Three people are dead after a fire broke out in a Queens apartment on New Year’s Eve.

The blaze was confined to a single apartment on the ninth floor of an 18-story tower in the LeFrak City residential complex and is suspected to have started in the kitchen, said fire officials. The officials said there was no working fire alarm in the apartment.

The victims have been identified by New York City police officials as Louise Jean-Charles, 59 years old; Nadia Donnay, 37; and Napoleon Michel, 69. They died after being taken to the hospital just before midnight Wednesday, police said.

Former New York Gov. Mario Cuomo was remembered Thursday night as a gifted orator, a principled politician, a proud son of immigrants and a father of five children, including the current governor.

President Barack Obama called the three-term Democratic governor a “determined champion of progressive values, and an unflinching voice for tolerance, inclusiveness, fairness, dignity and opportunity.”

Mr. Cuomo, who died Thursday evening at age 82, suffered a heart failure at home with his family by his side, said officials in the office of his son, Gov. Andrew Cuomo.

“Mario Cuomo was a giant in New York state politics…and probably the greatest orator this state has ever had,” said George Arzt, a political strategist and former press secretary to Mayor Ed Koch, who defeated Mr. Cuomo in a mayoral run in 1977. “He was probably the last of the golden age of New York politics.”

Condolences from elected officials across the state, on all ends of the political spectrum, poured in shortly after Mr. Cuomo’s passing.

New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio, a Democrat, described Mr. Cuomo as “a man of unwavering principle who possessed a compassion for humankind without equal.”

Mr. de Blasio ordered flags throughout the five boroughs, already lowered in honor of two late New York Police Department officers, to remain at half-staff for 30 days.

U.S. Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand, a Democrat, said, “I will always be grateful for his wisdom and generosity.”

Larry Sabato, director of the University of Virginia Center for Politics, said Mr. Cuomo’s rhetorical skill made him an inspirational figure of the Democratic Party in the 1980s and early ’90s.

“He was a liberal’s liberal and he was the party’s chief rhetorician who lifted their spirits and hopes,” Mr. Sabato said.

Several New York politicians recalled Mr. Cuomo’s 1984 speech at the Democratic National Convention as particularly memorable. Assemblyman Karim Camara, head of the Legislature’s Black, Puerto Rican, Hispanic and Asian Legislative Caucus, said he considered it “one of the greatest political speeches in history,” one that motivated him to get into politics.

In the address, Mr. Cuomo denounced speaking in “nice but vague rhetoric” when discussing the lives of poor people, and he described the nation’s wealth gap as “a tale of two cities.”

Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver, a Manhattan Democrat who served under both Gov. Cuomos, also recalled being moved by those words. “His words ring as true today as they did more than 30 years ago,” said Mr. Silver, who added that “truly, New York has lost one of its most beloved and charismatic sons.”

Former New York Gov. George Pataki, a Republican who succeeded Mr. Cuomo after defeating him in 1994, said Mr. Cuomo “was a proud son of immigrants and a compassionate leader. He was a great New Yorker.”

Former Mayor Michael Bloomberg, a friend of Mr. Cuomo’s, praised him in a statement: “He never swayed with the political winds—whether on the death penalty or any other issue—and he earned a spot alongside Theodore Roosevelt, Charles Evans Hughes, Al Smith, and Franklin Roosevelt in the pantheon of New York’s great progressive governors.” But for all he accomplished, his proudest day in life well may have been his last, seeing his son, Andrew, inaugurated for a second term.

Mr. Cuomo had a reputation for calling reporters and commentators when he disagreed with their words, said University of Virginia’s Mr. Sabato.

After Mr. Sabato publicly commented on Mr. Cuomo’s inability to take the plunge and run for president in the 1990s, he said the Democrat phoned him and dressed him down for an hour. “It was a fairly one-sided conversation,” he said.

Mr. Cuomo preferred to sleep in Albany rather than travel the way one would need to for a national run, Mr. Sabato said.

“He didn’t want to do the things you had to do to be elected president,” he said.

In his inaugural remarks in New York City on Thursday, Andrew Cuomo said his father was too ill to attend the ceremonies.

But the governor said the two had spent New Year’s Eve together and his father had approved of his remarks, joking they were impressive “for a second-termer.”

“My father could not be here physically. He’s here in the hearts and minds of every person in this room.”

A former reporter who is now a government official plans to testify at an upcoming terrorism trial about his reporting on al Qaeda—a new wrinkle in the continuing debate over whether the Justice Department has intruded on press freedoms.

John Miller, who is now the deputy commissioner of intelligence and counterterrorism at the New York Police Department, has been preparing to testify about his conversations surrounding a 1998 interview he conducted with Osama bin Laden in Afghanistan, according to people close to the case.

Federal prosecutors in the U.S. attorney’s office in New York want his testimony as they try to convict Khaled al-Fawwaz of conspiring to kill Americans with twin bombings of U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania in 1998.

The seeking of evidence from reporters has become a hot-button issue, particularly after leak investigations involving reporters at the Associated Press, the [New York Times](https://quotes.wsj.com/NYT) and Fox News Channel forced the Justice Department earlier this year to revisit and rewrite some of its rules on how it gathers evidence about reporters. Attorney General Eric Holder is still working on further revisions to the department’s policies, which could be announced in the coming weeks, according to people involved in those discussions.

Next week, New York Times reporter James Risen is scheduled to appear in a federal court in Virginia to answer limited questions under oath, ahead of a planned trial of an ex-Central Intelligence Agency employee accused of sharing national security information. After a lengthy court battle, prosecutors in that case have signaled they won't try to force Mr. Risen to identify his sources.

In the New York terror trial due to begin this month, there were no such contentious exchanges between prosecutors and Mr. Miller, the former reporter for ABC News, according to people familiar with the discussions. Mr. Miller has agreed to testify voluntarily, according to people familiar with the case. A spokeswoman for ABC News declined to comment.

Though the full scope of his testimony is still unclear, Mr. Miller has written, both in a book and a magazine article, about meeting Mr. Fawwaz and negotiating with him and others for an interview with bin Laden. He wrote he visited Mr. Fawwaz’s house outside London. Those discussions eventually led to a May 1998 interview with the terror leader in Afghanistan. That interview took place a few months before the attack on the U.S. embassies in Africa.

Prosecutors have also sought testimony from a CBS producer who sought to arrange an interview with bin Laden around the same time, though the producer has indicated he doesn’t want to testify, according to people close to the case.

Mr. Fawwaz, according to U.S. prosecutors, helped create the terror cell network in Africa that eventually bombed the embassies. In 1994, he moved to London where he led a group of men handling bin Laden’s public relations work, helping spread a 1996 fatwa declaring war on America, authorities say. For more than a decade, Mr. Fawwaz fought extradition to the U.S. Mr. Fawwaz has pleaded not guilty.

###### **Every Brilliant Thing**

Barrow Street Theatre, 27 Barrow St.

($55-$75), 212-868-4444

closes March 29

New York

Duncan Macmillan’s “Every Brilliant Thing,” which has transferred to an off-Broadway house after successful runs in London and Edinburgh, is an hourlong one-man comedy about depression. The sweet-and-sour premise is that the narrator has drawn up a million-item list of “brilliant” things that he likes, loves, admires or appreciates (“321. Laughing so hard you shoot milk out of your nose”) in the hope of persuading his suicidal mother—and himself—that life is worth living.

The list itself is twee and greeting-cardy, and the script as a whole is close enough in tone to Nick Hornby’s “High Fidelity” to make alert viewers squirm, but the show works, mostly because of the battering-ram energy of Jonny Donahoe, the British stand-up comedian who performs “Every Brilliant Thing” in the round on a toenail-sized stage and is also credited as its co-author. A large amount of audience participation is built into the script, and Mr. Donahoe, who is awe-inspiringly fast on his feet, has a knack for persuading total strangers to shake off their fear of public embarrassment and help him out in the improvised bits. While I didn’t find the results all that affecting, I still had a good time.

*New York*

Originality is overrated. Even the most hackneyed-sounding plot can be made fresh by a writer who understands that life is always the same—and always new. That’s the secret of Samuel D. Hunter’s “Pocatello,” a 10-character drama about a pair of severely fractured families that covers its well-tilled ground in a way that is at once predictable and involving, not to mention poignant. To be sure, it’s also well acted and directed, but don’t be fooled by the high quality of Playwrights Horizons’ production: “Pocatello” is a fine play in its own right.

“Pocatello” takes place in the dining room of an Olive Garden-type Italian restaurant located in a small Idaho town that is growing smaller and seedier by the day. Eddie (T.R. Knight), the manager, is a gay singleton whose own family long ago gave up on getting along but who still dreams of bringing its estranged members together again, even though none of them shows any sign of wanting to be reunited. He also has a second workplace family that is closer and more sympathetic, but it, too, is in trouble, for the restaurant isn’t doing enough business to keep its doors open for much longer.

Mr. Hunter sets “Pocatello” in motion with a virtuosic opening scene in which two tablesful of diners talk loudly and simultaneously while the staff does its best to accommodate their variously persnickety requests (“Well, if you don’t have *that*, I just don’t see anything here that I can eat”). After the commotion comes to a frothy head and dies down, we meet the individual characters one by one. They are somewhat obvious types—the cold-fish mother, the alienated teenage girl-brat, the dementia-diminished grandfather—but Mr. Hunter sketches them so precisely and sympathetically that their individuality soon emerges. From that point onward the play, which is staged without an intermission, builds steadily and skillfully to a reconciliation scene that you’ll be expecting well in advance of its arrival. Nevertheless, it’s touching, just like the rest of “Pocatello,” because it’s believable: Mr. Hunter’s characters all sound like real people with real problems, the kind with which you yourself are currently wrestling or have very likely wrestled at some point in the not-too-distant past.

Davis McCallum, the director of “Pocatello,” is famously good at staging this kind of play. He dealt with closely similar theatrical challenges in the Mint Theater Company’s 2014 revival of John Van Druten’s “London Wall,” and he manages them with identical ease in “Pocatello.” Mr. Knight sounds rather too much like Matthew Broderick for his own good, but everybody else in the cast nails their parts, with Jonathan Hogan, Leah Karpel and Brenda Wehle making the deepest impressions as the grandfather, the teenage daughter and the mother. Lauren Helpern’s set is in every way indistinguishable from the mass-produced chain restaurants that it endeavors to evoke, so much so that you can all but smell the too-doughy breadsticks.

Never having worked in the food-service business, I took the precaution of bringing along a friend who has waited on tables in more than one restaurant of the sort portrayed in “Pocatello.” For the record, she assured me that Mr. Hunter’s depiction of this one is correct to the smallest detail.

Economic forecasters may be eagerly looking forward to 2015—if only to forget some of their off-the-mark projections from 2014.

Looking back at the projections made in January 2014 in The Wall Street Journal’s monthly survey of economists, the picture isn’t pretty: Most economists expected far higher oil prices, firmer inflation, a worse jobless rate and higher interest rates than the year actually delivered.

Economic projections are a difficult guessing game based on complex computer models, instinct and a lot of luck. It isn’t called the dismal science for nothing.

Here are the consensus forecasts from January 2014 and the results:

###### **Unemployment Rate**

Projection for December 2014: 6.3%

Actual (November 2014): 5.8%

Almost every economist saw the jobless rate at or above 6% by the end of 2014. The consensus for the jobless rate at the end of 2015—5.8%—is right where the latest jobs report had it. The jobless rate should stay low in 2015 unless the labor market deteriorates or potential workers return to the labor force.

###### **Payroll Growth**

Average monthly change in payrolls during next 12 months: 200,000

Actual (11-month average through November 2014): 241,000

Professional economic forecasters tend to go wrong by being too optimistic. Last year, it was the opposite as the labor market picked up strength after a sluggish start.

###### **Inflation**

Projected annual change in the consumer-price index for December 2014: 1.9%

Actual (November 2014): 1.3%

Credit the plunge in energy prices for the miss in forecasting overall inflation. Excluding food and energy, annual inflation clocked in at 1.7% in November.

###### **Interest Rates**

Projection for closing yield on 10-year U.S. Treasurys in December 2014: 3.52%

Actual: 2.17%

This one is a real doozy for one of the world’s most important interest rates. Every economist in the survey in January was far off the mark in expectations for interest rates in 2014.

###### **Crude Oil**

Consensus for the end of December 2014: $94.65 a barrel

Actual: $53.27 a barrel

The year’s plunge in crude-oil prices, amid plentiful supplies and tepid demand, was the biggest economic surprise of 2014.

###### **GDP Growth**

Full-year 2014 forecast: 2.8%

Actual: due in early 2015

When the final numbers are in, economic growth probably won’t be as strong as most economists expected. But the economy still appears to have picked up in 2014, with a first-quarter weather-driven contraction offsetting stronger output later in the year.

Mario Cuomo, a three-term New York governor whose soaring liberal speeches made him a national leader of the Democratic Party through the 1980s, but who never took up calls to run for president, died on Thursday, said the office of his son, Gov. Andrew Cuomo.

Mr. Cuomo, 82 years old, died at his Manhattan home of heart failure on the same day his son [was inaugurated for a second term](http://www.wsj.com/articles/cuomo-set-to-expand-his-agenda-in-new-term-1420168568?mod=article_inline).

The Queens-born son of Italian immigrants, who didn’t speak fluent English until he began public school, Mr. Cuomo came to his 22-year political career after stints as a minor league baseball player, a lawyer and a mayor-appointed mediator in a dispute between New York City and residents of Forest Hills, Queens, over proposed low-income housing.

Throughout his public life—as a mayoral candidate, a lieutenant governor, a governor and a presidential prospect—Mr. Cuomo’s career was colored by questions about moral principles and politics, especially on the topics of abortion and the death penalty.

#### Mario Cuomo’s 1984 DNC Speech

He supported abortion rights, as did most of his party, over the objections of the Catholic Church, of which he was a practicing member. But he stood firm against the death penalty, citing his religious beliefs—a stand believed to have played a role in his defeat for a fourth term in 1994 and his unsuccessful 1977 New York City mayoral run.

Mr. Cuomo was perhaps best known for [a speech at the 1984 Democratic National Convention](http://youtu.be/kOdIqKsv624?mod=article_inline) in San Francisco that called for a renewed focus on the poor. He critiqued what he called President Ronald Reagan’s vision of a “shining city…where everyone seems to be doing well.”

“But…there’s another part to the shining city; the part where some people can’t pay their mortgages, and most young people can’t afford one; where students can’t afford the education they need, and middle-class parents watch the dreams they hold for their children evaporate,” Mr. Cuomo said.

That speech helped turn him into a national Democratic Party figure, though it didn’t resonate with voters. That year, the party’s nominee, Walter Mondale, lost to Mr. Reagan in a landslide.

Mr. Cuomo drew criticism for those positions—particularly from then-Archbishop of New York John Cardinal O’Connor, who threatened to excommunicate him over his position on abortion—but those reactions didn’t appear to sway him.

“He believes what he believes,” Andrew Cuomo wrote in [his memoir](http://www.wsj.com/articles/in-memoir-new-york-governor-cuomo-lays-out-liberal-credentials-1412814536?KEYWORDS=mario%20cuomo&mod=article_inline), published in October. “It doesn’t matter what anyone else thinks—even the public at large.”

The roots of Mr. Cuomo’s political career took hold in the late 1960s, when Mr. Cuomo, then a practicing lawyer, began work on a pair of disputes between City Hall and homeowners in the Queens neighborhoods of Corona and Forest Hills. His appetite for public service piqued, ran for lieutenant governor.

He lost, but newly installed Gov. Hugh Carey, a college friend, made him secretary of state, and from that post Mr. Cuomo ran for mayor against Ed Koch in 1977.

During a debate, Mr. Koch suggested that his opponent’s moral stances sometimes smacked of sanctimony.

“He gets in there and he says, ‘I’m against the politics of electrocution,’ as though if you’re for the death penalty, that somehow or other you are immoral,’’ Mr. Koch said at the time.

After a brutal primary race and runoff, Mr. Cuomo lost to Mr. Koch. The following year, however, Mr. Cuomo won his second bid for lieutenant governor, setting the stage for his rise to the state’s highest post.

The younger Mr. Cuomo played a significant role in his father’s professional life, working on several of his political campaigns and serving as his special aide during the start of his first term as governor. The two shared an Albany apartment when the elder Mr. Cuomo was lieutenant governor.

After winning his first gubernatorial election in 1982, Mr. Cuomo began drawing attention as a potential White House contender following his 1984 DNC speech.

But for publicly unexplained reasons, Mr. Cuomo repeatedly declined to pursue a presidential campaign in both 1988 and 1992. His indecision on the matter earned him the nickname “Hamlet on the Hudson.”

He also was considered as a Supreme Court nominee by President Bill Clinton, but Mr. Cuomo said he wasn’t interested.

As governor, he presided over an era of balanced budgets and reduced income taxes, and took a tough tack on criminal justice, increasing penalties and expanding prisons. But on his watch, the state’s debt ballooned and the economy stagnated toward the end of his tenure.

In 1994, he was narrowly defeated in his fourth gubernatorial bid, against George E. Pataki. He returned to practicing law at a Manhattan firm, Willkie Farr & Gallagher LLP, where he worked until his death.

In a statement, President Barack Obama said Mr. Cuomo lived “a life of public service—and we are all better for it.”

Mr. Cuomo is survived by his wife, Matilda, his five children—including Andrew and Chris Cuomo, an anchor on CNN—and 14 grandchildren.

###### **SYRIA**

###### **Assad Visits Front Line, as death toll mounts**

President Bashar al-Assad made a rare visit to the front line of his country’s civil war, spending New Year’s Eve with his troops in a tense neighborhood in eastern Damascus, state media said Thursday.

State TV footage showed Mr. Assad having dinner of baked beans and boiled potatoes with soldiers and pro-government militiamen Wednesday night in the Jobar neighborhood, the site of intense fighting in recent months between troops and opposition fighters. Mr. Assad was last seen in public on April 20.

Meanwhile, the Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights on Thursday said more than 76,000 people were killed in 2014, including about 17,800 civilians. The monitoring group, which has a network of activists around the country, said the dead included some 22,600 troops and pro-government fighters.

*—Associated Press*

###### **ISRAEL**

###### **Netanyahu Wins Backing Of Hard-line Likud Party**

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu won the backing of his hard-line Likud party in its primary and will lead it into general elections this March, Israeli media reported on Thursday.

With most of the ballots cast Wednesday counted, Israeli media said Mr. Netanyahu had won the support of about 75% of electors, giving him an unassailable lead over challenger Danny Danon, a former deputy defense minister.

Some 100,000 Likud members were eligible to vote in the poll. Netanyahu was the heavily favored candidate.

Early opinion polls ahead of the March 17 general elections show the Likud party in a neck-and-neck race with a joint list headed by Labor Party leader Isaac Herzog and former Justice Minister Tzipi Livni of the Hatnuah party.

*—Associated Press*

###### **CUBA**

###### **Police Detain Dissidents Amid broader crackdown**

Cuban police detained several dissidents who had gone to a Havana prison to demand that fellow opponents of the government be released, dissidents said on Thursday.

The detentions follow a series of others since Tuesday in a crackdown against activists who have attempted to test the Communist government’s tolerance for free speech and assembly in the wake of Cuba’s thaw in relations with the U.S.

Cuban officials do not comment on police activity such as the detention of dissidents, and the Cuban government dismisses the opponents as paid advocates of the U.S. government. The dissidents have limited public support inside Cuba.

*—Reuters*

###### **TURKEY**

###### **Police Hold man Accused**

###### **Of Attack on Premier**

Police subdued a man after he threw grenades and fired a weapon at officers near the offices of the prime minister, Turkish news agencies said.

The Istanbul police chief told the state-run news agency that officers destroyed two unexploded grenades. The man was also armed with a small weapon and an assault rifle. He was arrested after the incident near the offices at the Dolmabahce Palace in downtown Istanbul.

The nearby offices are used by Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoglu and previously by President Recep Tayyip Erdogan. The agencies said neither was present during the attack.

Altinok said the man is suspected to be a member of a terrorist organization. “The individual’s identity and affiliation is obvious to us. . He has spent time in prison,” he said.

SEOUL— [Hyundai Motor](https://quotes.wsj.com/HYMLY) Co. and its affiliate [Kia Motors](https://www.wsj.com/market-data/quotes/000270.SE) Corp. expect their weakest sales growth in more than a decade this year as they struggle to compete with Japanese rivals benefiting from a weaker yen.

The two South Korean auto makers, which together form the world’s fifth-largest seller of cars by sales, on Friday said they expect a combined 2.5% increase in global sales to 8.2 million vehicles for 2015.

That would be the duo’s lowest growth rate since 2003 and down from last year’s growth. The group has been one of the world’s fastest-growing auto makers in recent years.

Hyundai and Kia, aided by a weak local currency, sleek designs and clever marketing, enjoyed rapid sales growth in the wake of the 2008 global financial crisis. Group sales rose 24% in 2010.

However, momentum has weakened in recent years as the won has strengthened, particularly against the Japanese currency.

The won is hovering around a near seven-year high against the yen, which has been depressed by Tokyo’s easy monetary policy.

“The yen’s weakness forces us to make qualitative improvement, including cost cuts, more important than anything else, if we continue to grow,” Chairman Chung Mong-koo told employees in a New Year’s speech.

Mr. Chung said this year, the auto makers will focus on enhancing brand identity and strengthening research and development to raise quality as competition intensifies.

Hyundai and Kia have also been dogged by a series of recalls and quality problems in Korea and the U.S., which is the group’s second-largest market after China.

Last month, Hyundai said it would recall more than 40,000 vehicles, including its premium Genesis sedan, in the U.S. due to defective parts. Its flagship Sonata model has seen disappointing sales since a revamped version made its debut last year.

Etrade Securities analyst Kang Sang-min said the company’s capacity constraint has also contributed to its conservative sales forecast.

“Hyundai is running plants at full capacity. The factories have little room to increase output for now,” he said.

On Tuesday, Hyundai said it would build two factories in China, instead of one as originally planned.

But the new plants—its first major global expansion in three years—won’t go into production until 2016.

New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo stuck close to home in his first term in office, but he is set to rack up the frequent-flier miles in his second.

Mr. Cuomo, who was sworn in for a second term on Thursday, is tentatively planning to kick off an out-of-state agenda in late January with a trip to the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, according to people familiar with the matter. And the governor’s newfound taste for foreign travel—including at least five scheduled international excursions—has fueled questions and speculation about his political future.

During his first 3½ years as governor, Mr. Cuomo, a Democrat, left New York on only a handful of times and never left the country. Instead, he stayed close to home in the mold of his father, former Gov. Mario Cuomo, who died on Thursday, according to staff members in the current governor’s office.

But in the final months of his first term, the younger Mr. Cuomo ventured far beyond New York’s borders, traveling to Israel, the Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico and Afghanistan. And in October, he announced a slate of second-term trips: a five-county “trade mission” itinerary that includes travel to China, Mexico, Italy and Canada, as well as another trip to Israel.

The trip to Davos would put Mr. Cuomo among business and political leaders who meet annually to discuss issues such as global warming and the world economy. The summit this year runs from Jan. 21 to Jan. 24.

A spokeswoman for the governor declined to comment about the Davos trip.

The flurry of foreign trips has created significant chatter about Mr. Cuomo’s goals beyond Albany.

While people close to the governor say he wouldn’t challenge Hillary Clinton if she seeks the Democratic presidential nomination for 2016, they allow that bulking up his foreign-policy resume now better prepares him for a cabinet position in a Democratic administration or for a national bid in 2020—particularly if a Republican succeeds President Barack Obama in the White House.

And, these people say, it broadens his options for other work should he decline seek a third term as governor.

Mr. Cuomo himself has dismissed such chatter.

“I wanted to make it clear that I wasn’t interested in any other job,” he said, explaining when announcing his five trade missions why he rarely left his home state during his first term. “Not that we have a cynical press corps, but if you have a New York governor who starts to travel over in other states, right away they look for other political motivations.”

Going forward, he said, foreign travel would be “essential to doing the job of governor.”

But observers don’t entirely buy that explanation.

“Politics is the business of relationships. If people don’t know you or they don’t love you, they’re not going to want to help you in your career, and certainly having relationships with people in other counties is going to help you,” said Hank Sheinkopf, a Democratic strategist who worked for the Cuomo-controlled state Democratic Party during the 2014 elections but is no longer on the payroll.

“The bottom line is, he is running as what could be perceived to be a shadow presidential campaign,” said Doug Muzzio, a political-science professor at the City University of New York.

“But the other possibility is more general than that: he is building up his résumé, as a political leader and a statesman,” enabling him, Mr. Muzzio said, to secure a job as the head of a foundation or nongovernmental organization in 2018.

For now, Mr. Cuomo’s travel is largely foreign, with few domestic excursions on the agenda.

Mr. Cuomo lacks the excuse for travel of his neighbor New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie, a 2016 presidential prospect who has roamed the country campaigning for fellow Republican governors as the chairman of the Republican Governors Association. Mr. Cuomo has almost no relationship with the Democratic Governors Association.

Travel—both foreign and domestic—carries political risks. In 2009, then-Gov. David A. Paterson was forced to abandon his own plans to attend Davos after he faced fierce criticism over his intention to leave the state during a period when it faced a $15 billion budget deficit.

Mr. Cuomo, however, may not face the same backlash.

“The state of New York is no longer the Wild West,” Mr. Sheinkopf said. “It’s a very calm place where things seem to get done, so the governor can travel without worrying about what going’s on in Albany.”

Even so, Mr. Cuomo may face complications when it comes to the matter of who pays for his trips. None of the governor’s foreign travel during his first term was financed by New York state taxpayers, since his campaign paid for visits to Israel and the Dominican Republic, and the federal government paid for travel to Afghanistan. A spokeswoman for the governor declined to provide information about how his second-term travel would be financed.

Mr. Muzzio argued that taxpayers would accept the notion of paying for Mr. Cuomo’s trips as long as the governor can produce concrete results, such as a new trade deal.

“The conundrum,” he said, “is if you pay for it with state funds, then you really do have to deliver.”