen expected it, but her 12-year-old daughter was crying. “Mommy,” she said, “I just got hit by a car.”

Allen, 49, doesn’t drive, and she didn’t have money for a cab. On the bus from her Navy Yard apartment, she imagined the worst. Half an hour felt like a thousand. When she got to the intersection of Sixth and D streets NE, her daughter was in an ambulance. “I had the light,” Paisley im-



MORIAH RATNER FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

Deirdre Allen, left, with daughter Paisley Brodie, 12. A witness said the driver who struck Paisley did not stop in time for a red light.

mediately told her, referring to the walk signal. “There was numbers on the light; I saw it.”

Allen never saw the man who hit her daughter with a black

Land Rover. A witness told police, and later The Washington Post, that the driver did not stop in time for the red light. After he hit Paisley, witnesses said, the man

berated her for being in the crosswalk, claiming she had a red signal. Paisley, unable to walk, was taken to Children’s National Hospital. The driver left with a citation for colliding with a pedestrian, which can lead to up to 30 days in jail.

The driver, Earl Darryl Curtis, of District Heights, Md., said in an interview that he stopped in the crosswalk once he realized the light was red and that it was Paisley who collided with his car, not the other way around.

“If I had ran the light, I would have run her over,” he said. “She damaged my car.” He went on to say, “I didn’t even see the girl. ... The only thing they got me on is the crosswalk.”

“I’m awfully sorry about the situation,” said Curtis, 58. “An accident is an accident.”

D.C. police would not comment on the witness account, but a police report labeling the

SEE CRASH ON A10

Suspect hid near course for hours, prosecutors say

NO SHOTS FIRED, TRUMP NEVER IN GUN SIGHT

Two firearms charges as investigators probe motives

BY LORI ROZSA,
PERRY STEIN,
DEVLIN BARRETT
AND MARK BERMAN

WEST PALM BEACH, FLA. — The man suspected in an apparent assassination attempt against Donald Trump evidently spent nearly 12 hours in the bushes around the former president’s golf course before a Secret Service agent spotted his rifle and opened fire, according to a federal criminal complaint unsealed in Florida on Monday.

Authorities said the suspect did not fire a shot and never had a clear line of sight to shoot Trump.

A Secret Service agent protecting Trump, the Republican nominee in the November election, was walking the perimeter of the course Sunday when he saw a gun poking out of the tree line near where Trump was golfing and fired in that direction. No one was injured.

Law enforcement officials Monday charged 58-year-old Ryan Wesley Routh as a felon illegally possessing a gun — a charge that allows authorities to keep him in custody while they continue to investigate his mo-

tives and actions, and try to determine whether he had any accomplices. Routh fled and left behind his phone, a loaded SKS-style rifle with a scope, two bags and food, according to the complaint.

Authorities said at least one of his bags also contained ceramic plates, which are often used as body armor.

Investigators found the suspect’s cellphone number in one of his Facebook posts and were able to quickly track his phone data, which suggested he could have been hiding in the bushes from around 2 a.m. until about 1:30 p.m., when the Secret Service saw him, the complaint said.

Routh, of Hawaii, appeared before a judge in federal court in Florida on Monday morning as officials charged him with two crimes: possession of a firearm by a convicted felon and possession of a firearm with an obliterated serial number.

The obliterated serial number

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Laying blame: Trump faults Biden and Harris for their “rhetoric.” A4

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MARTIN COUNTY SHERIFF’S OFFICE/AP

A still from body-camera video shows officials preparing to make an arrest in a potential assassination attempt against Donald Trump.

Trump’s golfing habits present unique challenge for Secret Service

BY CAROL D. LEONNIG,
JOSH DAWSEY
AND ISAAC STANLEY-BECKER

Soon after Donald Trump became president, authorities tried to warn him about the risks posed by golfing at his own courses because of their proximity to public roads. Secret Service agents came armed with unusual evidence: not suspect profiles or spent bullet casings, but simple photographs taken by news crews of him golfing at his private club in Sterling, Va.

They reasoned that if photographers with long-range lenses could get the president in their sights while he golfed, so too could potential gunmen, according to former U.S. officials involved in the discussions who, like most others interviewed for this story, spoke on the condition of anonymity because of the matter’s sensitivity.

But Trump insisted that his clubs were safe and that he wanted to keep golfing, the former officials said. These preferences posed problems for his protection that former Trump aides, Secret Service officials and security

SEE GOLF ON A6

Suspect was all talk, no help with Ukraine defense, organization says

BY DAVID L. STERN
AND ANNABELLE TIMSIT

KYIV — The man accused of pointing a gun at former president Donald Trump traveled to Ukraine in 2022 to help recruit foreigners for its defense, but a representative of the country’s International Legion at the time said it did not find him useful.

Ryan Wesley Routh, 58, was arrested Sunday on suspicion of trying to assassinate Trump, the Republican presidential nominee, on a Florida golf course. He was charged Monday with two gun-related crimes. In recent years, according to a picture that emerges from his online activity and accounts of his interactions with journalists and activists, he began to see himself as a player on the world stage: a militant advocate for Ukraine, a self-appointed recruiter for the Ukrainian cause and a defender of Taiwan in the shadow of China.

Evelyn Aschenbrenner, an American who served in the administration of the Ukrainian International Legion until June, said the news that he was possibly involved in an attempt to

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