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When lying is O.K., and when it's not

Jonathan Powell

OPINION

LONDON The revelation that Jared Kushner, the president's son-in-law, attempted to create a secret back channel to the Russian government in December has led to a feeding frenzy in the media. Yet there is nothing wrong per se with governments' having a secret channel to an enemy. Most successful diplomatic negotiations are built on a secret initial phase. Think of the Iran nuclear talks and the Cuba negotiations under the last United States administration, both of which were begun through secret channels. I have spent the decade since I left public service constructing such channels between other governments and armed groups with the aim of ending civil wars. This is based on my experience in Northern Ireland, where I was the British government's chief negotiator. The British government had a secret back channel to the Irish Republican Army from 1972 onward, even though Britain was fighting the I.R.A. throughout the quarter-century that followed. This secret channel played a crucial role in bringing about a cease-fire in 1975, the end of the first hunger strike in 1980 and, crucially, the 1994 cease-fire and peace talks under Prime Minister John Major. (The brave Catholic businessman who was the channel's key conduit, Brendan Duddy, died about three weeks ago.)

Democratic governments use such secret channels because it is very hard to be seen talking to people who are murdering your citizens. Unless you talk to the men with guns and offer them a political way forward, however, they are unlikely to stop fighting. Governments go to great lengths to disguise what they are doing. Mr. Major stood up in the House of Commons and said he would never talk to the I.R.A., that it would turn his stomach to do so. At the same time, he was corresponding secretly with the I.R.A. leader Martin McGuinness — and thank goodness he was, or there would have been no peace. When the I.R.A. leaked the correspondence in 1993 after that interaction, the Northern Ireland secretary at the time, Patrick Mayhew, was terrified that he would have to resign for lying to Parliament. Instead, he won support from both government and opposition benches for what he had done.

POWELL, PAGE 13



Emmanuel Macron has proven to be more decisive as president than as a candidate.



Mr. Macron delivering his victory speech before the pyramid in front of the Louvre.

Macron's presidential bearing

PARIS

After only a few weeks in office, French leader projects aura of authority

BY ADAM NOSSITER

France's boyish president already has faced down Donald J. Trump, lectured Vladimir V. Putin and confronted the formidable French labor unions — all in less than three weeks.

Seeking to shatter any doubts about his youthfulness and inexperience, President Emmanuel Macron, 38, has shown himself punchier and more decisive than the bland candidate he evoked in the campaign. And he is doing it with-

out notes.

Last week, he outshook President Trump's hand at the Group of 7 summit meeting. On Monday, in a slap at Russia, he put the visiting Mr. Putin on notice over Syria and propaganda assaults from Kremlin-allied media.

Mr. Macron has politely but firmly challenged France's unions about changing what he regards as France's job-killing labor code, the most ambitious part of his domestic agenda.

He has given fits to France's established parties on the right and the left, poaching personalities for his government from the first and advancing a Socialist-unfriendly agenda destabilizing to the second. In the process, he will most likely win a parliamentary majority in June's elections, though skeptics doubted he could even assemble enough candidates for his new party.



With President Vladimir V. Putin in Versailles, Mr. Macron put him on notice over Syria.



With a firm grip, he outshook President Trump's hand at the Group of 7 meeting.

The early impression is a marked contrast to the downbeat, relatively informal style of his predecessor, François Hollande, derided for his "little jokes," chattiness with the media and desire to be a "normal" president. Mr. Macron is not chatty, keeps the media at a distance, does not tell jokes and is anything but a "normal" politician, or president.

Instead, he came close to humiliating Mr. Putin in his face, about chemical weapons in Syria on Monday, in the deliberately chosen grandiose setting of Versailles. In the news conference Saturday after the Group of 7 meeting in Sicily, he spoke fluently and off-the-cuff on topics like Libya and African development, without Mr. Hollande's customary hems, haws and little smiles.

Mr. Macron projected assertiveness, telling reporters, for instance, that he had insisted to Mr. Trump how "indis-

pensable" it was for "America's reputation" that he stick to the Paris climate agreement.

Otherwise, Mr. Macron's public declarations have been sparse.

"It's been very presidential. You can see him totally assuming the job, the verticality of the job" — the French presidency as a top-down operation, with the man at the top giving the orders — "and putting a certain distance between himself and the press," said Laurent Bouvet, a political scientist at the University of Versailles.

"You can also see it in the stage-setting of the presidency — the night of his election," when Mr. Macron spoke from the great courtyard of the Louvre, "and in the reception of Putin" at Versailles in a grand hall celebrating French military triumphs, Mr. Bouvet continued.

MACRON, PAGE 4

Blind spots in Trump's rant against Germany

WASHINGTON

Trade deficit complaint overlooks jobs created in U.S. by automakers

BY MARK LANDLER

The last time relations between the United States and Europe were this bad — in the spring of 2003, during the buildup to the invasion of Iraq — the administration of George W. Bush decided to "punish France, ignore Germany and forgive Russia," in a phrase attributed to the national security adviser at the time, Condoleezza Rice.

Now, President Trump has flipped the formula, punishing Germany while largely ignoring France. (His conciliatory approach to Russia seems more or less in line with the Mr. Bush of 2003.)

The difference this time is trade. Germany runs a chronic, yawning trade surplus with the United States, which Trump administration officials say Germany has widened by exploiting a weak euro to put American exports at a disadvantage. That, more than differences over NATO, Russia or climate change, is driving a wedge between the two countries.

"We have a MASSIVE trade deficit with Germany, plus they pay FAR LESS than they should on NATO & military," Mr. Trump said on Twitter on Tuesday morning. "Very hard for U.S. This will change."

Mr. Trump was continuing a drumbeat he began during his visit to Europe, when he told European Union officials that Germany was "very bad" on trade. But the president's campaign against Germany, while accurate on the statistics, overlooks the benefits in the German-American trade relationship, and overstates Berlin's ability to do much about it.

German companies employ roughly 700,000 people in the United States. Car makers like BMW and Mercedes-Benz have huge American assembly plants, which export vehicles to China and Latin America. BMW's factory in Spartanburg, S.C., is a major employer.

GERMANY, PAGE 4



German Chancellor Angela Merkel questioned America's commitment to Europe.

Home cooks shine during Ramadan



Amanda Saab bakes her Lebanese grandmother's syrup-soaked cake in preparation for Ramadan at her home in Huron Charter Township, Mich.

Daily fast during holiday brings joys of food into focus for many Muslims

BY TEJAL RAO

For Amanda Saab, the flavors of Ramadan are baked into sweet, tender bites of nannoura. Her Lebanese grandmother used to make the cake, folding together frothy, aerated yogurt and semolina flour. Now Ms. Saab makes it the same way, soaking the cake in a floral-scented sugar syrup while it's still warm from the oven, and cutting it into diamond-shaped pieces.

"While I'm not consuming food all day, I'm thinking about food," said Ms. Saab, a social worker who lives near Detroit. "Not about how I'm missing out, but about how to make the best thing to fulfill everyone's cravings after a long day of fasting."

In the United States, Ramadan began on Friday, and on Saturday in other parts of the world. For 30 consecutive

days, many of the 1.8 billion Muslims around the world will fast, eating each evening after the sun goes down and squeezing in a predawn meal before it rises again.

"While my tummy is rumbling, it's drawing me closer to my faith," said Ms. Saab, 28.

Fasting may sound strenuous, and it is, but it's also an act of devotion during a month filled with immense joy, culminating in the feasts of Eid al-Fitr. There's an emphasis on community and charity, self-reflection and kindness. The absence of food can deepen its meaning: After pushing through long stretches of hunger and thirst, there is a heightened sense of gratitude and delight that comes with breaking the fast while surrounded by family and friends.

"When everyone's standing around, picking from the same platter, suddenly you get a surge of energy," said Malika Ameen, 42, a cookbook author and pastry chef. "Everyone is chatty and smiling with the anticipation of dinner."

Ms. Ameen's father immigrated to the

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Bangalore \$6230.00
Chennai \$6240.00
Hyderabad \$6250.00
Jaipur \$6260.00
Lucknow \$6270.00
Patna \$6280.00
Ranchi \$6290.00
Bhopal \$6300.

PAGE TWO

Freight too big for roads or rails

WATERFORD JOURNAL
WATERFORD, N.Y.**Storied Erie Canal makes small rebound in shipping for odd and oversize cargo**

BY JESSE MCKINLEY

It has been 200 years since a corps of men and mules started to dig what was known as "Clinton's ditch" across hundreds of miles of farmland, forests and other decidedly dry terrain in upstate New York, creating the Erie Canal and, with it, a range of prosperous towns from Albany to Buffalo.

The canal's heyday has long passed, and in recent decades it has been relegated as a recreational byway, drawing pleasure boats, fishing lines and the occasional canal fan.

Lately, however, there has been a curious sight along the Erie Canal and some of its offshoots: commercial shipping — a small rebound pegged to the canal's use as a niche waterway for cargo whose size or weight make it impossible, impractical or too expensive to haul any other way. All told, the state anticipates more than 200,000 tons of shipping on the canal system in 2017, a milestone not reached since 1983, according to state officials. Still, that is a far cry from the millions of tons of cargo the canal regularly trafficked during the 19th and early 20th centuries.

Unlike the frontier farm goods that once headed east to market, these new shipments often have a distinctly modern feel. They have included electrical transformers and turbines, Navy sonar equipment, and huge pedestals to support the New York Wheel, a towering Ferris wheel being built on Staten Island.

And giant beer cans.

Over the past two weeks, 12 enormous beer tanks were slowly floating on the canal to Rochester, where the Genesee Beer Company plans to use them to brew a whopping eight million bottles of beer at a time.

Like many of the other items seen lately along the canal, the tanks are simply too big for the roads or rails, the company says. So the tanks bobbed their way about 225 miles on four barges: a virtual beer flotilla, and an opportunity for canal and beer aficionados to see Clinton's ditch in action.

"This is history," said Thomas Schlegel, a self-described fan of "Geney," as the beer brand is known, who accompanied the tanks with the water head into the canal. "They should utilize the canal more often."

That, it seems, is exactly the plan under the New York Power Authority, which operates the state's canals — all



Twelve enormous beer tanks, headed to the Genesee Beer Company in Rochester, were among the oversize cargo populating the Erie Canal.

The chief executive of the New York Power Authority said the canal could again be vital to economic activity in the state.

524 money-losing miles of them.

Gil C. Quinlones, the chief executive of the authority, said the Erie Canal was once critical to economic activity upstate, and could be again, noting its uses in manufacturing, agriculture and tourism. He likened the canal system to the High Line in Manhattan, the West Side Freight train track that was converted into a park and now is regularly mobbed.

"There may not be a High Line idea for the whole 524 miles," Mr. Quinlones said, "but maybe there are sections where we could have a big idea."

Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo has repeat-

edly cited the upstate economy as a priority, including the state's alcohol industry. The Genesee beer tanks are part of a \$50 million project — backed by about \$10 million in state subsidies — to create an "eco-brewery district" in Rochester, which the governor's office describes as "a sustainable destination for brewing, tasting and learning about beer."

But the shipment has not come without criticism, including objections to the use of state money and the use of a Chinese manufacturer in a state where Mr. Cuomo has promoted the concept "Buy American."

Protesters from Feldmeier Equipment, which has a plant in Little Falls on the canal, charged at the passing barges last week, upset that their company had not built the giant tanks. Those concerns were amplified in a letter from several lawmakers, chastising the use of a Chinese manufacturer rather than Feld-

meier, which makes similar tanks.

"The last place New York State should be taking its business is China," said Assemblyman Anthony Brindisi, a Democrat from Utica. "Decisions like this one make taxpayers scratch their heads and business owners shriek."

But Jason Connolly, a spokesman for Empire State Development, rejected the notion that its investment in the brewing center in Rochester somehow amounted to supporting the offshoring of jobs.

"Governor Cuomo and Empire State Development support New York State businesses, period," Mr. Connolly said, noting that the state had not spent any money on Chinese equipment.

Such sniping, however, seemed a long way from the lazy pleasures that some found in watching the tanks float along. Paul Coffey brought his three grandchildren to see the barge enter Lock 2 at Wa-

terford, just north of Albany, where a series of locks lift — or lower — boats into downstream stretches of the Mohawk River.

Mr. Coffey, a New York history buff who can recall colonial trivia with the best of them, said he was skeptical of any plan to try to return the Erie Canal to its golden past. "I think it's wasted money," he said, adding that he thought "the dams and locks should just be opened and let the waterways go back to their natural level."

That said, he still admired the moxie of Gov. DeWitt Clinton — who was mocked in the early 19th century for pushing for the canal, but was later celebrated — and the manpower it had taken to make the ditch a reality.

"To sit and think men dug, by hand, a ditch and leveled it, 365 miles, less than 50 years after our revolution," Mr. Coffey said. "To me it's just awesome."

Surfer created first magazine for the sport

JOHN SEVERSON
1933-2017

BY RICHARD GOLDSTEIN

John Severson, a pioneer of modern surf culture who founded Surfer magazine in 1962 and created paintings, films and photographs depicting the surfing lifestyle, died on Friday at his home outside Lahaina on the Hawaiian island of Maui. He was 83.

His wife, Louise, said he had leukemia.

Surfing was a niche sport in America when Mr. Severson, having surfed on a redwood board in his native Southern California as a teenager, set out to portray its essence as a counter to the 1950s Hollywood film "Gidget" (a forerunner of the 1960s beach party films with Frankie Avalon and Annette Funicello) and the early music of the Beach Boys, which he regarded as a "cheap, honky look at surfing."

He believed that the popular portrayal of surfing spawned an image that led to municipal restrictions on serious wave riders.

"The Gidget-inspired kids wanted to go surfing, or at least be a part of this underground culture," Mr. Severson recalled in his 2014 book, "John Severson's SURF."

"Their role models were Hollywood stereotypes, and the sport quickly picked up a bad name. Wannabes came into the sport as rebels, pranksters, vandals, and thieves, wearing Nazi imagery — helmets and iron crosses. Surfers hated those Hollywood surf films, and I could see that Surfer could create a truer image of the sport."

Drew Kampine, the editor of Surfer magazine from 1968 to 1972, said in an interview Saturday that he viewed Mr. Severson, who preceded him as its editor, as "the first to treat surfing as a worthy subject matter for fine art."

The surfer journalist Sam George wrote in 1999, "Before John Severson, there

He likened surfing to "a beautiful sensation of dance."

was no 'surf media,' no 'surf industry' and no surf culture — no least not in the way we understand it today."

Mr. Severson likened the surfing experience to "a beautiful sensation of dance with the added dimension of being in nature."

"There's this whole force of moving water, and as you ride, you harness this water," he told the contemporary culture magazine *032c* in a 2014 interview. "Then, as your abilities increase, you can go further and deeper into the wave and into more radical positions — like off the top, off the bottom — and there are these weightless sensations. It's an other dimension."

Surfer, the first major magazine devoted to wave riding, began as an annual publication, then became a quarterly and finally a monthly. "As long as I had enough money to make the next issue and pay the little staff I had, I was pretty stoked," Mr. Severson told The New York Times in 2014.

The magazine thrived, and by the early 1970s he had about 100,000 readers and plentiful advertising. But his publishing obligations were becoming excessively consuming, and he was confronted by restrictions on his favorite surfing spot.

President Richard M. Nixon had bought an estate alongside Mr. Severson's home in San Clemente, Calif., looking out on the popular Cotton's Point surf break. The Secret Service, citing security concerns, sought to close public access there when Mr. Nixon was visiting. Mr. Severson spoke with top White House aides to discuss a compromise on surfing hours but remained discouraged at having to battle for unfettered access. His son, Surfer magazine in the early 1970s for an undisclosed amount, then returned to Hawaii to pursue his artwork, to ride big waves and to relax with his family.

His films included "Surf," "Surf Safari," "Surf Fever" and perhaps most notably "Pacific Vibrations." The posters he designed for them became collectors' items.

Mr. Severson's "Surf BeBop," a semi-autobiographical alongside Mr. Severson's home in San Clemente, Calif., looking out on the popular Cotton's Point surf break. The Secret Service, citing security concerns, sought to close public access there when Mr. Nixon was visiting. Mr. Severson spoke with top White House aides to discuss a compromise on surfing hours but remained discouraged at having to battle for unfettered access.

His son, Surfer magazine in the early 1970s for an undisclosed amount, then returned to Hawaii to pursue his artwork, to ride big waves and to relax with his family.

He always felt like surfing belonged to everyone, he told The Times in 2014, "not the guy with the most money."

Home cooks shine to break the Ramadan fast

RAMADAN, FROM PAGE 1

United States from Pakistan in the 1960s. She grew up in Chicago, where her family hosts vibrant iftars, one of the names for the evening meal that breaks the day's fast.

An iftar may be as elaborate as the truffle-laden platters on display in the dining room at the Four Seasons Resort in Dubai, in the United Arab Emirates, or as simple as chicken and rice, passed out free on paper plates at a mosque.

For home cooks, who often take turns hosting an iftar or carrying their home-made food to share at community centers and mosques, it's time to shine.

Many will strategize for the days ahead, planning menus and cooking in bulk. Keeping a few labor-intensive dishes ready to heat up can minimize the time spent hungry, in a fragrant kitchen, when there are hours to go before the day's first bite.

"By about 3, you start to hit a wall and you wish you didn't have to eat this food all day," Ms. Ameen said. "Everything starts to smell so strong."

She stocks her freezer with home-made soups to last the month, ready to heat up or to pop into the oven in small batches. Ms. Ameen fills hers with kibbeh, the bulgur wheat and beef shaped by hand into tiny, plump balls, and makes big pots of lentil soup.

Of course, not everything can be done in advance. Ms. Ameen will also put together light foods she finds ideal for a fasting stomach, like fruit chaat, a tangy, savory fruit salad made from what's ripe that day and in season, all marinated with lemon, dried mint and chives.

"We eat a lot of watermelon," Ms. Ameen said of a fruit she uses to make the chaat. "You're so dehydrated, it's a quick way to get liquid into your body."

She also stocks up on dates throughout the month, the lentil fritters soaked in a cool sauce of yogurt and a second of sweet-sour tamarind. It's a dish that her family serves this time of year and no one would eat its jammy, dried, perfume of toasted, crushed cumins rises.

"That smell, to me, is the smell of Ramadan," Ms. Ameen said.



From left, the iftar table at the Four Seasons Resort in Dubai, United Arab Emirates; Malika Ameen preparing a watermelon chaat dish in Chicago; and a Lebanese mamsous cake.

roni and cheese to eat campur, the Indonesian dessert of fruit and jellies, from the Nigerian bean fritters known as akara to asheh, an herb-packed Persian soup.

"But the fast is a reminder that food is a means, not an end goal," said Falyaz Jaffer, a researcher and chaplain at New York University's Islamic Center. The center serves iftar to nearly 300 people each evening, with catering from restaurants such as Soul Spot in Brooklyn and Fatima's Halal Kitchen in Queens.

"It's hard to put into practice, of course," Mr. Jaffer said. "We save up to eat at expensive restaurants, we think about food and what meal is next, but the idea is that there's a time for that, but it's not the end goal of life."

Though not all Muslims choose to fast, fasting is one of the Five Pillars of Islam, and many are connected by it each year.

"It's a test of our willpower, a way to emphasize our spiritual dimension," Mr. Jaffer said.

Ramadan is the ninth month of the Islamic lunar calendar, and this year it falls at the tail end of spring and the beginning of summer in the United States. The days stretch out, long and hot. "I will make a big salad every day, and that is not negotiable," said Ms. Saab,

who likes to pace herself with light foods that will hydrate and nourish.

For her Lebanese-American family, she prepares juicy variations on fattoush: a range of crunchy vegetables, herbs and leafy greens tossed in a simple lemon-succic dressing with pieces of warm fried flatbread.

Ms. Saab also serves fattoush at "Dinner With Your Muslim Neighbor," the meals she hosts twice a month for friends of friends, colleagues and locals she has met via Facebook. She started the dinners with the idea that she could complicate and add nuance to the national understanding of Muslim Americans, one person at a time, by inviting strangers into her home and offering them seats around her table.

It's work, but Ms. Saab wants to continue these dinners during Ramadan. And she has been moved by people from outside of her faith, eager to fast by her side for a day. "I think it's so generous that they want to fully embrace and engage," she said.

Skipping food and drink for well over 12 hours can put stress on the body, which immediately struggles against dehydration and hunger.

Many people experience throbbing headaches and dizziness, caffeine withdrawal and waves of fatigue. (Ms. Saab,

who is expecting a child over the summer, will not fast this year; young children, pregnant women and older adults or the unwell are not expected to do so.)

"It's a big change to go from three meals a day and snacks to fasting, and all of a sudden that energy isn't coming in," said Mark Mattson, chief of the Laboratory of Neurosciences at the National Institute on Aging, who studies the effects of fasting.

"Just like it takes a while for your cardiovascular and muscular systems to adjust to the stress of exercise, the bioenergetic challenge of intermittent fasting is the same," he said. It can take weeks, or in some cases up to a month, for the body to adapt to more restricted time windows for food.

"The first week is always rough," said Blin Adewunmi, a journalist for BuzzFeed News, who began fasting for Ramadan at boarding school in Nigeria. "But it's very rewarding, and I always feel like a champ when I'm done."

Ms. Adewunmi, 34, cooks for ease when fasting, focusing on carbohydrates and protein, often preparing a simple, simple recipe on a loop all month. "One year, I was obsessed with courgette fritters," she said, using a term for zucchini. "Another crazy Ramadan, it was spinach balls."

She found the spinach recipe on a halal food blog, an adaptation of the Italian chef Antonio Carluccio's green dumplings. It was ideal for breaking the fast at home the way she liked, with comforting food she could warm up and eat in small doses throughout the evening.

"You're so worried about how hungry you're going to get, you end up eating way too much and it's uncomfortable," she said. "You learn it every Ramadan."

Last year was Ms. Adewunmi's first living in New York. Far away from her family and friends during Ramadan, she found herself alone between work and home at sundown. She stopped in a Punjabi-owned bodega in Manhattan and asked the shopkeeper if he had anything with which she could break her fast.

"Straight away, a big tray of dates came out," Ms. Adewunmi said. "He didn't ask me about my Muslim-ness; he didn't ask for my credentials. During Ramadan, everyone becomes everyone's sister, everyone's brother."

Ms. Adewunmi doesn't like dates, truth be told. But in the moment, and in the spirit of the month, she found that it didn't matter. The only thing that mattered was the generosity of a stranger, the small and beautiful kindness. She ate four.

World

Monks defy Myanmar authorities

HONG KONG

Hard-line group accused of promoting sectarian violence is unrepentant

BY MIKE IVES

In the wake of vigilante attacks and brawls that have shaken Yangon, Myanmar's largest and most cosmopolitan city, the country's religious authorities are ramping up a crackdown on hard-line Buddhist monks who have played increasingly public roles as sectarian provocateurs.

On May 23, Myanmar's top Buddhist authority, the State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee, ordered Ma Ba Tha, a prominent group led by ultranationalist monks, to remove its signs around the country by July 15. It also said that no organization would be allowed to operate under the name Ma Ba Tha.

The orders were just the latest moves to clip the group's wings amid fears that it could further destabilize a newly democratic country struggling to shake off the vestiges of military rule.

Ma Ba Tha's leaders, however, responded with a defiant shrug.

"We are not sure whether we will follow this order or not," said Maung Thawee Chuan, a member of Ma Ba Tha's Central Executive Committee, echoing public comments by his colleagues last week. "If we wish to, we will. If we don't, we won't."

Sectarian tension is a fact of life in parts of Myanmar, a predominantly Buddhist country dotted with monasteries and gilded pagodas. But interfaith conflict has escalated sharply since 2012, when communal violence in the far-western state of Rakhine left dozens dead and displaced more than 100,000 members of the Muslim minority group Rohingya from their homes.

Other sectarian clashes were later reported in the country's heartland, and Buddhist mobs killed more than 200 Muslims. Ma Ba Tha has long denied promoting violence, but critics say that its statements — which often go viral on social media — have clearly fueled it.

"You can be full of kindness and love, but you cannot sleep next to a mad dog," Ma Ba Tha's best-known ultranationalist monk, Ashin Wirathu, said in a 2013 sermon, referring to Muslims.

Analysts say the Buddhist authority's directive, and Ma Ba Tha's headstrong reply, illustrate a central challenge facing the governing National League for Democracy, the political party led by the Nobel Peace Prize laureate Daw Aung San Suu Kyi.

The government's crackdown on Ma Ba Tha, they say, could ease pressure on Ms. Aung San Suu Kyi from rights advocates overseas who have criticized her inability — or perhaps unwillingness — to curb state-sanctioned violence against Rohingya who live in western Myanmar.

But the analysts said, it could also drive Ma Ba Tha supporters toward political parties that increasingly embrace hard-line Buddhist rhetoric, including one party that is linked to the military junta that ruled Myanmar for decades until 2011.

The National League for Democracy "continues to ignore this movement in general at its peril," Matthew J. Walton, a senior research fellow at the University of Oxford who studies religion and



Police officers guarding an Islamic religious school on the outskirts of Yangon, Myanmar, in late April after protests by supporters of Ma Ba Tha, a group led by hard-line monks.



The ultranationalist monk Ashin Wirathu, center, in 2013. "You can be full of kindness and love, but you cannot sleep next to a mad dog," he has said, referring to Muslims.

politics in Myanmar, said of Ma Ba Tha. Popular support for Ma Ba Tha did not hurt Ms. Aung San Suu Kyi's party in Myanmar's 2015 general election, the first since the end of military rule, because many people voted for broad change instead of specific policies, Mr. Walton said. But because that could change by the next general election in 2020, he added, the National League for Democracy must ask monks who support it to "articulate an alternative discourse of protecting and promoting the Buddhist religion that doesn't require expelling Muslims."

The state-run Buddhist authority's

May 23 directive came two weeks after a raid on a Muslim neighborhood in Yangon by Buddhist vigilantes who were searching for Rohingya they believed were hiding there illegally. There is a widespread view in Myanmar that Rohingya are illegal immigrants from Bangladesh, regardless of whether their families have lived in Myanmar for generations.

The raid led to street clashes between Buddhists and Muslims, a rarity in Yangon, and left at least one person injured. A Buddhist nationalist group, the Patriotic Monks Union, later claimed responsibility for the raid, and several people

were charged with incitement to commit violence.

Sectarian tensions have been especially high in Myanmar since the fall, when Rohingya militants killed nine police officers at a border post in Rakhine, inciting a brutal counterinsurgency campaign that sent tens of thousands of Rohingya fleeing into neighboring Bangladesh. In March, widespread reports of state-sanctioned rape and killing in Rakhine led the United Nations to call for a fact-finding mission to investigate accusations of rights violations by Myanmar's Army and security forces.

In another potential blow to religious harmony, U Ko Ni, a Muslim lawyer and a top adviser to the National League for Democracy, was shot and killed outside Yangon's international airport in January, in what appeared to be a political assassination. Mr. Ko Ni had been working on a plan to replace Myanmar's military-drafted Constitution with one that would strip the military of its political powers.

The order on May 23 by the state-controlled Buddhist committee is the latest in a series of moves by the country's religious authorities to push back against Ma Ba Tha's influence. Last summer, for example, a top Yangon official said that the group was "not necessary" for the country, and the committee rebuked an assertion by Ashin Wirathu, the nationalist monk, that Ma Ba Tha was operating under the committee's authority. And in March, the committee barred him from preaching for a year.

U Khin Maung Lwin, a taxi driver in Yangon, said he welcomed the Buddhist authority's moves to clamp down on Ma

Ba Tha's activities. "We don't need Ma Ba Tha" because Myanmar already has an official Buddhist clergy, he said. "It will only create divisions among monks."

Ma Ba Tha was formed in 2013 and gained prominence by promoting a package of so-called race and religion laws that were passed by a military-backed government just before the 2015 election. The laws cover topics like monogamy and interfaith marriage and are widely seen by scholars and human rights groups as discriminatory toward Muslims.

After the Buddhist authority's directive on May 23, Ma Ba Tha canceled an event that it had planned for last week-end in Yangon to celebrate its fourth anniversary, according to reports in the local news media.

Few expect Ma Ba Tha to go quietly. Mr. Walton said that the group had recently created a spinoff, called Dhamma Wundharu Rakita, "to do the things that monks can't do, like bring defamation lawsuits." He predicted that the group would essentially rebrand itself.

"This isn't going to spoil the end for extremist monks affiliated with Ma Ba Tha," said Matthew Smith, the chief executive of Forty Rights, an advocacy group based in Thailand that has urged Ms. Aung San Suu Kyi's government to curb state-sanctioned violence against the Rohingya. "They're still mobilizing, they still have a sizable following, and they're still attempting to influence the minds of young people."

Thurein Win contributed reporting from Yangon, Myanmar.

Biting song in Britain labels May 'a liar, liar'

As election approaches, tune demonizing prime minister is a chart-topper

BY DAN BILEFSKY

The song has a catchy chorus and a not-so-subtle message.

"She's a liar, liar. She's a liar, liar. You can't trust her, no, no, no, no," it goes, accompanied by snippets of its target, Prime Minister Theresa May, variously laughing, speaking earnestly and, in one heavily edited clip, apparently herself saying, "No, no, no, no."

Just over a week before a general election in Britain, a scathing song lampooning Mrs. May for her perceived political flip-flopping appears to have captured the national mood, climbing to the top of the U.K. iTunes chart. Released on Friday, the song was No. 2 by Monday, behind a remix of Luis Fonsi & Daddy Yankee's "Despacito," featuring Justin Bieber. ("One Last Time" by Ariana Grande, the American pop star whose Manchester concert was attacked last month by a suicide bomber, was at No. 4.) "Liar, Liar" has been viewed more than 597,000 times on YouTube.

The demonizing of Mrs. May echoes that of another polarizing leader, the former Conservative prime minister Margaret Thatcher, who was vilified by left-wing musicians for her championing of untrammeled capitalism. Among the unflattering songs were the Beat's "Lands Down Margaret" and "Tramp the Dirt Down" by Elvis Costello.

Mrs. May, who prides herself on a straight-talking veracity and a more compassionate form of conservatism than the other Iron Lady, has come under criticism for a series of U-turns.



Prime Minister Theresa May has been criticized for a series of political U-turns.

"We all know politicians like telling lies. Big ones, little ones, porky pies. Saying they're strong and stable won't disguise."

She vowed she would not call an early election and then did just that. She reported Britain's remaining in the European Union, yet is now overseeing its departure. She has been criticized for backtracking from new plans to fund care for older people, even as she has portrayed herself as the champion of those "just about managing" to get by.

The song "Liar, Liar" is the work of Captain Ska, a politically fueled ensemble of London-based session musicians who came to national prominence in 2010 with the first version of "Liar, Liar." That was aimed at the austerity policies of the coalition government of Prime Minister David Cameron. The band was founded by Jake Painter, and the song is being promoted by an organization called the People's Assembly Against Austerity.

"We all know politicians like telling lies. Big ones, little ones, porky pies. Saying they're strong and stable won't disguise. We're still being taken for a ride," go the song's lyrics, which take Mrs. May to task for cutting spending on education, the National Health Service and the police. They continue: "Nurses going hungry, schools in decline, I don't recognize this broken country of mine."

Proponents of the song have accused some broadcasters of censorship for not playing the song, including the BBC. The BBC said it would not be playing the song because of editorial guidelines requiring the broadcaster to remain impartial during elections.

"We do not ban songs or artists," a spokesman said, noting, however, that "the U.K. is currently in an election period so we will not be playing the song."

Not everyone agrees with the song's sentiments. In a blistering attack, Rupert Murdoch's conservative tabloid The Sun called Mrs. May's rival, the Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn, a liar. His record on security, it said, "would make an honest man blush."

Jacob William Rees-Mogg, a Conservative member of Parliament, was unimpressed by the song. "The People's Assembly is a hard-left pressure group that has put together a rather low-spirited attack ad of the kind that is more familiar with elections in the United States than in the United Kingdom," he wrote in an email statement. "I am not sure anyone other than political obsessives will watch this rather tiresome video through to the end."

Kabul bombing kills scores, shaking city center

KABUL, AFGHANISTAN

BY MUJIB MASHAL AND FAHIM ABED

A truck bombing near the Afghan presidential palace early Wednesday killed at least 80 people and wounded hundreds, officials said. The death toll seemed certain to rise, and the attack appeared to be one of the bloodiest of the long Afghan war.

The huge blast during the morning rush hour caused panic in much of central Kabul, shattering windows as far as a mile away. Nearly two hours after the explosion near Zandab Square, a crowded area in the capital that leads to the presidential palace as well as major foreign embassies, plumes of smoke were still rising from the scene.

Kabul's police chief, Gen. Hassan Shah Frogh, said the truck that had been in a tanker truck used to empty septic wells. The bomb was detonated near the square just as the street turns toward the German Embassy, he said.

The blast was so huge that it dug a big crater as deep as four meters, or 13 feet, General Frogh said.

Wahidullah Majrooh, a spokesman for the Health Ministry, said that 80 bodies and 350 wounded people had been brought to hospitals.

The German Embassy suffered extensive damage, with dozens of windows blown in, the public broadcaster ARD reported. It broadcast images showing stunned civilians pressing makeshift bandages to bloody limbs, stumbling through a smoke-filled street

as ambulances rushed to the scene.

Germany's foreign minister, Sigmar Gabriel, said that an Afghan security guard employed by the embassy had been killed. He also said that several Germans had been wounded. He condemned what he called an attack on "those who are in Afghanistan working with the people there for a better future."

"To target these people is especially despicable," Mr. Gabriel said.

But there was no immediate claim of responsibility for the blast, and it was unclear whether the embassy had been specifically targeted. A spokesman for the Taliban said they were not behind the attack.

President Ashraf Ghani called the attack "a crime against humanity." A statement by Gen. John W. Nicholson Jr., the commander of American and North Atlantic Treaty Organization forces in Afghanistan, applauded the Afghan security forces for preventing the truck full of explosives from entering the Green Zone, a reference to the area that houses the headquarters of the coalition forces as well as several foreign embassies.

"The attack demonstrates a complete disregard for civilians and reveals the barbaric nature of the enemy faced by the Afghan people," the statement said.

There was a heavy security presence, including forces from the United States-led coalition, and helicopters circled overhead. Dozens of people waited outside the large security cordon for news of their loved ones.

Emotions were running high among the Afghan security forces at the scene. Intelligence officers closely checked the paperwork of emergency workers shut-



After the blast, emergency personnel tried to evacuate victims. Hundreds of wounded people were taken to hospitals.

tling between the blast site and the hospitals, fearing that they might have been infiltrated by militants planning a follow-up attack.

At one point, after a senior police official tried to pass the cordon with a large entourage of guards, a scuffle broke out, and the police officers and intelligence officers cocked their weapons at one an-

other. But the situation was quickly defused.

The sheer scale of the blast was staggering, though it was not unprecedented. In 2005, a similar truck bombing in the Shah Shaheed neighborhood of the city also caused hundreds of casualties and left a strip of shops leveled and houses in a wide radius damaged. Other

large truck bombings have targeted the offices of an elite force that provides security to senior government officials, as well as a compound for Western contractors.

Jawad Sukhanvar contributed reporting from Kabul, and Melissa Eddy from Berlin.

WORLD

Trump advisers wage tug of war on climate

WASHINGTON

President to make decision this week, as he hears from both sides on Paris accord

BY MICHAEL D. SHEAR AND DIANE CARDWELL

A divided White House staff, anxious corporate executives, lawmakers and foreign leaders are fiercely competing for President Trump's ear this week as he hears a decision on whether to pull the United States out of the Paris climate accord, the landmark agreement that commits nearly every country to combat global warming.

For a president not steeped in policy intricacies, the decision is vexing. On both sides are voices he profoundly respects: chief executives of some of the world's largest companies urging him to remain part of the accord and ardent conservatives like Stephen K. Bannon, his chief strategist, and Scott Pruitt, his Environmental Protection Agency administrator, tugging him toward a withdrawal from the 195-country agreement.

Exxon Mobil's chief executive, Darren W. Woods, wrote recently that remaining in the agreement would be prudent, part of a nearly united corporate front. Within the administration, Gary D. Cohn, the director of the National Economic Council; the president's daughter Ivanka Trump; and his secretary of state, Rex W. Tillerson, say the United States can remain a party to the accord even as the administration moves to eviscerate the Obama-era climate policies that would have allowed the United States to meet its pollution-reduction targets under the agreement.

In a major climate speech Tuesday, the United Nations secretary general, António Guterres, exhorted world leaders to stick to their commitments to the accord, calling for "increased ambition" in the face of threats to disengage.

But the voices calling for a clean break from Paris are no less urgent, tugging at the president's gut-level in-

"He wants a fair deal for the American people."

stincts by arguing that remaining a party to the agreement would shackle the American economy and betray his core supporters.

"Everybody who hates Trump wants him to stay in Paris. Everybody who respects him, trusts him, voted for him, wishes for him to succeed wants him to pull out," said Grover Norquist, an anti-tax activist who had earlier posted on Twitter the "Top 5 reasons USA should withdraw from Paris 'climate' debacle."

Mr. Trump said on Twitter last weekend that he would announce his decision this week, and White House officials said the president spoke again Tuesday with Mr. Pruitt, who is responsible for unwinding the pollution-reduction efforts the prior administration had put in place during the negotiations in Paris.

"He wants a fair deal for the American people," Sean Spicer, the White House press secretary, said of Mr. Trump. "He will have an announcement on that shortly."

Mr. Trump has given few public indications of his thinking. Inside the West Wing, advisers have believed for weeks that he was inclined to do what he promised during the campaign: In rallies, he repeatedly vowed to "cancel" what he called a job-killing agreement.

Mr. Trump's daughter, however, has spent the past several weeks making sure that her father has heard from both sides, according to an administration official familiar with her efforts.

Ms. Trump's husband, Jared Kushner, a senior adviser in the White House, also favors staying as long as doing so does not legally limit the steps Mr. Trump is taking to move away from the restrictive environmental standards President Barack Obama put in place.

On the other side, Mr. Bannon has been one of the most aggressive advisers lobbying the president to pull out of the agreement. Since the administration is already moving quickly to reverse the policies implemented to comply with the accord, staying in would be pointless, he argues, but would risk costing the president support from his core supporters.



President Trump's assistant, and daughter, Ivanka Trump, during the president's recent trip to Israel. Ms. Trump is said to support the country's remaining in the climate pact.

Meanwhile, advice is pouring in from outside the White House — much of it unsolicited.

On Capitol Hill, 22 Republican senators signed a letter urging the president to abandon the agreement. Staying in "would subject the United States to significant litigation risk that could upend your administration's ability to fulfill its goal of rescinding the Clean Power Plan," they wrote.

Senator Lindsey Graham, Republican of South Carolina, chided his colleagues from his party, saying on CNN that pulling out of the Paris accord would amount to "a statement that climate change is not a problem, is not real."

Democratic senators took to Twitter — Mr. Trump's favorite communication medium — over the weekend to make their case.

But the corporate voices for remaining in the agreement may be the most influential. "By expanding markets for innovative clean technologies, the agreement generates jobs and economic growth. U.S. companies are well positioned to lead in these markets," a host of corporate giants wrote in full-page advertisements that ran recently in The New York Times, The New York Post and The Wall Street Journal.

Mr. Woods, the Exxon Mobil chief executive, wrote to Mr. Trump last month after the two men spoke by phone about investments that the company was planning in the Gulf of Mexico, according to a company spokesman, Alan Jeffers. As disagreement over whether to withdraw appeared to intensify, Mr. Woods wanted to communicate his stance directly.

"By remaining a party to the Paris Agreement, the United States will maintain a seat at the negotiating table to ensure a level playing field so that all energy sources and technologies are treated equitably in an open, transparent and competitive global market so as to achieve economic growth and poverty reduction at the lowest cost to society," Mr. Woods wrote.

Environmentally oriented groups like Ceres, the Business Council for Sustainable Energy and the Center for Climate and Energy Solutions have brought together big companies like Apple, Ingersoll Rand, Mars, National Grid and Schneider Electric to appeal to the president to stay in. Many of them operate globally and worry that if the United States abandons the deal, it would be harder to operate in existing markets and break into new ones.

"It's the right thing — we finally had a workable framework," said Stephen Harper, global director of environment, energy and sustainability policy for Intel, who has attended several of the global climate meetings. "More than half of our market is outside the United States — our biggest market right now is China."

Tom Werner, the chief executive of SunPower, a solar panel maker, sent letters to Mr. Trump and other administration officials arguing that companies have already made plans based on the Paris standards.

The global reaction has been fierce and almost exclusively in favor of keeping the United States in the 2015 agreement. In Europe last week, world leaders privately implored Mr. Trump not to bolt.

President Emmanuel Macron of France told reporters that he urged Mr. Trump not to make a "hasty decision." Chancellor Angela Merkel of Germany called her discussions with the president "very difficult, if not to say very dissatisfying."

The global pressure campaign continued on Tuesday with the speech by Mr. Guterres at New York University. While not specifically mentioning Mr. Trump in his speech, the secretary general of the United Nations referred to "those who might hold divergent perspectives" as he called for all countries to fulfill the promises they made.

"It is absolutely essential that the world implements the Paris Agreement — and that we fulfill that duty with increased ambition," Mr. Guterres said.

In the end, Mr. Trump's decision may be influenced by voices closer to home. Critics of the pact said they hoped Mr. Trump would think less about world leaders and more about his voters.

"This is a huge deal to speak to the people who bring you to the dance," Mr. Norquist said.

If Mr. Trump pulls out of the Paris Agreement, he said, the message is this: "I kept my word."



President Emmanuel Macron relayed to Vladimir V. Putin, during the Russian president's visit, his displeasure over propaganda assaults from Kremlin-allied media.

Macron's presidential bearing

MACRON, FROM PAGE 1

Both settings are intimately associated with France's ancient monarchy. "He's not hesitating at all to stage-set the majesty of presidential power," Mr. Bouvet said.

That aura of authority is partly a response to the menacing international context Mr. Macron repeatedly referred to during the campaign, with France and its partner Germany threatened on two sides by unpredictable behemoths of uncertain attachment to European values, Russia and Mr. Trump's America.

But it is also a function of Mr. Macron's deeply held belief that France in some sense has been missing its king since the execution of Louis XVI on Jan. 21, 1793, and that his job is to fill the gap.

In an interview two years ago, Mr. Macron made a statement about France's absent king that is still the subject of shocked commentary. "In the process and function of democracy there is something missing, the figure of the king, whose death, I believe, fundamentally, the people did not want," Mr. Macron told the weekly newspaper Le 1, saying it "created an emotional void."

In France, no politician outside the circle of fringe far-right royalists is supposed to talk about missing the king.

That form of nostalgia is taboo for anybody who professes attachment to Republican values.

Yet the view encapsulates both his regal view of power — offset somewhat by the slight youthful figure he presents — and his love of paradox, combining the concepts of monarchy and democracy.

Mr. Macron's most celebrated catch-

"You can see him totally assuming the job, the verticality of the job, and putting a certain distance between himself and the press."

phrase in his speeches reflects that love. "And at the same time," Mr. Macron often says — so much so that the crowds began to laugh when he pronounced it during the campaign.

Commentators have traced that desire on Mr. Macron's part — to juggle two opposing viewpoints at once — to his early philosophical training as an assistant to one of France's most celebrated 20th-century philosophers, Paul Ricoeur, who died in 2005.

Mr. Ricoeur's work, the newspaper Le Monde most recently pointed out, is

shot through with apparent paradoxes, which in reality expressed a kind of civilizing wish to find a middle ground. Mr. Macron was his research assistant as a university student at the end of the 1990s.

In French politics, sharply divided on ideological lines between right and left, the tendency has been difficult for Mr. Macron's opponents to digest. Yet it has allowed him to siphon off large numbers of centrist political figures who don't see themselves represented in the old parties. It also allowed him to find a glimmer of hope in his talks with Mr. Trump. On Saturday, he acknowledged the wide differences between Mr. Trump and the other members of the Group of 7 on the Paris climate accords. But at the same time, as Mr. Macron might say, "I took note of his willingness to listen and of his desire to make progress with us," the French president said at his news conference, calling Mr. Trump "pragmatic."

That was a markedly less pessimistic view of the American president than that of Chancellor Angela Merkel of Germany, who suggested that Europe could no longer count on the United States as a solid ally.

At home, the test of Mr. Macron's own pragmatism will come soon. "We've never gone after the roots of mass un-

employment," he wrote in his campaign book "Revolution." He says he thinks he has found a way, in redoing the country's labor code, which makes it difficult to hire and fire.

Attempts to tamper with those worker protections brought thousands into the streets last year. French chief executives habitually cave in the face of such union protest. Will Mr. Macron?

He wants to limit the amount of payouts labor boards can dispense to fired workers, and he wants to allow individual companies to negotiate labor agreements with workers at the local level.

The new president's method so far has been to summon the union leaders for discussions to the Elysée Palace, in an attempt to bring them on board. "He was open, in the discussions," said Jean-Claude Mailly, the head of Force Ouvrière, one of the leading unions. "On the surface at least there's a desire for partnership. He wasn't authoritarian."

Laurent Berger of the CFDT union agreed. "He showed determination, but he was open, and he listened," Mr. Berger said. But he warned his union colleagues that if they did not seek compromises with Mr. Macron, "he'll do it by himself."

If so, the streets of France could be packed with demonstrators this fall.

Trade tirade against Germany has blind spots

GERMANY, FROM PAGE 1

burg, S.C., is the largest single exporter, by dollar value, in the American automotive industry.

Mr. Trump's latest offensive appeared to be in response to peppery remarks by Angela Merkel, the German chancellor, at a political rally in Munich on Sunday, when she said Europe could no longer rely on the United States as a partner. Europeans, she said, needed to "take our fate into our own hands."

France also runs a substantial trade surplus with the United States, and it, like Germany, falls short of the military spending benchmark set by NATO, though in both cases by less than Germany. Yet Mr. Trump has spared France the kind of vitriol he has given the Germans — largely, officials say, because France spends more on its defense than Germany.

When he met France's new president, Emmanuel Macron, for the first time in Brussels last week, he lavished praise on him for his election victory. "All over the world they're talking about it," he said. White House officials said Mr. Trump got along well with Mr. Macron in private, notwithstanding their much-photographed death grip of a handshake. Officials said Mr. Trump even told Mr. Macron he had been pulling for him in the election.

There is no such rapport between the flamboyant Mr. Trump and the brainy, button-down Ms. Merkel.

The two have a businesslike relationship, officials on both sides said. But Ms. Merkel, several officials said, has concluded that there is little prospect of closing the gap with Mr. Trump on issues like trade, Russia or the Paris climate accord, which Mr. Trump has threatened to leave. Her defiant tone on Sunday was driven in part by the fact that she is running for re-election and that Mr. Trump is deeply unpopular in Germany.

Whatever the motivation, it seemed to register with Mr. Trump. "I think it just stuck in his craw," said Jackson Janes, president of the American Insti-



Angela Merkel, the German chancellor, is said to have little rapport with President Trump. Europeans, she said, needed to "take our fate into our own hands."

tute for Contemporary German Studies at Johns Hopkins University.

White House officials said it was the combination of Germany's wealth and its meager contribution to NATO that singled it out for criticism. Germany spends only 1.2 percent of its gross domestic product on defense, compared with 1.8 percent for France. Both are below the 2 percent threshold that NATO has set for its members.

Germany's trade surplus is a ripe target for Mr. Trump. It is mammoth — \$64.8 billion in 2016 — and longstanding, and there is little evidence that Germany, which regards its export machine as a source of national pride, is inclined to do much to remedy it.

German officials typically tell their American counterparts that the surplus reflects the competitiveness of German goods, that Germany does not set its trade policy, and that it cannot control the value of the euro, since monetary policy is set by the European Central Bank, not Berlin.

Mr. Trump is not the first American

Aides said the president was bothered by a combination of Germany's wealth and its meager contribution to NATO.

leader to be rankled by imbalances with Germany. President Barack Obama's economic advisers, Jacob J. Lew and Lawrence H. Summers, pushed German officials on these issues, with little success. But Mr. Trump is more acutely aware of the deficit because jobs and trade are such resonant issues with his voters.

John C. Kornblum, a former American ambassador to Germany, said the president's views "seem to be a mixture of his own resentments from not being able to push his business deals through the E.U. as he wished; broad prejudices which have been building up in the American political class for some time on both NATO and trade; and the conviction of his economic advisers that the German trade balance is an evil, which causes

many other problems from job losses to currency instability to loss of American exports."

In his conversation with European Union leaders, Mr. Trump reportedly complained about the millions of cars that Germany sells in the United States, and threatened to stop them. Yet he has been an enthusiastic buyer of German luxury cars over the years.

After his wedding in Palm Beach in 2005, Mr. Trump and his bride, Melania, jumped into a Mercedes Maybach limousine. He once bought a limited-edition silver Mercedes SLR McLaren roadster, with a supercharged AMG V8 engine, for \$465,000. Mrs. Trump had her own Mercedes at the time.

German officials are eager to avoid a wholesale rupture between Berlin and Washington. Ms. Merkel, they said, has spoken before of the need for Europeans to control their own fate and was still determined to develop a productive relationship with Mr. Trump.

"Precisely because trans-Atlantic relations are so important, it is imperative to speak honestly about the differences we have," Peter Wittig, Germany's ambassador to Washington, said. "Past meetings have revealed a number of such differences, for example in the area of climate change."

At the White House, the message was much the same. Sean Spicer, the press secretary, said Mr. Trump would describe his relationship with Ms. Merkel as "fairly unbelievable" — meaning, apparently, that it is unbelievably good. Mr. Spicer finished the thought by adding, "They get along very well."

He said Ms. Merkel's call for Europe to go it alone actually vindicated Mr. Trump's demand that Germany shoulder more responsibility for its defense. "The president is getting results," he said. "More countries are stepping up their burden sharing. That is a good thing for them. It's a good thing for NATO, and it's a good thing for America."

Kitty Bennett contributed research.

A long fight to identify war hero's remains

Family of first soldier to get WWII Medal of Honor sues for DNA test

BY DAVE PHILLIPS

In the early days of World War II, a baby-faced West Point graduate with a rifle in one hand and a Tommy gun in the other made a one-man attack in the Philippines against the invading Japanese that altered the course of the war.

Jumping from foxhole to foxhole in the jungle, he downed enemies with grenades, gunfire and eventually his bayonet before he was killed. The attack repelled an advance that delayed the Japanese for months, and within weeks the soldier, 23-year-old First Lt. Alexander Nininger, was awarded the first Medal of Honor of the war.

Since then, he has been venerated with a statue, an annual award at West Point and even a Malcolm Gladwell treatise on human potential. But his body has not been found. The Army officially lists him as "nonrecoverable."

His family disagrees. It says the lieutenant's bones rest in grave J-7-20 at the American Cemetery in Manila. For 70 years, the family has been pressing the military to identify the remains and bring the fallen lieutenant home.

Now, the family and six other families of soldiers buried as "unknowns" in Manila are suing the United States Department of Defense to compel it to identify the bodies. In a complaint filed in federal court last week, they argue that by not using readily available DNA testing to identify the remains, the department is flouting its legal duty to track down "missing persons from past conflicts or their remains after hostilities have ceased."

Among the missing dead are a defiant general killed by a firing squad after he refused to aid the Japanese, a colonel cut down by machine guns during the Americans' last stand on the Bataan Peninsula and a private who died months later in a Japanese prison camp of dysentery and bayonet wounds.

In the confusion of warfare, all were buried in graves labeled "unknown," but the families say that in the years since, they have compiled enough evidence to once again give names to the nameless.

"It seems like the least we could do," John Patterson, 80, Lieutenant Nininger's nephew, said in an interview in his study in North Kingstown, R.I., where bookshelves sagged with research compiled in an effort to bring his uncle's body home. "He was a real hero who sacrificed himself."

The target of the suit is the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency, an arm of the Pentagon with a \$15 million annual budget that is tasked with accounting for the roughly 45,000 recoverable lost service members dating back to World War II. For years, the agency and a group of agencies that preceded it have been plagued by reports of waste and dysfunction.

Despite its hefty budget, the recovery effort has averaged fewer than 90 bodies annually in the past five years. Congress, frustrated by the low numbers, mandated that the agency increase the number to at least 200 per year by 2015,



The American Cemetery in Manila. The family of Alexander Nininger, who was killed in World War II, says his remains are buried there and wants the Pentagon to exhume them.



John Patterson has been searching for the remains of Lieutenant Nininger, his uncle, since the 1960s. "It became my avocation," he said.

but it has yet to meet that total.

The agency said connecting remains with lost fighters was a meticulous process that often took years. It has tried to streamline the effort, and identified a record 164 remains in 2016, but staff members warned in recent interviews that extracting usable DNA from 70-year-old remains damaged by the chaos of battle would continue to be a

plodding endeavor.

"We completely understand there is frustration and pain of families," said John Byrd, the director of the agency's lab. "We are going to do the best we can to ramp up the most robust capability while trying to do the work properly."

But many families have run out of patience. Lieutenant Nininger's family has been rebuffed for decades, even though



Lieutenant Nininger, standing, in an undated family photograph. His one-man attack in the Philippines against the invading Japanese altered the course of the war.

the family claims it can literally draw a map to his grave site and has provided DNA to make a match.

Lieutenant Nininger seemed an unlikely war hero. At West Point, the soft-spoken cadet from Florida gravitated to theater and liked listening to Tchaikovsky. But when the Japanese stormed the Philippines shortly after the attack on Pearl Harbor, it was as if a switch

flipped, his nephew said.

Lieutenant Nininger volunteered to go to a spot on the front lines that had splintered under the pounding of a larger Japanese force. With a satchel of grenades and a gun in each hand, he crept through a grove of mango trees and surprised the enemy at close range.

He was wounded three times but kept going. After he ran out of ammunition,

witnesses said, he killed three more men with his bayonet, then collapsed. He was wrapped in tent canvas and buried in a hasty grave in a churchyard. A few months later, Americans on the island surrendered.

Ever since, his resting place has been in dispute. After the war, the Army assigned unidentified bones found in a churchyard grave the number X-4685 and reburied them, along with thousands of others, in the American Cemetery in Manila.

Veterans from the lieutenant's battalion told the family that the grave held the fallen hero, and Army grave technicians sorting remains at the time concurred. The workers concluded twice that X-4685 was Lieutenant Nininger, citing dental records and other details. But the central office overruled the identification, saying the bones appeared to be a few inches too short.

In 1951, the agency closed the case, labeling him "nonrecoverable," and sent a letter to his parents saying, "It is regretted that there is no grave at which to pay homage."

"I don't think my mother ever got over it," said Mr. Patterson, a former Rhode Island state senator. In the 1960s, at the urging of his mother, Mr. Patterson wrote to the Department of Defense asking about the grave, but got only stock responses that the body was lost.

In the 1970s, he began rooting through historical accounts of the battle for clues.

In the 1980s, he tracked down witnesses the Army had never spoken to: a scout who had conveyed the body to the churchyard, an intelligence officer who drew a map showing an ancient mango tree 50 paces southwest of the church, next to the spot where the lieutenant was buried.

"It became my avocation," Mr. Patterson said. "Some in my family would say my obsession."

In the 1990s, he made a pilgrimage to the churchyard, then tracked the remains to the Manila American Cemetery, where a white marble cross at grave J-7-20 bears the words "Here rests in honored glory a comrade in arms known only to God."

He asked the Department of Defense again to exhume the remains in 1991. The request was denied. He asked in 2015. It was denied again. He requested instructions on how to appeal the denial. He never got a response.

Agency anthropologists warn that the confusion of combat is often preserved in World War II's many graves. Single coffins can hold multiple skeletons. Bones are often broken and commingled. And buried and degraded remains can make extracting DNA unlikely.

"It's not as straightforward as pointing to a grave," said Greg Gardner, chief of the Army's Past Conflicts Repatriations Branch. "We still have a lot of unknowns." He added that he was not sure who is in grave J-7-20.

Mr. Patterson hopes a lawsuit will force the agency to find out. And in the process, he hopes Lieutenant Nininger's case will compel the government to identify hundreds of other missing soldiers.

"Once again maybe he can lead," Mr. Patterson said. "This time from the grave."

Remembering Tiananmen Square with a high-proof tribute

BEIJING

BY DIDI KIRSTEN TATLOW

It's a big journey for a little bottle, even one so potent in alcohol and symbolism.

The liquor bottle — whose label commemorates the 1989 crackdown on democracy demonstrators in Tiananmen Square in Beijing — made a monthslong trip around the world and arrived in Hong Kong days before the 28th anniversary of the killings on Sunday and one year after it was produced in Chengdu, in the southwestern Chinese province of Sichuan.

It was carried by hand, reportedly by a sympathetic Chinese official, from Chengdu to the Middle East and then by

someone else to Paris, where it was mailed to Washington, arriving about four weeks ago, said Yang Jianli, a Chinese-born rights activist based in Washington who aided its passage around the world.

Finally, coming nearly full circle, the 450-milliliter bottle of baijiu, a fiery Chinese clear liquor, was carried to Hong Kong, a semiautonomous city that is part of China, by Andrew To, a local democracy advocate. Mr. To confirmed his part in the bottle's travels in an interview. In Hong Kong, it is set to appear at a candlelight vigil on Sunday to memorialize the crackdown in Tiananmen Square, providing a new "focal point" for the event, Mr. Yang said.

Mr. Yang declined to identify the official who smuggled it out and asked that

the Middle Eastern country that was the liquor's first destination not be identified to protect the official.

As all of that was going on, the four men charged with producing and selling the commemorative liquor sit in detention in Chengdu, facing possibly long prison sentences. In March, Chinese prosecutors charged Chen Bing, Fu Hailu, Luo Fuyi and Zhang Junyong with "inciting subversion of state power."

The liquor's name, "Eight Liquor Six Four," is a homophone for 8/6/4, the date of the massacre on June 4, 1989. The label features a modified drawing of the famous standoff between an unarmed man and a row of tanks near Tiananmen Square, and it boasts that the liquor was aged for 27 years. (Last year was the

A commemorative liquor bottle smuggled out of China has circled the globe in time for an anniversary vigil in Hong Kong.

27th anniversary of the crackdown.) The men advertised their product online and had sold perhaps several dozen bottles — charging 89.64 renminbi, about \$13, for two — when the police detained them last May.

The Chinese government has never said how many people died around Tiananmen Square when troops moved in on the night of June 3, 1989. It officially labels the event "turnover" and forbids public discussion or commemoration of the victims, arguing that the high-speed

economic growth that followed the protests proves that taking firm action to restore Communist Party-led order was the correct course.

The charges against the four men are absurd to the parents of Xiao Jie and Wu Guofeng, who were killed in the crackdown as 20-year-old students in Beijing. The parents, who live in Sichuan, want to testify on behalf of the defendants, who they said are of good character.

"If remembering June 4 is a crime, then please, the Chengdu Public Security Bureau should arrest us," said Mr. Wu's father, Wu Dingfu, in a deposition for the court.

No date has been set yet for the trials at the Chengdu Intermediate People's Court, Wan Miaoyan, a lawyer for Mr. Chen, said in an interview. Her client

and the other defendants have pleaded not guilty, she said.

Nowhere is the anniversary remembered on a greater scale than in Hong Kong, the former British colony that returned to Chinese rule in 1997 but that has retained a more liberal political and economic system. Tens of thousands of people, including some visitors from the Chinese mainland, gather each year for a candlelight vigil in a public park.

Mr. Yang said the bottle's label will help combat the amnesia that has enveloped the killings on the Chinese mainland.

"These people were trying to reactivate the collective memory of our own past," he said. "China must some day come to terms with its past, and this incident must have a solution."



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WORLD

Four senators to watch in Russia inquiry

NEWS ANALYSIS
WASHINGTON

Here’s why these members of the panel matter and the effect they could have

BY CARL HULSE

They are a disparate foursome: the chamber’s leading Republican centrist, a minister who embraces public service as a calling, a seasoned dealmaker and a high-profile presidential contender.

These four Republican senators — Susan Collins of Maine, James Lankford of Oklahoma, Roy Blunt of Missouri and Marco Rubio of Florida — are emerging as a bloc integral to the Senate Intelligence Committee’s investigation into Russian meddling in the 2016 presidential election.

The investigation is widely considered the premier inquiry, the one with the necessary jurisdiction and the best chance of producing a credible outcome. These four senators loom large as a crucial element in getting there.

Despite early skepticism about the Republican-led panel’s commitment to the investigation, the four have made it clear that they are determined to see it through to a conclusion that would satisfy the public and their colleagues in both parties. To get there, they will have to slog through thousands of pages of raw intelligence held by the Central Intelligence Agency and devote untold hours to grinding committee work behind closed doors.

“This is not about the president; this is about the presidency,” said Mr. Lankford, who was a longtime Baptist youth minister before he entered politics. “This is about where we are as a nation.”

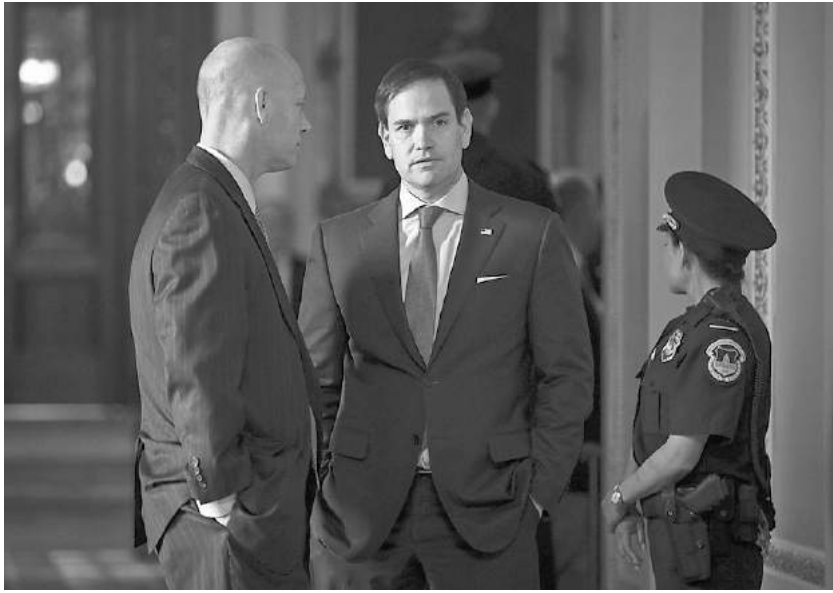
This is not to say that other members of the panel are not engaged. The committee’s seven Democrats are certainly interested in finding out whether Russians colluded with the Trump campaign and helped to elect him.

Senator Richard M. Burr, Republican of North Carolina and the chairman of the panel, has shown an increasing zeal for pursuing the question after an uncertain start. He and Senator Mark Warner of Virginia, the committee’s ranking Democrat, have forged a solid working relationship.

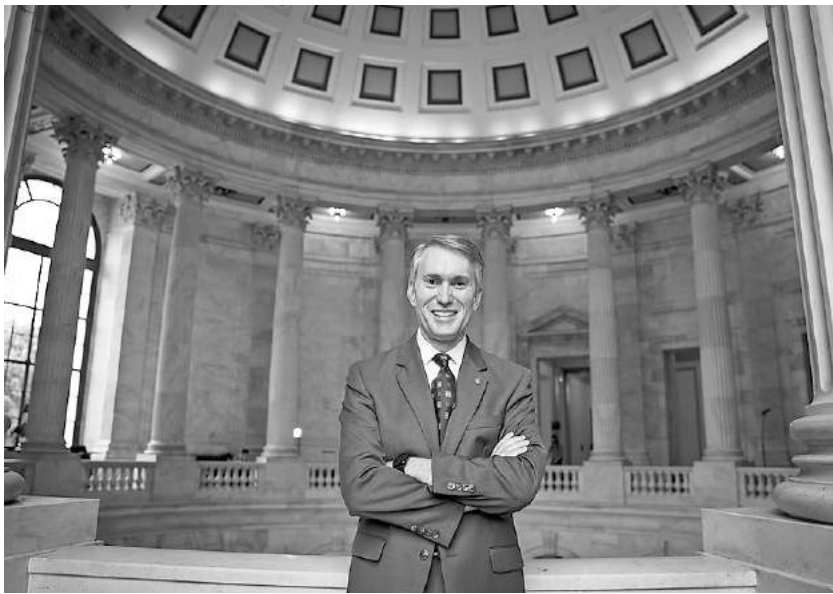
Three other Republicans are also playing a role: John Cornyn of Texas, who as the No. 2 Senate Republican brings a leadership perspective to the investigation; Jim Risch of Idaho; and Tom Cotton of Arkansas.

But it is notable that the other four have quietly coalesced into something of an informal working group within the Intelligence Committee, pushing the investigation forward and consulting not only with one another and Mr. Burr, but also with Mr. Warner.

“We are working very hard and we talk a lot with one another, as well,” said Ms. Collins, who said the investigation would “take as long as required.”



MARCO RUBIO dismissed the president’s complaint that he was the victim of a witch hunt.



JAMES LANKFORD objected sharply to reports that the Senate inquiry was understaffed.

“This is a complex investigation, and as you pull the threads, you find that it is connected to a whole lot of other threads in this tapestry that we are not yet seeing the whole of.”

Here is a look at the four and what is driving them:

SUSAN COLLINS

Although she is known as the Republican centrist voice in the Senate, another role she has held in Washington may be equally important in this case: senior Senate staff member.

Ms. Collins was a top Senate aide and served in other executive posts before running for office. She is experienced in both conducting and overseeing inquiries.

“I really want to know the truth, no matter who is implicated, no matter where the evidence leads,” she said.

As a 21-year-old in 1974, she was an intern for Representative William S. Co-

hen, a freshman Republican congressman from Maine who helped draw up the articles of impeachment of President Richard M. Nixon.

JAMES LANKFORD

His colleagues say it would be a mistake to underestimate this junior member of the Senate.

Mr. Lankford showed surprising political strength in a 2014 primary fight in a special Senate election in Oklahoma after compiling a conservative record and rapidly raising his profile during two terms in the House.

He objected sharply to recent reports that the Senate inquiry was understaffed and moving at a plodding pace.

“If you make a big staff, they get less access to the real documents for intelligence that you need,” he said. “You need to keep it with high-level folks in as small a pool as possible and give them the time they need,” he said.



SUSAN COLLINS has said, “I really want to know the truth, no matter who is implicated.”



ROY BLUNT has said that Congress must pursue the investigation into Russian meddling.

ROY BLUNT

Very few members of Congress make it into the leadership ranks; hardly anyone makes it into leadership in the House and in the Senate.

Mr. Blunt, the former House majority leader and a savvy inside player, is now the fifth-ranking Republican in the Senate. He has been adamant that Congress pursue the investigation into Russian meddling — both to find out what happened and to allow Congress and the White House to move beyond it.

“Everyone would benefit if we do this job in the right way and do it not faster than we can, but as fast as we can,” he said.

Mr. Blunt has been a consistent voice that the committee must be thorough. “When we are done, we need to have talked to everybody a reasonable person would think we should talk to and have seen everything a reasonable person would think we should see,” he said.

MARCO RUBIO

After his failed presidential bid, he almost did not return to the Senate, but a change of heart has thrust him into the middle of an inquiry surrounding the election of his Republican primary rival.

In a recent appearance on CBS’s “Face the Nation,” Mr. Rubio suggested that committee work would not just lay out for the public what the Russians did, “but how they did it and what it means for the future and what we should be doing about it.”

A proponent of a hard line with Russia, Mr. Rubio dismissed Mr. Trump’s complaint that he was the victim of a witch hunt. “We are nation of laws, and we are going to follow those laws,” he said. “The president is entitled to his opinion.”

There is no doubt that political conflict will erupt as the inquiry advances. These four senators will be crucial in determining whether it stays on track.

A vocal defender of ethics takes a stand

WASHINGTON

BY NICHOLAS FANDOS

Walter M. Shaub’s term as the United States government’s top ethics watchdog does not expire until next January, but his corner office here, just a few blocks from the White House, looks unoccupied.

No diplomas line the wood-paneled walls. No family photos or mementos. Just standard government-issue furniture, his humming computer and four large paintings. Mr. Shaub wanted to get rid of those, too, but his chief of staff warned that it might scare the 70 other employees in the Office of Government Ethics.

“I wanted to not be so attached to this office that I’d be afraid to lose it,” Mr. Shaub said last Friday, surveying the room he packed up shortly before Inauguration Day.

For a man and agency that have long labored in obscurity, that does not seem such a far-off possibility these days. Ethics have been thrust to the forefront in President Trump’s Washington, where the president’s own vast holdings and those of his asset-rich cabinet and advisers from businesses and lobbying firms have raised many accusations of conflicts of interest.

Mr. Shaub, 46, has emerged as one of the few voices from within the government willing to second-guess the president and his advisers. At first quietly and then in a rare public speech here in January, Mr. Shaub tried to nudge Mr. Trump toward the only financial arrangement he felt was truly ethical — the total liquidation of his vast business and personal holdings.

He failed. But that confrontation and a string of others in the months since have given Mr. Shaub, a self-effacing career bureaucrat more comfortable parsing legal arguments and wonkish ethics guidelines, the reputation of a fighter. Admiring fans have put his face on T-shirts. He even has a Facebook fan group, with more than 1,000 likes.

“The story of Walter Shaub is to some extent the story of our American system of checks and balances that has stepped up beyond expectation to defend the

Constitution and the law when Trump oversteps,” said Norman Eisen, the Obama administration’s first ethics counsel. Mr. Shaub, he added, might well be “the unluckiest star of 2017.”

Republicans do not see it that way. The president’s chief of staff, Reince Priebus, warned Mr. Shaub on national television to “be careful” of criticizing the president. Outside groups have pointed to donations he made to Democratic campaigns in 2008 and 2012 as evidence of bias.

For Mr. Shaub, who has spent the better part of 15 years in the ethics office — mostly as a career civil servant — the experience has been as confounding as it is exhausting.

“If you really look at things, all I’ve done is stand still. It’s the world that is moving around me,” Mr. Shaub said. “And that’s seen as some radical act.”

If he has become more outwardly vocal than directors past, he said, it is because this particular White House has shown little interest in an ethics program that both Republicans and Democrats have long supported. His public remarks, he added, came only after he felt the usual private channels of communication with the Trump team were not working.

“I’m not fighting against him. I’m fighting for the ethics program. And there is a difference,” Mr. Shaub said. “Because if I succeed, he’ll benefit.”

Mr. Shaub has had some success. Though Mr. Trump ultimately put his assets into a so-called half-blind trust that Mr. Shaub has called ineffectual, the ethics office has worked closely and productively to steer the president’s nominees through necessary financial disclosures and ethics agreements.

Mr. Trump’s budget director, Mick Mulvaney, tried to block what Mr. Shaub and others said was a standard request for the names of former lobbyists who had been granted waivers to work in the Trump administration.

Last Friday, after Mr. Shaub wrote a long and heavily footnoted letter to Mr. Mulvaney, the White House unexpectedly backed down.

The White House declined to comment on Mr. Shaub.

The Office of Government Ethics is not usually a breeding ground for po-



Walter M. Shaub, director of the Office of Government Ethics, is one of the few people in government willing to second-guess President Trump and his advisers.

litical stardom — or conflict. Set up in the aftermath of the Watergate scandal, its job is to work with a network of ethics offices in federal agencies to oversee ethical standards for 2.7 million civilian government employees. This means examining financial disclosure reports issued by political employees, to help these new hires decide which assets they must sell to avoid a conflict of interest. The office also helps ensure that once new political employees are hired, they honor restrictions from participating in deliberations over topics they handled for paying clients.

Though the president is not strictly beholden to those laws, the ethics office has always relied on support from the top to send a message to the rest of the federal work force that its program needs to be taken seriously. The office, agency veterans say, has long prided it-

“I’m not fighting against him. I’m fighting for the ethics program. And there is a difference.”

self on being nonpartisan, not least because its effective operation depends on strong relationships with whichever party is in the White House.

The son of a government chemist, Mr. Shaub grew up in the Washington suburbs with a sense that whatever he chose to do, it ought to entail public service. An interest in ethics only came later, after degrees in history at James Madison University and law at American University. (Two decades later, his own financial disclosure forms show, Mr. Shaub is still paying off student debt.)

Can Trump be indicted? The answer is not clear

WASHINGTON

The Supreme Court and the Constitution offer no resolution

BY ADAM LIPTAK

The Constitution does not answer every question. It includes detailed instructions, for instance, about how Congress may remove a president who has committed serious offenses. But it does not say whether the president may be criminally prosecuted in the meantime.

The Supreme Court has never answered that question, either. It heard arguments on the issue in 1974 in a case in which it ordered President Richard M. Nixon to turn over tape recordings, but it did not resolve it.

Reports that President Trump asked James B. Comey, then the Federal Bureau of Investigation director, to shut down an investigation into his former national security adviser, Michael T. Flynn, prompted accusations that the president may have obstructed justice. Robert S. Mueller III, the former F.B.I. director who has been appointed special counsel to look into ties between the Trump campaign and Russia, will presumably investigate the matter.

But would the Constitution allow Mr. Mueller to indict Mr. Trump if he finds evidence of criminal conduct?

The prevailing view among most legal experts is no. They say the president is immune from prosecution so long as he is in office.

“The framers implicitly immunized a sitting president from ordinary criminal prosecution,” said Akhil Reed Amar, a law professor at Yale.

Note the word “implicitly.” Professor Amar acknowledged that the text of the Constitution did not directly answer the question. “It has to be,” he said, “a structural inference about the uniqueness of the president himself.”

The closest the Constitution comes to addressing the issue is in this passage, from Article I, Section 3: “Judgment in cases of impeachment shall not extend further than to removal from office, and disqualification to hold and enjoy any of-

The prevailing view among most legal experts is no. They say the president is immune from prosecution so long as he is in office.

fice of honor, trust or profit under the United States; but the party convicted shall nevertheless be liable and subject to indictment, trial, judgment and punishment, according to law.”

This much seems clear: The president and other federal officials may be prosecuted after they leave office, and there is no double jeopardy protection from prosecution if they are removed following impeachment.

However, “whether the Constitution allows indictment of a sitting president is debatable,” Brett M. Kavanaugh, who served on the staff of Kenneth W. Starr, the independent counsel who investigated President Bill Clinton, wrote in a 1998 law review article. Mr. Kavanaugh, who is now a federal appeals court judge, also concluded that impeachment, not prosecution, was the right way to address a sitting president’s crimes.

The most prominent dissenter from the prevailing view is Eric M. Freedman, a law professor at Hofstra University and the author of a 1999 law review article that made the case for allowing criminal prosecution of incumbent presidents.

Professor Freedman demonstrated that the issue had divided the founding generation and argued that granting sitting presidents immunity from prosecution was “inconsistent with the history, structure and underlying philosophy of our government, at odds with precedent and unjustified by practical considerations.”

He pointed out that other federal officials who are subject to impeachment, including judges, have been indicted while in office. Courts have rejected the argument that impeachment is the sole remedy for such officials.

But Professor Amar said that presidents were different.

“If you’re going to undo a national election, the body that does that should have a national mandate,” he said. “Even a federal prosecution would follow only from an indictment from a grand jury sitting in one locality.”

The Justice Department’s regulations require Mr. Mueller, the special counsel, to follow the department’s “rules, regulations, procedures, practices and policies.” If the memos bind Mr. Mueller, it would seem he could not indict Mr. Trump, no matter what he uncovered.

“Much of the recent pontificating about the technical elements of obstruction of justice is quite beside the point,” he said. “Donald Trump is to be judged by the House and the Senate, who are in turn judged on Election Day by the American people more generally.”

Eric Lipton contributed reporting.

Business

The politics of wind

Administration reviewing disruption to conventional sources of energy

BY DIANE CARDWELL

Wind farms, with their rapid geographic spread and technological advances, are reshaping the United States electric system, defying skepticism that they are steady or reliable enough to displace conventional power plants.

"The fuel of choice right now, certainly for us, is wind," said Ben Fowke, the chief executive of Xcel Energy, which shut down a large natural gas plant in Colorado for two days in January and let wind fill, on average, half of its customer demand.

Now politics, not skepticism, may be wind power's biggest barrier. Under new leadership with ties to conventional energy interests, the Energy Department is scrambling to complete an internal study this month that could lead to an upending of the policies that fostered the rapid spread of solar and wind.

In ordering the study, Energy Secretary Rick Perry directed his department to determine whether federal subsidies that encourage wind and solar energy — and the way wholesale markets value different energy sources — are putting conventional power plants at a disadvantage and threatening the stability of the grid.

The study has been praised by trade groups representing the nuclear and coal industries. But it is being conducted without including many of those potentially affected. And clean energy executives and advocates, as well as some lawmakers, have expressed concern that it will be grounded more in ideology than in evidence.

A group of trade organizations representing clean energy interests delivered analyses to the department in mid-May arguing that renewables do not threaten grid reliability and that subsidies are not to blame for the economic troubles of coal and nuclear plants.

Representative Paul D. Tonko, a Democrat from New York State who serves on the House Energy and Commerce Committee, raised concerns at a recent meeting of utility industry executives that the new study would not be objective. "It appears to me to be a bottom line that's written and now looking for a study to substantiate it," he said in an interview. "I think it's an attempt to hold on to the past."

Among the subsidies the department is examining is a production tax credit that allows most wind farms to shave pennies off the price of each kilowatt-hour they send to the grid. Though flattening demand for electricity and cheap natural gas are the main forces depressing wholesale energy prices, the credit means that wind producers can often offer their power to the market at the lowest price. Sometimes, when energy demand is low and wind is strong, the credit can drive the effective price below zero.

Mr. Perry has raised the possibility of federal intervention in energy markets to protect coal and nuclear plants against lower-priced wind and natural gas supplies. While he backed state control of market policies as Texas governor, he said at a conference in April that "the boot's on the other foot now."

Energy experts say that without the credit and other favorable subsidies, mandates and market policies in place, wind development and production will be threatened. When the credit has periodically expired, installations nearly ground to a halt — dropping by 78 to 83 percent, according to an analysis by the Union of Concerned Scientists — only to resume again with its renewal. Congressional estimates put the cost of the credit at \$3.3 billion last year, and the figure is expected to reach \$4 billion this year.

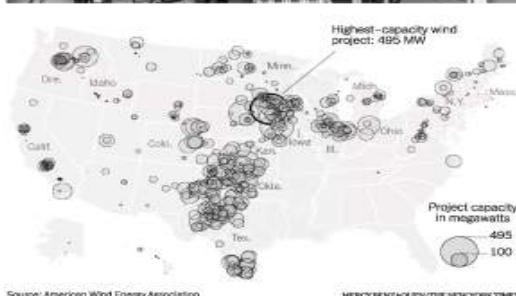
"There's no question: if the P.T.C. goes away, that's a big number," said Robert F. Shapiro, a lawyer at Chadbourne & Parke in Washington, who focuses on project finance and energy, referring to the production tax credit. "New plants would have to meet a tougher test, a market-price test, that can't be masked in part by that subsidy."

Though some energy analysts and executives say it is unlikely that the Trump administration will seek to undo the federal tax credit — which is set to phase out by 2020 — high-ranking Energy Department officials involved in the study have taken part in efforts to diminish support for renewables. Those include Mr. Perry's chief of staff, Brian McCormack, whom Mr. Perry directed to open the study, and another appointee, Travis Fisher, who is overseeing it, according to a former Energy Department official who is one of its advisers.

Mr. McCormack, as vice president for political and external affairs at the main trade group for the electric utility industry, the Edison Electric Institute, was part of an effort to diminish incentives for rooftop solar installations, according to the Energy and Policy Institute, which supports renewables. Mr. Fisher is a former economist at the Institute for Energy Research, a right-leaning policy organization connected to Charles G. Koch, the ultraconservative billionaire whose fortune is connected to oil and petrochemicals. Mr. Fisher has suggested that policies promoting renew-



A turbine at the Spring Canyon Wind Farm outside Pecos, Colo. Below, a power systems trader on the Xcel Energy trading floor in Denver. Xcel shut down a natural gas plant in Colorado for two days in January and let wind fill, on average, half of customer demand.



Source: American Wind Energy Association

able energy should be repealed or overhauled and has blamed the production tax credit for making the grid less reliable.

Mr. Perry has relationships with executives in the oil, gas and nuclear waste industries. But the Energy Department said its review was simply meant to ensure a balanced and secure energy supply, and noted the surge in wind development during his time as governor, making Texas the leading wind energy-

producing state by far.

"Secretary Perry's proven record as a champion for an all-of-the-above energy policy speaks for itself," said Sheryllyn Hynes, a department spokeswoman. "He understands that a reliable, resilient and affordable electric system — using all of our domestic resources, including renewables — is essential."

The department would not comment on how Mr. McCormack and Mr. Fisher would influence the study.

Parts of the study aim to determine the extent to which current regulations and incentives are forcing coal and nuclear plants to close, and whether the increased use of renewable sources is adding to the cost of operating the system.

But many energy experts and executives say the study appears to take an outmoded view of how grid operators and some utilities are looking to meet their base loads, and have criticized the fast deadline and lack of outreach to those who oversee the electric system. The Energy Department is working with researchers at several national laboratories and the Energy Information Administration, but not grid operators or state and federal regulators, because of time constraints, according to internal study memos obtained by The New York Times.

Although wind energy on its own cannot fill all the functions of traditional power plants, it is increasingly serving some of them; utility executives are beginning to call it the new base-load source.

In several regions, especially at night when demand is lower, grid operators will signal coal and nuclear plants to reduce production and let wind displace their output.

Some states, like Iowa, Kansas, Oklahoma and the Dakotas, have pulled far ahead in wind production, but few utilities are taking advantage of it more than Xcel. It already leads the nation's utilities in wind power on its system, according to the industry's main trade group, the American Wind Energy Association, and is working to add more than any other electric company.

Mr. Fowke, the Xcel Energy chief executive, said that he planned to replace aging coal plants mainly with wind and use natural gas as the backup, and that he hoped the production tax credit would stay in place as currently planned.

"The P.T.C. is one piece of the puzzle and allows us to offer wind at a price that is below virtually any other alternative," he said, adding that as renewables continued to come down in price they would be able to expand even as the subsidies phase out. "It's working for us; you can have a cleaner product and it can be affordable."

Wall St. eyes boom in Australia property

SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA

Two private equity firms bidding for Fairfax Media and its real estate website

BY JACQUELINE WILLIAMS

Wall Street has started a bidding war for Fairfax Media, an Australian company best known for the dowdy business of publishing newspapers. To understand why, look no further than Deanna McMahon.

Ms. McMahon, owner of a small business specializing in print and design, is trying to determine the value of the fixer-upper house she bought in 2009 in the Sydney suburb of Stannmore, and whether to sell it and cash in on the area's wild property boom. Where she once would turn to the real estate pages of The Sydney Morning Herald, a Fairfax paper, she now scours two online real estate portals: Realestate.com.au, which is part of Rupert Murdoch's media empire, under News Corporation, and Domain, which has quietly become Fairfax's most lucrative business.

"They're the only two sites I go to," she said. "There's nothing in the papers. You don't pick up The Herald anymore on a Saturday to see what's for sale."

Australia's two biggest cities — Sydney and Melbourne — are having an intense surge in property prices, and for global investors, Fairfax's Domain offers a piece of the action.

Two large American private equity firms, TPG Capital and Hellman & Friedman, are bidding to buy Fairfax, valuing the company at nearly \$3 billion. That is not bad for a company that, just weeks ago, said it would have to sharply reduce staffing at many of its newspapers to contain costs.

Australia's remarkable — and unbalanced — property boom appears to be the driver behind the bids.

"They've formed an investment thesis that real estate's just got a lot of value in it," Damien Topping, a partner in Deloitte Australia's technology and media practice, said of the bidders for Fairfax.

That has raised concerns that the intense focus on a real estate market that may or may not keep growing will put at risk Fairfax's most visible assets: major newspapers including The Sydney Morning Herald and The Age, based in Melbourne. Staff members at those papers went on a weeklong strike last month over imminent job cuts, and they fear that both Fairfax bidders would further shrink print operations in order to invest in the company's digital real estate advertising arm.

The bidding war sets up another battle, between News Corporation, one of Australia's biggest media companies, and well-funded Wall Street investors bent on making money from Australians' fascination with property prices.

Sensitive to the worries about what a deal might do to Australia's media landscape, TPG has pledged to nurture the newspapers. Hellman & Friedman have declined to comment. Fairfax owns community newspapers and has interests in online video, digital publishing and radio.

Australia as a whole is grappling with a slowdown in demand for the iron ore, coal, milk and other resources it exports to China and elsewhere. As Australia's growth has slowed, its central bank has cut interest rates to help keep the economy humming.

But Sydney and Melbourne stand as glaring exceptions, making the country something of a two-track economy.

Those two cities are experiencing much stronger job creation and economic growth, and the low interest rates translate into cheaper mortgages for people there, making buying and selling a lot more attractive.

As a result, both cities are experiencing a property boom. Until last year, when the overall Australian market slowed, Sydney and Melbourne regularly had double-digit annual growth in house prices. Elsewhere in the country, the growth was slower, or even negative.

"The Australian housing market is going gangbusters," said Terry Rawnsley, an economist with SGS Economics and Planning. "Wages and profits are up in Sydney and Melbourne, so people have got more money in their pockets."

The listings business offers a way to cash in on the boom. Domain's digital revenue grew 15 percent in the six-month period that ended in December while Fairfax's overall revenue dropped almost 5 percent. Fairfax's revenue fell about 2 percent in its fiscal year that ended last June.

Like many media companies, Fairfax is struggling to keep readers as the number of news outlets online grows. The company's stock, which has surged since the bidding began, is still below the levels it reached before the global financial crisis, even as the broader Australian market has bounced back.

Domain and Realestate.com.au enjoy a duopoly in selling ads for residential real estate, property agents say. Listings can cost 1,500 Australian dollars, or

"If you want to get the right price you need to get on those websites."

about \$115, per property, said Jonathan Hammond, an agent with Cobden & Hayson.

"If you want to get the right price," Mr. Hammond said, "you need to get on those websites."

Those are the sorts of conditions that can draw big private equity investors. Sometimes castigated as corporate raiders, private equity firms use money from pension funds, wealthy investors and other sources to buy a company, streamline it and resell it, often by listing it on a stock market. Sometimes private equity firms borrow the money they use to strike a deal, which can put even more pressure on the firm to turn around a company.

When it works, a company can come out in much better shape — although a number of high-profile bets have also stumbled. TPG, formerly Texas Pacific Group, got its start buying out and fixing Continental Airlines in the early 1990s, but it was also involved in the costly and troubled buyout of the utility giant TXU. It now owns stakes in the Spanish-language broadcaster Univision, the room-sharing platform Airbnb and the theatrical circus Cirque du Soleil.

Hellman & Friedman, which was founded in the 1980s, has invested in the German publisher Axel Springer, the asset management firm Franklin Templeton Investments and the Nasdaq Stock Market.

Both TPG and Hellman & Friedman have investments in property-listing firms outside Australia. Greg Ellis, who is leading Hellman & Friedman's Fairfax takeover effort, runs the firm's Scout24 listings company in Germany and is a former executive at the digital advertising company REA Group, which has News Corporation as its majority owner and in turn owns Realestate.com.au.

Isabella Kival contributed reporting.

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BUSINESS

Food, in a package made of food

To help reduce waste, researchers are developing alternative containers

BY STEPHANIE STROM

For the environmentally conscious eater, they are among the most inconvenient truths: Too much food goes to waste. Too much packaging comes with the food. And too much of the packaging is made to last for ages.

Now there may be a single answer to all three problems: using excess food to make the packaging.

Entrepreneurs and researchers are working to turn food like mushrooms, kelp, milk and tomato peel into edible — if not always palatable — replacements for plastics, coatings and other packaging materials.

Their efforts come as food and beverage companies are not only looking for biodegradable containers — Nestlé Waters and Danone recently announced a joint project to make water bottles from wood — but also joining in the effort by governments, restaurateurs and consumers to reduce waste, which contributes to the greenhouse gases enveloping the planet.

The United States Department of Agriculture, for instance, is giving new meaning to the notion of pizza with extra cheese: A team at its research laboratory in Wyndmoor, Pa., has developed a material from milk protein that can be used to line pizza boxes, encase cheese or create, say, soluble soup packets that can simply be dropped in hot water.

The product could even serve as a substitute for the sugar used to coat cereal flakes to prevent them from going soggy too fast, said Peggy Tomasula, a research leader at the laboratory — although she also noted that at this point, it may be uneconomical for some applications.

The project grew out of the Agriculture Department’s search for ways to put some of its stockpiles of milk powder to use; fluid milk consumption has steadily declined for years, but federal subsidies for the dairy industry have kept production humming.

The Merck Forest and Farmland Center, a nonprofit environmental group in Rupert, Vt., that supports itself by selling maple syrup, faced a quandary of its own.

“We were going to great expense to make maple syrup and even somewhat more expensive to get organic certification — and then shipping it in all this plastic,” said Tom Ward, a former executive director of the center, referring to the containers and foam pellets it used to ship orders. “That just seemed nonsensical.”

So for the past two years, the group has sent its syrup out in glass bottles cradled in a molded material made from mushrooms. “You can literally break it up and put it in a compost pile, then scatter it around your rose bushes,” Mr. Ward said. “I think what we’re doing is a microcosm of what’s coming in terms of products that are sustainable from start to finish.”

That mushroom-based packaging is the invention of Ecovative, a design company in Green Island, N.Y. “I studied mechanical engineering, and as I was working on turbines, I couldn’t forget what I saw as a child growing up on a



Above, preparing mycelium fungus, which forms the roots of mushrooms as they grow in places like compost piles, at Ecovative's factory. Below, its packaging using mycelium.



farm in Vermont,” Eben Bayer, a founder, said. “Biology really is the best technology available, and we’ve started thinking about living cells more as living machines.”

The Ecovative product is made using the mycelium fungus that forms the roots of mushrooms as they grow in environments like piles of dead leaves or compost. Ecovative grows the fungus in a variety of substances, which lead to materials of different strengths, flexibility and durability.

“You could eat it,” Mr. Bayer said, “although we don’t encourage that.”

Over the past several years, governments have quietly bankrolled efforts to develop packaging from food. The European Union, which underwrote a project to develop coatings from whey and potato proteins from 2011 to 2015, estimates that the global market for so-called bioplastics is growing by as much as 30 percent each year.

Bringing those products to market, however, is a challenge. The Agriculture Department, for example, tried to build interest in a milk-protein-based product more than a decade ago but found no takers, Dr. Tomasula said. Cost and the

fact that it was susceptible to moisture made it a hard sell.

“Edible films were just getting started then, and there were a lot of people playing around with them,” she said. “But food waste and food security weren’t big issues then, and nobody really seemed to notice them.”

Times have changed. Mike Lee, the founder of the Future Market, a firm that forecasts trends, has been keeping an eye on products like the cheese packaging. “I can even see a grocery store free of conventional packaging some day,” Mr. Lee said.

But he sees hurdles. “Even though these products are important,” he said, “until someone steps up and says, ‘I’m going to use it on a big scale,’ they’re just science looking for an application.”

Big companies like PepsiCo and Nestlé are more interested today than they were years ago, goaded by consumers who are increasingly aware that the food they eat and its packaging can damage the environment.

The companies remain skeptical, however. “Some of the stuff out there is just gimmicky,” said David Strauss, the head of packaging in Nestlé’s United

States operations. “They sound nice but will never be cost-competitive or, in a final analysis, don’t have the impact on waste or the environment that the people making them promise.”

Then there is the issue of food security: Nestlé says it wouldn’t want its demand for packaging to reduce the food supply, given widespread hunger. “It’s no good to package our products in a packaging that could instead have been used to feed people,” Mr. Strauss said.

Few, however, are begging to eat the peels left after tomatoes are processed. A group of researchers in Italy has used them to develop a lining for cans.

Called Biocopac Plus, the product aims to replace BPA, or Bisphenol A, which is used in coatings for cans and bottles that contain food and drinks. Small amounts of BPA can migrate into food, raising concerns among some consumers and health advocates, despite assurances from American and European regulators that it is safe.

“We extract a natural polymer from tomato skins, and using that, we produce a lacquer to protect food packaged in metal cans,” said Angela Montanari, the head of packaging at the Experimental Station for the Food Preserving Industry in Parma, Italy. “It can be used to pack tomatoes, peas, meat, fish, all kinds of food that are canned.”

Originally underwritten by the European Union, the project is being advanced by a group that includes a large Italian family-owned farming business, a major Italian food processor and a manufacturer of industrial coatings. The group is building a pilot plant in Mantua, Italy, to make the coating.

The Wyss Institute for Biologically Inspired Engineering, at Harvard, has extracted chitosan, a polysaccharide, from shrimp and lobster shells and combined it with silk fibers to create an alternative to plastic packaging, called Shrilk.

“We put it in different layers, like an insect’s wing, and demonstrated that you can make sheets that look something like Saran Wrap and are much stronger,” said Robert Cunningham, the director of platform development at the Wyss Institute.

Dr. Cunningham said Shrilk could be used to make egg cartons or a wrap for lettuce. He said that a number of large packaging companies had expressed interest in the product, but that it is not yet cost-competitive. “The next step has to be industry stepping in and changing the economics,” he said.

A British start-up called Skipping Rocks Lab is taking matters into its own hands. The company has developed a packaging it calls Ohoo from edible seaweed, and is building a machine to produce containers from Ohoo to hold water, juices, cosmetics and other liquids on the spot.

A juice bar, for instance, could create a container with each order. “It’s something like an espresso machine that you put on the shelf and make a container from Ohoo while a customer waits,” said Rodrigo García González, a founder of Skipping Rocks.

The company has talked with many of the world’s largest beverage companies, Mr. García González said, but none have yet embraced Ohoo.

“Those conversations are moving quite slowly because this is a product that challenges the status quo,” he said. “And there are people who are making quite a lot of money from the status quo.”

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Goldman bond bet causes uproar in Venezuela

BY LANDON THOMAS JR.

Venezuelan bonds would seem to be an unlikely target for global investors.

The country is in near revolt and has barely enough ready cash to feed its people, much less pay the billions of dollars in debt that the government owes to its foreign lenders.

Yet bonds issued by Venezuela’s national oil company, Petróleos de Venezuela, have attracted some of world’s most sophisticated investors. They are betting that the government will use its dwindling supply of dollars to pay bondholders instead of importing food and medicine for its people.

Now, a decision by Goldman Sachs to snap up \$2.8 billion worth of the oil company’s bonds maturing in 2022, at a 70 percent discount to the market price, has struck a nerve.

The investment has caused a political uproar in Venezuela, where opposition forces have taken to the streets to protest the autocratic rule of the nation’s unpopular president, Nicolás Maduro. Nearly 60 people have died in clashes, mainly between protesters and the police, in recent months.

Julio Borges, the opposition lawmaker who heads the National Assembly, wrote a letter of protest to Lloyd C. Blankfein, the chief executive of Goldman Sachs, accusing the Wall Street firm of looking to make a “quick buck off the suffering of the Venezuelan people.”

Goldman Sachs has defended the deal, saying that many other investors, including mutual funds and exchange-traded funds, own the bonds and that its asset management division bought the securities on the secondary market, without interacting with the Venezuelan government.

Nevertheless, the transaction highlights the extent to which investors are willing to take on increasing levels of po-

litical and economic risk as they seek high-yielding investments when interest rates still hover near zero.

“There is a lot of interest in this trade,” said Carlos de Sousa, an economist at Oxford Economics, a research company based in London. “We are in a low-rate environment, and these are dollar bonds with really high yields.”

Among the large holders of Petróleos de Venezuela bonds are BlackRock, T. Rowe Price, Fidelity, JPMorgan Chase and Ashmore, an emerging market specialist based in London.

But none of those firms carry Goldman’s reputation for being politically influential and financially opportunistic — a combination that has made it an easy global punching bag.

At the root of what makes the bonds so attractive to investors, beyond their more than 20 percent returns, is the crucial role played by the Venezuelan oil company in providing foreign exchange to the embattled Maduro government.

While Venezuela has been in economic crisis for more than two years, the surge of people to the streets began after its Supreme Court, which is loyal to Mr. Maduro, tried to dissolve the country’s National Assembly in late March. The group of lawmakers, controlled by opposition parties, is considered the only government institution independent of the president.

Mr. Maduro’s growing authoritarianism is only the beginning of mounting grievances against Venezuela’s ruling leftists, who have governed since President Hugo Chávez took control of the country in 1999.

Falling petroleum prices and years of economic mismanagement when oil revenues were high, have led to triple-digit inflation and left a majority of Venezuelans hardly able to buy sufficient food and other necessities. Even those who can afford meals most days



Protesters at Goldman Sachs headquarters in New York opposed the Wall Street firm's purchase of bonds issued by Venezuela's national oil company, Petróleos de Venezuela.

Investors are willing to take on political and economic risk as they seek high yields.

have trouble finding basics like bread, eggs and sugar because of rampant shortages.

Petróleos de Venezuela brings in about 95 percent of the economy’s dollars, so foreign investors believe that the government, even in a worst case, will do all it can to keep it functioning.

Mr. de Sousa also points out that unlike pure sovereign bonds issued by the government, the oil company’s securities lack legal mechanisms, like collective action clauses, which can help a government negotiate favorable terms with foreign bond holders if it defaults

on its debt.

Moreover, investors have noted that in the last year, as Venezuela’s economic situation has deteriorated sharply, the government has paid out billions of dollars to foreign investors holding the oil company bonds.

The Petróleos de Venezuela trade is the latest sign that foreign investors are becoming bolder in investing in the bonds of governments in far-flung locales. In recent months, higher-risk countries such as Turkey, Russia and Brazil have been at the forefront of this trend. Driving the bet, analysts say, is a view that emerging market economies, regardless of their political and economic challenges, are no longer willing to face the wrath of bond investors by defaulting on their debts.

That is because global investment gi-

ants like BlackRock and Goldman have become ready sources of financing, quick to lend billions in dollars or even local currencies, to governments in Africa, Latin America and Asia that in the past relied on banks.

Perhaps no country is as reliant on the kindness of risk-happy foreign bond investors as Venezuela. According to the research firm Exotix, Venezuela has a financing requirement of \$17 billion in 2017, yet its central bank reserves are a paltry \$10 billion.

As investors see it, if you can buy a Petróleos de Venezuela bond at 30 cents on the dollar, with a double-digit yield, the gains made on the investment would be enough to overcome any loss even if the government has to default.

While Goldman Sachs defended its trade by saying that it bought the bonds on the open market from a broker, bankers and traders say the money ultimately ended up in Venezuela’s treasury because the seller was an institution with ties to the government.

Nonetheless, the threat by Mr. Borges, the opposition leader, that a new government would not make good on these bonds seems unlikely.

That is because these bonds carry covenants aimed at preventing an issuer from favoring one bond holder over another. So paying BlackRock or JPMorgan Chase and not Goldman would open Venezuela to lawsuits.

All of which suggests that, despite the controversy over the Goldman trade, foreign investors will keep lining up to buy Petróleos de Venezuela bonds.

“This is the only source of foreign currency the government has,” said Mr. de Sousa, the Venezuelan expert at Oxford. “So I think the government will continue to sell more of these types of bonds to foreign investors.”

Nicholas Casey contributed reporting.

Sports

Arsenal and coach stand apart by staying together

ON SOCCER
LONDON

Other top clubs changed coaches, but Gunners will stick with Arsène Wenger

BY RORY SMITH

For a few minutes on Saturday evening, it seemed even Arsenal would succumb. The club's longtime manager, Arsène Wenger, was sitting in front of members of the news media at Wembley Stadium, reflecting on his team's victory in the F.A. Cup final against Chelsea. His winners' medal, still in its case, was safely stored in his right trouser pocket.

Wenger is not a man given to nostalgia; he has given most of the medals he has claimed in his career to staff members. He was keeping this one, though, he said, a memento of a "special" victory.

That felt like a sign. So, too, was his apparent inability to confirm that next season he would still be in charge of Arsenal, as he has been for the last 21 years. Wenger was asked about the team's prospects for next year. He was optimistic, as always, but he was also impersonal. "They" would be in contention, he said.

Throughout the last six months or so, those who know Wenger have insisted he would stay on, that for all the clamor for him to resign, to walk away from his post, he would never be able to countenance life without management, life without Arsenal.

He would stay, they said, no matter how many planes were commissioned to fly banners demanding his removal. He would stay, no matter how much the mutiny of a significant minority of fans pained him. That he was now 67 would not face him, either: to anyone watching him during the Cup final, his body twisting and writhing with the tension, it was abundantly clear that he did not want for energy, or for enthusiasm.

Yet when Wenger spoke with reporters an hour or so later, he seemed so uncertain, so contemplative, his voice so thick with emotion that it was impossible not to wonder if, perhaps, he was wavering. This was his chance to go out as he would hope, as he deserved: on a

high, in triumph; with a parade, rather than a protest.

He has passed up that chance. Wenger met Arsenal's majority owner, Stan Kroenke, on Monday, and expressed his desire to stay, reaffirming his continued and avowed belief that he is the best man for the job. Kroenke agreed. The motion was put to the club's board — where support for Wenger is not nearly so unanimous — on Tuesday. By Wednesday, he was likely to be formally awarded a new two-year contract.

These last few days have brought considerable change among the upper echelons of European soccer. Some of it has been entirely predictable. On Monday, when Barcelona confirmed that Ernesto Valverde, a former player for the club, would replace Luis Enrique as coach for next season, it was hardly a shock. Valverde, once regarded as promising managerial material by no less an authority than Johan Cruyff, had been the outstanding candidate for the post for months.

Likewise, few in Italy were surprised when Roma announced that Luciano Spalletti would be departing; he is expected to take control at Inter Milan in the coming days. His countryman Roberto Mancini, meanwhile, was a relatively predictable choice for the managerial vacancy at Zenit St. Petersburg, in Russia.

More striking was the news of Thomas Tuchel's departure from Borussia Dortmund, which arrived just two days after he led the club to victory in the German Cup. That too, however, was not unforeseen: Relations with Dortmund's board, and its internal hierarchy, had been uneasy for some time — the club's influential chief scout, Sven Mislintat, has been barred from the training grounds for almost a year because of an argument with Tuchel — and many in Germany had long believed the situation was irretrievable.

Tuchel is expected to be replaced at Dortmund by Lucien Favre, fresh from leading the French club Nice to the Champions League. Tuchel himself, once regarded as a potential successor to Wenger, should become Bayer Leverkusen's next manager in the coming days or weeks.

It is the one great constant, of course, amid all this frenzied activity, these seismic shifts, that Arsenal should stand



Arsène Wenger, Arsenal's longtime manager, after his team beat Chelsea in the F.A. Cup final on Saturday.

At some point, those around Wenger — and, strictly speaking, above him — have to start planning for a day when he is no longer there.

apart. That has been the club's defining characteristic under Wenger: its constancy, its immunity to change.

That, to many, is its greatest strength, what has enabled it to weather any number of storms in recent years. Arsenal's success over the last decade might have been a relatively dull one — consistency, rather than efficiency; a smooth-running marriage, rather than a pulse-raising tussle — but it has, by most standards, been a success.

Of its direct rivals, Manchester United and Liverpool have both endured fallow periods, one rather longer than the other. Even Chelsea has had the occasional bout in its boom era.

Arsenal, though, is always there, or at least always was: steady, reliable and consistent, for good and for ill, cleareyed and coolheaded, the epitome of a well-run club. That is what has persuaded Kroenke to stand by Wenger for another two seasons. It is what was expected to enable him to overcome any lingering resistance among his fellow board members.

Perhaps, in the context, that is the right decision. It is hard to see where Arsenal might have turned had Wenger decided to call it a day; none of the outstanding candidates — the likes of Carlo Ancelotti, for example — appear to be

available.

And yet it is hard to avoid the suspicion that the call for Wenger to stay has been reached in the wrong manner. Whatever happened on the field this season, off it there can be no question that Arsenal's reputation for smooth running has suffered enormously. Even Wenger has acknowledged that the uncertainty about his future created a "horrendous" environment, one that directly contributed to the team's disappointing fifth-place finish in the Premier League this season.

Nobody, though, was prepared to force Wenger's hand, to demand he make up his mind. Nobody had the nerve to challenge his all-encompassing power.

Kroenke is largely absent from London, and his emissary, Ivan Gazidis, the



Thomas Tuchel, fired by Borussia Dortmund, soon may coach Bayer Leverkusen.

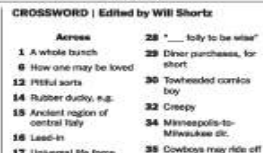
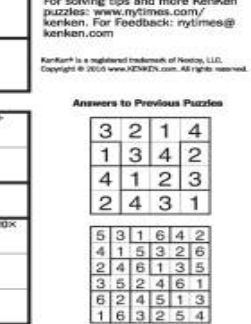
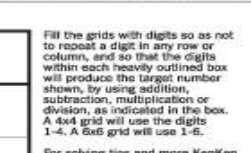
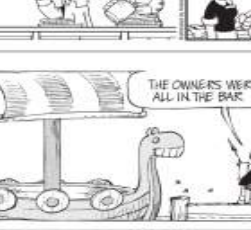
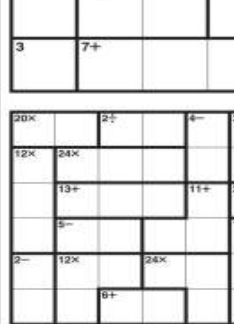
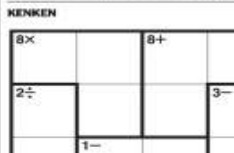
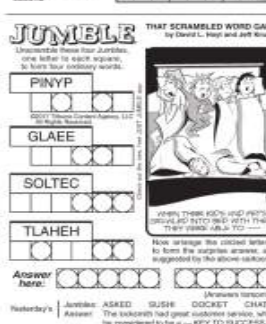
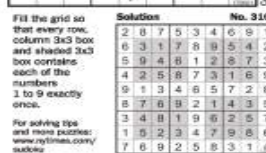
team's chief executive, has ceded considerable ground to Wenger over his plan for a thorough overhaul of how the club works this summer.

Wenger will retain final say on all transfer activity. There will be a series of technical appointments, but no director of football to help ease his workload. Wenger viewed that as beyond the pale. Arsenal, though, cannot be the club that does not change forever. At some point, those around Wenger — and, strictly speaking, above him — have to start planning for a day when he is no longer there, when the one great constant over the past two decades has disappeared from view.

They cannot allow this same drama to play out in two years, in which everything rests on Wenger's whim, in which a billion-dollar business is forced to hold its breath until one man decides what form the future should take.

Gazidis is right to believe that the era of the omnipotent manager, overseeing every aspect of the club, is over. He is right to want to bring in experts to help relieve Wenger of some of his responsibilities. Not simply because it might help Wenger focus, a little more, on crafting a team that could win a championship, but because at some point all of those responsibilities will be removed from him.

Arsenal, once more, stands apart this summer. The future, as it always does, looks like the present and looks like the past. Change will come, though, one day. It cannot be postponed indefinitely. Arsenal was not ready now. The task, for Gazidis and the rest, is to ensure it is ready when the time arrives.



STYLE

What to wear to be kind to the planet

Even natural fibers have drawbacks, so informed choices are important

BY TATIANA SCHLOSSBERG

In the Garden of Eden, figuring out what to wear was easy, and the fig leaves were environmentally friendly. Today, it's much harder to find clothes that don't have some kind of negative impact on the planet.

Textile manufacturers use complicated chemical and industrial processes to make clothing materials, from cotton to synthetic fibers. And while the environmental consequences aren't always clear, consumption is growing. Europeans bought 34 percent more clothing per capita in 2012 than in 1996. Americans spent 14 percent more on clothing and footwear in 2016 — around \$350 billion total — than they did in 2011, and the trend is similar or greater in much of the rest of the world, according to the market research firm Euromonitor International.

Buying less is the easiest way to make a difference. But when you do need new clothes, you will usually be choosing among four types of fibers: petroleum-based synthetics, cotton, rayon and wool. Their environmental trade-offs are so varied that a definitive ranking would be impossible. But here's what we know, so you can make more informed decisions.

SYNTHETICS IN UNEXPECTED PLACES Synthetic fibers — polyester, nylon and others — make up more than 60 percent of the global fiber market by some estimates.

Many are made from petroleum, a non-renewable resource.

Polyester, one of the most common fibers, is a plastic derived from crude oil. The long fibers that make up polyester thread are woven together to make fabric. Extracting the oil and melting the plastic require energy.

Perhaps a bigger concern is what happens when synthetics get into the hands of consumers.

Synthetic fibers shed plastic filaments — from daily wear and tear, and in the wash. If shed in the laundry, the filaments can make it into sewer systems and eventually into waterways.

Even if these so-called microplastics are trapped at filtration plants, they can end up in sludge produced by the facilities, which is often sent to farms to be



When buying clothes, you will usually be choosing among four types of fibers: petroleum-based synthetics, cotton, rayon and wool.

used as fertilizer. From there, the fibers can make their way into other water systems, or into the digestive tracts of animals that graze on the fertilized plants.

Researchers found plastic fibers in samples from 28 tributaries of the Great Lakes in the United States and Canada in a 2016 study, making up about 70 percent of all the plastic collected.

Scientists have not been able to fully quantify the scale of the problem, but early research showed that plastic fibers are among the most abundant environmental debris in the world, according to Mark Browne, a senior research associate at the University of New South Wales, Sydney, in Australia.

COTTON ISN'T ALL NATURAL

Cotton makes up about a quarter of all

fibers used in textile for clothing, furniture and other uses. Synthetic fibers or rayon are often blended with cotton thread, especially if there is a cotton shortage, as there was in 2011, or if the price of cotton goes up.

Cotton's share of the textile market is declining, but cotton production still uses just over 2 percent of the world's arable land and accounts for about 3 percent of global water use, according to the United Nations.

Cotton also requires pesticides. According to the United States Department of Agriculture, 7 percent of all pesticides in America are used on cotton, and global estimates are 11 percent for pesticides and 24 percent for insecticides.

Many of those chemicals seep into the ground or run off into surface water.

Consumers can choose organic cotton grown without pesticides, but it uses more water and requires more land than conventional crops. Organic cotton can also be much more expensive and difficult to find.

RAYON OFTEN TAKES CHEMICALS

Rayon, one of the first man-made fibers, was developed from plant fibers as a substitute for silk in the 19th century. Most rayon today is produced as viscose rayon, which is treated with chemicals, including carbon disulfide.

Chronic exposure to carbon disulfide can cause serious health problems for rayon workers, including Parkinson's disease, premature heart attack and stroke, said Dr. Paul Blanc, a professor of medicine at the University of California, San Francisco, who has written

about the history of rayon. The chemicals may also be released into the environment, though the effects are harder to pinpoint. By the time the rayon gets to the store, it poses no danger to consumers, Dr. Blanc said.

Viscose rayon is often made from bamboo. In Indonesia and other areas, producers are cutting down old-growth forests to plant bamboo for rayon, said Frances Kozen, associate director of the Cornell Institute of Fashion and Fiber Innovation.

Ms. Kozen warned that viscose rayon is often wrongly marketed as environmentally friendly because it is derived from bamboo. The Federal Trade Commission in the United States has required retailers to provide accurate labels.

If viscose rayon is produced me-

chanically from bamboo instead of chemically, which is sometimes known as "bamboo linen," it has a relatively small environmental impact, but it is much more expensive.

Another type of rayon fiber, known as lyocell or Tencel, is often made from bamboo but uses a different chemical that is thought to be less toxic, though studies are scarce, Dr. Blanc said.

WOOL MAY BE MORE SUSTAINABLE

Producing wool requires sheep. And sheep, like other ruminants including cattle, produce methane, a powerful greenhouse gas, in their burps. One study suggested that 50 percent of the greenhouse gas emissions from the wool industry come from the sheep themselves.

Still, Ms. Kozen said she considered wool to be more ecologically sound than cotton, rayon or synthetic fibers, though she added that not everyone shares that view.

SO WHAT CAN YOU DO?

"The best thing we can all do is buy less and wear more," Ms. Kozen said.

The "fast fashion" market isn't helping, since it encourages rapid turn-around between seasons and more frequent clothing purchases. These clothes aren't made to last, so they are more frequently thrown out.

When new clothes are made, materials are often shipped internationally from farms to factories to stores, adding to emissions.

Even donating clothes can have unexpected consequences, said Andrew Brooks, a professor of development geography at King's College London. Since many donated clothes end up in less developed countries, "they also displace the opportunity to produce and manufacture things locally, creating a dependency between rich countries and poor countries," he said.

Some sustainable initiatives save growers and producers money, said Nate Herman, a senior vice president for supply chain for the American Apparel and Footwear Association, an industry group. "That's the best driver for sustainability: what helps the bottom line."

For consumers, the most effective solution may be to keep wearing that old T-shirt, buy used clothes or just make do with fewer articles of clothing.

The environmental problems from textiles will continue to compound, Ms. Kozen said, "if we can't get rid of that mind-set that clothing is disposable."

Turnaround for luxury?

LONDON

BY ELIZABETH PATON

Consumers of luxury goods will apparently worry for only so long about the effects of global unrest, economic fluctuations or a volatile political outlook before they start spending again. Or so suggests a new report by the consulting firm Bain & Company, which predicts an upturn in the luxury industry this year.

After slowing sales amid fears of terrorist attacks, unpredictable stock markets and currency fluctuations that kept many tourists away from cities including Paris, the market will return to growth in 2017, according to the Bain report. The Worldwide Luxury Market Monitor, released on May 22, the report estimates a global personal luxury goods market of 254 billion euros to 259 billion, or \$284 billion to \$289 billion, this year, assuming constant exchange rates, up 2 percent to 4 percent from 2016 last year.

"It is a sad state of affairs, but people are becoming more accustomed to uncertainty being part of their lives," said Claudia D'Arpizio, a partner at Bain who specializes in the luxury and fashion industries. "The impact of events like terror attacks are becoming less strong on the luxury market."

The stronger forecast for 2017 stems from three factors, Ms. D'Arpizio said: a

resurgence in Chinese consumer spending, both at home and abroad; a return of tourism confidence in Europe; and efforts by luxury brands to identify and respond to the tastes of specific groups of consumers, particularly millennials.

"The last several years have been very difficult for the luxury sector," Ms. D'Arpizio said. "As recently as last October, we said that the market would continue to stagnate if brands failed to revamp their trading strategies. For those who have, the benefits are now starting to kick in," she added, pointing to a polarization between "big winners" and "strong losers," particularly in the race to capture the interest of younger customers.

The Bain report expects annual sales of personal luxury goods, which include high-end fashion, handbags and jewelry, to total €280 billion to €290 billion by 2020.

After terrorist attacks in Paris (the world leader in the luxury market), Brussels and Nice, European sales of luxury goods slowed drastically in the past 18 months, with many shoppers moving away from high-end goods, reconsidering travel or spending closer to home. But geopolitical turmoil has since become somewhat normalized in many people's minds, Ms. D'Arpizio said.

Luxury sales grew 4 percent in the first three months of 2017 from the same period last year, lifted by particularly strong sales in accessories, jewelry and

beauty products in mainland China, where the sector had been hampered by a slowing economy in that country, as well as in Europe.

While China and Europe are rebounding, however, the so-called Trump bump in the United States — increased enthusiasm among investors and businesses after the presidential election in November — appears to be giving way to what some are calling a Trump slump.

The once strapping American luxury market is feeling pressure from falling tourism, for instance, as demand for travel to the United States has been hurt by factors including President Trump's targeted travel bans and limitations on electronic devices allowed on some flights to the country. Bain also highlighted the strength of the dollar and poor performance of department stores, a crucial national sales channel, as causes for concern.

Despite those factors, the Bain report paints a cautiously optimistic global outlook for the sector, with moderate expansion expected in the coming year.

"The peak of the largest nationality wave over to benefit luxury goods is behind us: There is not going to be another China," Ms. D'Arpizio said. "That said, the growth we are seeing now is much healthier and less dependent on any one market or spending trend. The market is still very reactive. But for now, the luxury business looks in a much better place than it was this time last year."

Renaissance Gucci

FLORENCE, ITALY

BY ELIZABETH PATON

At Gucci, people like to call Alessandro Michele the renaissance man. Since his ascent to the role of creative director just over two years ago, the soft-spoken Roman has been hailed as a design visionary, responsible for a dazzling turnaround in fortunes at the Italian luxury house.

It felt fitting, then, that Mr. Michele chose Florence at sunset as the backdrop for his 2018 cruise collection.

And not just because Gucci was founded in Florence in 1921 as a leather goods company. Beginning in the 14th century, this city was the place where art was first seen not just as decoration or religious tribute, but as a way to show intellect and imagination. At the center of it all was the Palazzo Pitti, home to the Medici family, a dynasty of bankers, popes and royalty who were patrons to the greatest artists and thinkers of the Renaissance period, including Botticelli, Leonardo da Vinci and Michelangelo. And home, earlier this week, to the Gucci resort show.

Mr. Michele chose to make that Medici palace his own, paving its cloistered staircases with deep magenta carpets and serving fizzy pink cocktails and prosecco, small palm fronds and silk parasols on its roof terrace before models took to the runway. (It is probably not a coincidence that Mr. Michele announced less than two months ago that it was underwriting an extensive restoration project in the Boboli Gardens, which surround the Palazzo Pitti.) "I have always felt connected to the Renaissance, because it transformed everything," Mr. Michele said backstage, surrounded by an army of well-wishers. His heavy beard and long, dark hair were topped by a baseball cap; nestled amid scores of gold necklaces was a T-shirt with the slogan "Guccify Yourself" in pink.

"Pink is very powerful. It makes you feel sweet and sexy, also if you are a man," he offered by way of explanation. Initial ideas for what might shape this collection, Mr. Michele said, had focused on the might and power of ancient Greece and Rome. But the Acropolis was not available (and Chanel, whose Greek-themed resort show took place a few weeks ago, already did that). So he opted for what he considered the next best thing.

"The only era to compare to those epochs, I think, was the Renaissance," Mr. Michele said. "It was the other big step. And Florence was at the center of that change — like California is now. It



Alessandro Michele's resort wear collection was on display in Florence this week.

heaved with beauty, creativity, energy and a power to shape the future, all fueled by money."

The same could be said of the Gucci resort scene. Hundreds of guests, including the actresses Kirsten Dunst, Saoirse Ronan and Dakota Johnson, and the singer Elton John — many of whom have earlier been treated to an after-hours private tour of the Uffizi Gallery, just across the river — perched in the Palazzo portrait galleries on rainbows-hued canvas stools inscribed with words from a poem by Lorenzo de' Medici to watch the show go by.

It included billowing gowns for a modern princess in striped Pepto-Bismol pink and violet, caped, buttoned and decorated by bejeweled gold bows that were also worn in the models' hair. Disaphanous gold and black chiffon dresses, bound with winding ribbons, pleated and worn with metallic citrara garlands. And pearls — unthinkably rare during the Renaissance but plentiful for Florentines with money and influence, Mr. Michele said — were scattered everywhere: on jackets, on necklaces and even fashioned as a balacava.

This being an Alessandro Michele show, however, it didn't stop there. Cruise collections, which are notionally

intended to be transseasonal wardrobes for jet-set shoppers who flit between climates, tend to err on the lighter side. Not here. In 90-degree Tuscan heat, boys and girls drifted past in rich ruffled necklines and heavy-duty felt millitary coats covered in rich brocade, kitschy brown double-G-embossed PVC and fur striped jackets and oversized white shearing leather bombers with fringing on the arms. An eccentric, sequined menagerie of snakes, tigers, butterflies, dragons and bees ran riot down sleeves, up chests and across shoulder blades, while the sound of harps hung heavy in the air.

Afterward, guests traveled to a cocktail party in a private garden on the outskirts of the city, complete with a concert by the American singer Beth Ditto. "I am always connected with the Renaissance, so I feel very comfortable here," Mr. Michele said. "It is also the right moment for the brand, which started here, and where what I am doing is closer to heart of Florence than other moments in its history. It is not about the past. I wanted to paint a new kind of Renaissance. The Gucci Renaissance: injected with rock 'n' roll."

That desire makes him, presumably, its new crown prince.



A shopping mall in Milan. Bain & Company expects sales for personal luxury goods to reach at least \$284 billion this year.

Opinion

All the president's people

Many Filipinos like Mr. Duterte because he seems to be a rare politician who doesn't forget about them.

Nicole Curato

CANBERRA, AUSTRALIA In the year that he has been president of the Philippines, Rodrigo Duterte has been called a murderer, a tyrant, a misogynist and a madman. And yet, according to some recent opinion polls, he inspires "much trust" in 80 percent of Filipinos.

Mr. Duterte's supporters are sometimes pejoratively called "Dutertards." But are they simply naïve, and easy prey for demagoguery, propaganda and fake news? I don't think so.

For more than three years, I have been studying how democratic politics takes shape in postdisaster contexts — specifically in communities that were affected by Typhoon Haiyan in November 2013. Haiyan was one of the strongest tropical storms ever to make landfall, and it killed more than 6,200 people.

Tacloban City, my field site, was ground zero for the cyclone. A city of about 240,000 people in the central part of the Philippines, it is a hub of commerce, trade, education and tourism in one of the country's poorest regions. I have talked to more than 250 residents, mostly in hazard-prone areas the government has declared "no-build zones," and many of these people, while still reeling from the disaster, were energized when Mr. Duterte ran for the presidency, and when he won it.

Mr. Duterte's brutal antidrug campaign masterfully builds on the popular view that compassion must be earned.

important, and something beyond the merely anecdotal, about why communities living in precarious conditions value Mr. Duterte's leadership: He seems to be a rare politician who doesn't forget about the people.

Consider Shirelyn, a gregarious mother of two in her 20s. When I first met her in 2014, she lived in a shanty made of driftwood and galvanized iron sheets. Her home had been washed away by the typhoon. Shirelyn worked odd jobs whenever her partner, a pedicab driver, failed to earn enough to support the family.

Last year, she chose to forego a few days' pay to campaign for Mr. Duterte when he was running for president. "This is the least I can do," she told me in April 2016, at the height of the race.

Mr. Duterte was the mayor of Davao City when Haiyan struck, and he sent rescue operations to Tacloban at the time. "It's our turn to help him" said posters plastered around Tacloban during his presidential bid.

Six months into his term, Mr. Duterte's campaign promise "change is coming" materialized for Shirelyn. She and her family were relocated to the northern part of the city — to a house with concrete walls, a toilet, even a



Supporters of President Duterte gathered in Manila in April. According to some recent opinion polls, he inspires "much trust" in 80 percent of Filipinos.

MARILYN K. CRISTOFANO/ROPER PHOTO AGENCY

garden. Her new home brings to mind the aspirational middle-class gated communities of Manila, with their brightly painted welcome arches, rowhouse designs and picket fences.

"I knew Duterte would not forget," Shirelyn said.

In November I heard Mr. Duterte give a speech in Tacloban commemorating the third anniversary of Haiyan's landing. He promised to speed up relief assistance in the region, which had stalled. And he threatened to kill a government official he had put in charge of the effort if that official failed to move families into permanent disaster-proof homes fast enough. ("You know male," he told the man, who was on stage with him, "in truth, it's rare that I shoot people, especially my friends. But if you are unable to do this ...")

In the same speech, Mr. Duterte also made a comment implying that he had ousted Vice President Leni Robredo's legs during cabinet meetings.

"What a pervert," I whispered to an

old woman sitting next to me in the audience. "Let it go," she said. "He cared enough to be here."

Politicians in the Philippines are often viewed as opportunists who reach out to constituents while they are courting votes but disappear from view once in office. To Haiyan survivors, Mr. Duterte is different.

Three years after the disaster, even since becoming president, he came to Tacloban. This set him apart from his predecessor, Benigno S. Aquino, who once castigated survivors for complaining about their hardships instead of being grateful for still being alive.

The paradox, of course, is that even as Mr. Duterte restores dignity to disaster victims who have felt neglected by the state, his administration is attacking other vulnerable communities, like suspected drug users and those around them.

In January I asked Rafael, a security guard in Tacloban, how he felt about the government's campaign against drugs, which has already claimed more lives

than Haiyan did. Rafael lost his wife to the typhoon.

"It's sad," he said, mentioning the case of a teenager who was killed by unidentified gunmen after being mistaken for someone else. "But others deserve it. I know. I patrol the streets here."

I asked if he thought that what Mr. Duterte was doing was fair. "He has been fair to us," Rafael replied.

In other words: Not all suffering is equal, and compassion must be earned. Mr. Duterte's antidrug campaign masterfully builds on the popular view that there are hierarchies of misery.

In a village near where Shirelyn used to live, a market vendor proudly told me that she had reported a drug dealer to the head of the village.

"I have been working hard to put my kids to school," she said. "Then this man sells them drugs. This can't be."

The dealer is now on a government watch list.

According to a poll conducted in March, 73 percent of respondents said

they were worried that they or someone they knew might become the victim of an extrajudicial killing. But the anxiety I encountered in Tacloban was about something else. It was about people's fear of being abandoned by the state once again.

Shirelyn showed me a notebook in which she had written down the promises Mr. Duterte made in his first address to the country as president. This was in January, a few months after she moved into her new home. For that, she was grateful; about the rest — the jobs, the new schools and the better health care to come — she was unsure.

"I made a list so I won't forget," she said. "We know what we deserve."

Mr. Duterte might get away with murder, but he won't get away with broken promises.

NICOLE CURATO is a fellow at the Centre for Deliberative Democracy and Global Governance at the University of Canberra. She is the editor of the forthcoming book "The Duterte Reader."

Trump's united American emirate

America now has a monarchy in the White House, headed by an emir named Donald.



Thomas L. Friedman

SEOUL, SOUTH KOREA President Trump's trip to Europe was truly historic.

He left our most important allies there so uncertain about America's commitment to their security from Russia and to shared values on trade and climate change that German leader Angela Merkel was prompted to tell her countrymen that Europe's days of relying on America are "over to a certain extent," and therefore Germany and its European allies "really must take our fate into our own hands."

No U.S. president before had ever put a crack in the Atlantic alliance on his inaugural tour. Historic.

Merkel is just the first major leader to say out loud what every American ally is now realizing: America is under new management. "Who is America today?" is the first question I've been asked on each stop through New Zealand, Australia and South Korea. My answer: We're not the U.S.A. anymore. We're the new U.A.E.: the United American Emirate.

We have an emir. His name is Donald. We have a crown prince. His name is Jared. We have a crown princess. Her name is Ivanka. We have a consultative council (Congress) that rubber-

stamps whatever the emir wants. And like any good monarchy, our ruling family sees no conflict of interest between its personal businesses and those of the state.

So any lingering Kennedyesque thoughts about us should be banished, I explained. Let every nation know, whether it wishes us well or ill, that we shall pay no price, bear no burden, meet no hardship, support no friend, oppose no foe to assure the success of liberty — unless we're paid in advance.

And we take cash, checks, gold, Visa, American Express, Bitcoin and memberships in Mar-a-Lago.

The Trump doctrine is very simple: There are just four threats in the world: terrorists who will kill us, immigrants who will rape us or take our jobs, importers and exporters who will take our industries — and North Korea.

Threats to democracy, free trade, the environment and human rights are no longer on our menu. Therefore, no matter how unsavory you are as a foreign leader, you can be the United American Emirate's best friend if you:

1.) Pay us by buying our weapons. I warn you, though, Saudi Arabia has set the bar very high, starting at \$110 billion.

2.) Pay us in higher defense spending for NATO — not to deter Russia, which is using cyberwarfare to disrupt every democratic election it can, but to deter "terrorism," something that tanks and planes are useless against.

3.) Pay us in trade concessions. And it doesn't matter how lamer those concessions are. All that matters is that Emir Trump can claim "concessions."

See the recent "trade concessions" to

Trump from China. (Pay no attention to that laughter from Beijing.)

4.) Pay us by freeing any U.S. citizen you arrested on trumped-up charges to annoy Barack Obama and to intimidate human rights activists. See Egypt's President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi's release of a U.S.-Egyptian charity worker, Aya Hiljazi, who was working with homeless children.

5.) Pay us by grossly flattering our emir about how much of an improvement he is over Obama. See President Rodrigo Duterte of the Philippines and Bibi Netanyahu of Israel.

6.) Be Russia, and you pay nothing.

Now, if you do any one of these six things the United American Emirate's commitment to you — and it's ironclad — is that you can do anything you want "out back." You can deprive your people of whatever human rights you like out back. You can be as corrupt as you want out back. You can steal as many elections as you like out back.

Just keep the arms purchases coming, the NATO dues rising, the phony trade concessions flowing and the compliments gushing — or be Vladimir Putin — and anything goes.

Too harsh? Not at all. Being in Korea and seeing how much this country has



President Trump in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, this month.

STEVEN GRANITZ/THE NEW YORK TIMES

grown out of poverty over the last 50 years by adopting all of our values — so much so that it just impeached its president for corruption after a peace-

ful "candlelight" mass protest based entirely on American democratic software — it makes you weep to think that virtually the only thing Trump's had to say about Korea is that it's a freeloader on our army (not even true) and needs to pay up.

Does Trump have a point that German economic policies have dampened its imports and disadvantaged southern Europe? Yes, he does. And NATO members should fulfill the alliance's long-term spending targets. But how much is Germany spending to absorb one million Syrian refugees so they won't be joining ISIS? How much security is that buying the world? The U.S. took 18,000 Syrians. Trump's friend Putin took zero, but Trump never thinks about such things.

It took us decades to build the Atlantic alliance and it has brought us so many tangible and intangible benefits in the form of security, stability, growth and friendships. Trump could actually break it, not just crack it.

This week for the first time I saw the official photographs that now grace the entry halls of all U.S. embassies. Vice President Mike Pence is smiling warmly. Trump is actually scowling. If his picture had a caption, it would be: "Get off my lawn."

It could also say: "Let all who enter this embassy know: We don't do alliances any more. We only do Master Limited Partnerships. Interested? Call 1-202-456-1414. Operators are standing by."

OPINION

The New York Times

INTERNATIONAL EDITION

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DONALD TRUMP'S INSULT TO HISTORY

The president beat up on NATO and walked away, leaving a leadership vacuum for others to fill.

The tectonic plates of Europe are shifting, and President Trump is at the heart of this upheaval. Chancellor Angela Merkel of Germany bluntly made that point on Sunday when she said, "The times in which we could rely fully on others — they are somewhat over," and the result is that "we Europeans must really take our fate into our own hands."

With that line, it became clear that the United States is no longer the reliable partner her country and the rest of Europe have long depended on. Since World War II, the United States led the way in building a new international order rooted in NATO and the European Union as well as a belief in democracy and free markets. Britain, France and Germany were central to that effort, which for 70 years kept the peace and delivered prosperity to millions of people while standing firm against the Soviet threat, helping end the Bosnian War and combating extremism in Afghanistan.

This trans-Atlantic partnership is still vital. But how, and how well, it will function as American leadership recedes is unclear. So far, no one is talking about dissolving NATO; Europe still depends for its security on America's nuclear and conventional arsenals. But Ms. Merkel's remarks underscored profound divisions between Europe and the United States that have one clear beneficiary, President Vladimir Putin of Russia, who has longed for the alliance, Moscow's Cold War adversary, to unravel.

Before Mr. Trump attended his first meetings of NATO and the Group of 7 last week, European leaders hoped they could bring him around on critical issues. That now seems like a pipe dream. Mr. Trump doubled-down on his most destructive campaign impulses by hectoring the other members at length for what he called their insufficient levels of military spending, and by refusing to reaffirm NATO's bedrock mutual defense commitment. He also broke with the allies on other issues. He offered a more conciliatory line on Russia and refused, despite their entreaties, to endorse the Paris agreement on climate change.

When he returned home, Mr. Trump stoked the fires more, complaining in a tweet that Germany pays "far less than they should on NATO & military. Very bad for U.S. This will change." His remarks showed no appreciation for how NATO works, how Ms. Merkel is in fact pushing her country to spend more on defense — and, more generally, how comments like this insult a trusted ally.

Europe's dismay could only have mistrust was deepened when Congress seemed to cheer cheered Mr. Trump on. Republicans, who control both houses, and who once prided themselves as stewards of national security, have shown little concern about the way Mr. Trump treated NATO members or about the links between Mr. Trump's aides and Russia. In a statement, Senator Bob Corker, chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, gushed over Mr. Trump's trip to Europe and the Middle East, saying it was "executed to near perfection."

These new stresses in the alliance came at a bad time. Europe has been battered by the Greek financial crisis; the rise of authoritarianism in Turkey, Hungary and Poland; Britain's decision to withdraw from the European Union; and the flow of refugees from the Middle East and North Africa.

Meanwhile, Mr. Putin, always eager to expand Russian influence, has exploited every weakness and crisis, along with instigating a few of his own. Russia invaded Ukraine and has interfered in electoral campaigns in the United States, France and Germany. Mr. Putin has meddled in the Baltic States, cultivated far-right-wing allies in Hungary and wooed President Recep Tayyip Erdogan of Turkey on NATO's eastern flank. He is now courting Italy with a savvy ambassador to Rome and financing for anti-establishment parties.

There are some bright spots. One is that Ms. Merkel seems committed to playing a lead role as the United States pulls back; another is France's election of President Emmanuel Macron, who has demonstrated a willingness to work in partnership with Ms. Merkel. The two won't always see eye-to-eye, but Germany needs France and Mr. Macron is a good fit.

Mr. Macron's first foreign visit was to Berlin. And just days later, he has shown that he is not afraid of taking charge. After greeting Mr. Trump, Mr. Macron acknowledged deliberately keeping their handshake going to make a political point: "I'm not your patsy. He made an equally strong point when he met in Versailles with Mr. Putin, who had probably worked to aid his rival, the far-right presidential candidate Marine Le Pen. Mr. Macron gave Mr. Putin full honors but did not mince words on Russia's destructive role in the Syrian conflict, in Ukraine and in its dissemination of fake news. The message was one Europe should stick to in the future: No major issue can be resolved without talking to Russia, but differences with Moscow should not be swept under the rug.

For now, it looks as if it is up to Ms. Merkel and Mr. Macron to keep the alliance alive and relevant, at least until Mr. Trump wakes up to the need for American leadership or until another, wiser president replaces him.

How to fix the health bill

Avik Roy

Throughout the 2016 campaign — and for months afterward — Donald Trump promised that his replacement for Obamacare would provide "insurance for everybody." Last week's Congressional Budget Office report makes clear that the House Republican health care bill falls well short of that goal.

But we now have a road map for how Senate Republicans can do better: by ensuring that more low-income Americans can afford coverage.

First, some caution regarding the C.B.O.'s numbers. The C.B.O. is chock-full of committed and talented public servants, but the agency is neither omniscient nor infallible. In 2010, when the Affordable Care Act was signed into law by President Barack Obama, the C.B.O. predicted that by 2017, 23 million Americans would be enrolled in the law's new insurance exchanges. Only about 11 million actually are.

That's because the C.B.O. failed to

account for how the A.C.A.'s insurance regulations would drive premiums up for relatively healthy individuals. A new study by researchers at the Department of Health and Human Services finds that for people buying coverage on their own, premiums have more than doubled in the Obamacare era. Most adversely affected have been those whose incomes — while modest — were not low enough to qualify for sufficient amounts of the A.C.A.'s insurance subsidies.

While the C.B.O. was overly optimistic in 2010 about Obamacare, there's a strong case that it is being overly pessimistic about the new House bill, the American Health Care Act.

In earlier reports, the C.B.O. expressed its view that around two-thirds of the people who would no longer have insurance under the House bill would voluntarily choose not to buy it, because the bill repeals Obamacare's individual mandate. Under the A.H.C.A., there would no longer be a fine for staying out of the health insurance market.

Insurers don't believe that the individual mandate is having anywhere near the effect that the C.B.O. assigns to it. There's another, more basic point: If

Americans have to be forced to buy A.C.A.-based insurance, that means Americans don't think that the insurance Obamacare is offering them is a good value on its own merits.

But there are real problems with the House G.O.P. bill, problems that Senate Republicans must fix.

The Senate should listen to Trump and "add more dollars."

Contrary to recent headlines, the biggest problem with the A.H.C.A. — one that the C.B.O. highlighted — is not how the bill deals with the

problem. While that part of the bill needs to be fixed, it represents a smaller problem.

Indeed, the biggest problem with the Republican bill — by far — is that it fails people who can't afford health insurance, regardless of their pre-existing health status.

House Speaker Paul Ryan insisted that the A.H.C.A. contain a federally defined, one-size-fits-all tax credit that provides a nearly uniform level of as-

sistance regardless of need.

Whether you're ill or in good health, the tax credit remains the same. If you live in a high-cost area or a low-cost area, the tax credit remains the same. If you and your spouse make \$150,000 a year, you get the same amount of assistance as people barely reaching the poverty line.

Mr. Ryan's insistence on uniformity means that the A.H.C.A. doesn't provide enough financial aid to people who most need the help: that near-elderly and the working poor. That feature of the bill would price millions out of the health insurance market.

The Republican bill is supposed to "repeal and replace." But for older individuals newly enrolled in Medicaid because of the A.C.A., the House bill's replacement is virtually useless.

Republicans routinely ask the poor to work harder to lift themselves out of poverty. But under the A.H.C.A., those who work longer hours or earn a raise or take a second job to cross the poverty line will be slapped with a gigantic health insurance tab. For those in their 60s, the cost of crossing the poverty line could exceed \$10,000 a year.

This is terrible policy. But the Senate has the ability to fix it. As the president tweeted on Sunday, the solution is to "add more dollars" to the bill to support the working poor, while eliminating subsidies for high earners.

Hidden within the House bill is the kernel of a solution. Section 202 of the A.H.C.A. contains a transitional schedule of tax credits for the years 2018 and 2019 that represents a hybrid between Obamacare and the Paul Ryan approach. It adjusts the government's level of premium assistance by age, like the Ryan plan, while also capping any individual's exposure to high premiums, like Obamacare.

If the Senate were simply to remove the House bill's uniform tax credit and continue the hybrid model past 2019 through 2020 and beyond, the bill would most likely get a better coverage score from the C.B.O. The Senate would be able to direct more financial assistance to those who need it, whether because of old age, ill health or low income. Indeed, the Senate could tweak the exact formulas for age and income adjustment, to maximize the number of people with health insurance in the most cost-effective way.

By doing so, the Senate might actually make the individual health insurance market better, by reopening its doors to the young and the healthy. Over time, we might find that more people, not fewer, have gained coverage under such a reform.

It would be a success that would belong not to the Republicans alone but also to the Democrats who in 2010 forced Republicans to come to the table with their own ideas. And maybe — just maybe — after eight years of partisan wrangling, we'd be able to find common ground on health care once again.

AVIK ROY is president of the Foundation for Research on Equal Opportunity and a former policy adviser to Mitt Romney, Rick Perry and Marco Rubio.



THEO KRAZ

Lessons for today from 1917

Ivan Krastev
Contributing Writer

SOFIA, BULGARIA Our reading diet these days is filled with anniversaries and scandals. This year, bookstores are being invaded by an army of new books related to the centenary of the Russian Revolution. And on the scandal front, not a day seems to pass without a new disturbing, inflammatory indignity besmirching the Trump administration.

Could the newly published books on the Bolshevik Revolution help us make sense of President Trump's Russia-centered scandals? You might be surprised.

Many contemporary writings see the 1917 revolution as little more than a German plot. This view is particularly popular now in Russia itself, where "revolution" is considered a dirty word. People are rarely content to explain revolutions by using commonplace political logic. History's changing events are interpreted as either something inevitable like the work of God or the intervention of a foreign power. And with Communism kaput, many of the popular histories of the Russian Revolution have now focused their attention from the rise of the masses toward espionage narratives that show how the Germans, as Winston Churchill put it, "transported Lenin in a sealed truck like a plague bacillus from Switzerland to Russia."

Now, as many people see Mr. Trump's election victory as little more than the effect of a Russian plot, if we understand why the Germans helped the Bolsheviks in 1917 and what happened after, we could get a better grasp on why Moscow might have been tempted to help the Trump campaign in 2016 and what we can expect next.

tionary dreams. If the maverick Bolshevik had been German, the authorities would have tossed him in jail. But Lenin was Russian, and the German high command saw Russia's revolution as helpful to Germany in the war. Likewise, it seems that Moscow's main goal in 2016 was major disruption over all else. To unduly stress ideological or other links between the Kremlin and the American president would be misleading.

Russia's history also teaches us that for a revolution-minded politician like Lenin, the real enemy is internal. In the way Germany saw the Bolsheviks as instruments for achieving German war aims, Lenin saw Germany as an instrument for achieving his revolution. Something similar is probably true for Mr. Trump. And although it's unlikely that the president personally conspired with the Russians, he would probably not have objected to others exploiting Russia's support to win. Mr. Trump's only other priority aside from "America first" is "electoral victory first."

This makes me believe that contrary

to the fears of many of Mr. Trump's critics, even if the president and his campaign knowingly or unwittingly collaborated with Moscow during the election, this in no way means the new administration will be friendly to Russia or controlled by it. Among other things, for the Russians to control Mr. Trump,

the president would have to have his own degree of self-control — which he doesn't. Paradoxically, Russia's alleged interference in the American election in favor of Mr. Trump makes United States-Russia cooperation less likely.

The White House's fear of being perceived as soft on Moscow trumps its willingness to work with Russia. This may indeed become the hallmark of the administration's foreign policy.

What can the Russian Revolution teach us about Mr. Trump? A lot more than you might imagine.



Vladimir Lenin's arrival at Finland station in Petrograd.

BOYKOV/VEA/GETTY IMAGES

IVAN KRASDEV, the chairman of the Center for Liberal Strategies and a permanent fellow at the Institute for Human Sciences in Vienna, is the author of the forthcoming "After Europe."



Trump's words in court

Kate Shaw

The most striking aspect of last Thursday's opinion by the United States Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit, which rejected the Trump administration's latest effort to revive its travel ban for individuals from six predominantly Muslim countries, was its reliance on Donald Trump's own words as candidate, president-elect and president. The court leaned particularly heavily on his now-famous campaign statement that he was "calling for a total and complete shutdown of Muslims entering the United States."

The government's lawyers argued that those words had no bearing on the order's lawfulness, but the court disagreed. The president's words, the court found, led to only one conclusion: The order was driven by "religious intolerance, animus, and discrimination," not a genuine national-security need (as the order claimed), and was thus most likely unconstitutional.

What weight, if any, should the words of a United States president have in court? It's not a question the Supreme Court has ever answered. But if the Trump administration asks the court to hear this case, and the court agrees to do so, the outcome will almost certainly turn on this issue.

I believe the correct view is that the speech of a candidate or even a president should not ordinarily be relevant to a court's determination of the meaning or lawfulness of government action. This is especially true when the words of the president conflict with executive branch positions offered in other, more authoritative settings and documents.

But there is an exception to this rule: namely, when presidential speech supplies evidence of intent or purpose of established legal relevance — for example, when assessing a claim of religious discrimination. Thus the Fourth Circuit was right to rely on Mr. Trump's words in rejecting the adminis-

tration's effort to revive its travel ban, and the Supreme Court should follow suit.

It is generally a mistake for a court to give legal force to statements whose goals are those of political mobilization or persuasion — or anything other than the articulation of considered legal positions. In most cases, the authoritative statements of the legal positions of the United States are contained in official settings and documents like the arguments and briefs presented to courts by the Department of Justice. Privileging such documents ensures

What weight should the words of a U.S. president have in court?

that the careful processes and expertise they reflect are not overshadowed by casual presidential utterances or ill-considered tweets. The judges who have objected to using Mr. Trump's words against him in the travel ban litigation have been motivated by such concerns. Alex Kozinski, a judge on the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit, which in February affirmed an order halting the initial travel ban, took particular issue with his colleagues' use of campaign speech, noting that "the panel has approved open season on anything a politician or his staff may have said." Judge Paul V. Niemeyer of the Fourth Circuit, dissenting from last week's opinion, agreed, expressing alarm that in the future a court could "have free rein to select whichever expression of a candidate's developing ideas best supports its desired conclusion."

These judges are right to be cautious: We don't want to give every tweet on every topic the color of law. And to a point they're correct on the merits: The speech of a president should not usually be relevant to a court's determination of the meaning or lawfulness of government action.

The Supreme Court, for example, acted properly in disregarding Presi-

dent Barack Obama's statement that the Affordable Care Act's individual mandate was "absolutely not a tax increase." When the case before the Supreme Court, Justice Antonin Scalia did press the federal government's lawyer to explain the president's remarks. But in the end, none of the opinions in the case even mentioned the remarks, presumably because the court concluded they were irrelevant to the constitutional question of Congress's power to regulate health care. Most presidential speech isn't legally significant.

Again, there are important exceptions. The Supreme Court has long held that in the context of religious discrimination claims, proof of government purpose is required to establish a constitutional violation. And countless courts have relied on statements by government officials in such cases. In 1993, in a case concerning whether a city ordinance in Florida impeded the free exercise of religion, the Supreme Court held that government purpose could be gleaned from "contemporaneous statements made by members of the decision-making body."

Giving decisive weight to all presidential statements would be a bad idea. It would unduly empower the president, allowing him to circumvent internal executive-branch processes, and it would also unduly disempower him, preventing him from speaking freely about topics that might have litigation consequences. Each effect would be problematic, whether we're talking about President Trump or any other president.

In the case of the travel ban, however, given the relevance of Mr. Trump's words to determining its purpose, the courts can rule that the president's speech is germane in this particular instance — without opening Pandora's box.

KATE SHAW is an associate professor at the Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law and a director of the Floersheimer Center for Constitutional Democracy.

How we really die



Frank Bruni

Over recent years, without much media fanfare, something fascinating occurred, a reminder that for all the ways in which we seem to be sliding backward, we're lurching forward, too.

The developing world turned a corner — thanks to medical advances, rising wealth and more — and communicable diseases like malaria and AIDS now kill fewer of its people than non-communicable ones like heart disease, strokes, respiratory ailments and diabetes do.

But awareness of this progress lags far behind it. According to the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation, noncommunicable diseases were responsible for 67 percent of deaths in low- and middle-income countries in 2015, but only about 1 percent of the foreign aid and donations dedicated to health care was aimed at preventing and treating them.

That discrepancy is showcased in an open letter that Mike Bloomberg publishes every year to explain the direction of Bloomberg Philanthropies, which gives away hundreds of millions of dollars annually, much of it to promote health.

He provided me with an advance copy and sat down with me last week to underscore his plea that nonprofits and governments work harder to fight noncommunicable diseases.

Viewed one way, he's trying to globalize priorities from his time as mayor of New York, where he waged wars against smoking and trans fats and coaxed people to eat smarter and exercise more.

"In 12 years in City Hall, life expectancy increased by three years," he said, referring to New York during his mayoralty, which ended in 2013. As he spoke, he nibbled from several bowls of snacks — blackberries, grapes, carrots — arrayed colorfully before us like props in a movie devoted to an obvious theme.

I asked him if his public crusades had made him a private health nut. Yes and no, he said, coping to too much bread and conceding that he means to exercise daily but often manages only four times a week. He hasn't smoked in many decades, though.

"A friend of mine once said the way to stop smoking is to close your eyes, think about the person you dislike the most," Bloomberg, 75, told me. "Now, do you want to be at their funeral or you want them to be at yours?"

He was making a point about how difficult it can be for people to change their behavior, which is a big part of foiling noncommunicable diseases. It's also one reason those diseases don't always generate the concern that something like Zika or Ebola does. They're regarded as the sufferer's fault.

There are other reasons, too. A communicable disease can spread fast and far and kill indiscriminate of age.

But heart disease, respiratory ailments and diabetes — all among the world's top 10 causes of death — also end the lives of many people still in their prime. And they're often abetted by environmental factors within government's influence.

We've used taxes to lessen the appeal of cigarettes and can take a similar approach with sugary beverages. We can construct parks and bike lanes. We can clean the air. We can improve road safety; traffic injuries were the 10th leading cause of death globally in 2015, according to the World Health Organization.

Bloomberg is advocating all of this in a new role as the W.H.O.'s global ambassador for noncommunicable diseases. And his charitable organization's Partnership for Healthy Cities provides money and other support to local governments around the world that implement policies to prevent noncommunicable diseases, road injuries or both.

A decade ago, his organization funded two programs along these lines; now it funds nine. He has committed more than \$800



Michael Bloomberg, the former New York City mayor, at the C40 Cities Award presentation in Mexico City last December.

million over the next six years to these efforts.

He noted that while many countries have cut smoking rates, none has made significant inroads against obesity, maybe because people don't deem someone else's extreme overweightness to be a concern of theirs, the way secondhand smoke is.

"You have 80 percent that want you to stop smoking," he said. "Zero percent want you to stop being obese." People need to understand better the wages of obesity, but such education isn't easy.

"What percentage of the public would know the name of the vice president of the United States?" he said, noting that many Americans don't.

"It's hard to get a message out." Ah, politics. I knew we'd get there.

Bloomberg, an independent who opposed Donald Trump, said that Democrats never found the right message. "Hillary said, 'Vote for me because I'm a woman and the other guy's bad,'" he said.

They're still searching for the right issues and words, he said, and too many have visions of 2020 dancing in their heads.

"They'll step on each other and re-elect Donald Trump," he told me, estimating "a 55 percent chance he gets re-elected."

Fifty-five percent? Whether good for my longevity or not, I need a cookie.

FROM READERS

SINGAPORE'S MEDIA VALUES

"The Censor and the Vibrator," by Balli Kaur Jaswal (Op-Ed, May 22), criticized how the media is regulated in Singapore.

One can read and see almost anything in Singapore, in private and online. But we treat free broadcasts differently. Singaporeans, like Americans, expect free content to conform to community norms, and to be suitable for viewers of all ages. America's norms differ from Singapore's, but free content also conforms to standards that regulators deem appropriate for your society.

Just as Americans are offended by "wardrobe malfunctions" occurring on TV, Singaporeans object to the broadcast of adult themes like masturbation. Every country regulates its media in accordance with its own social norms. Singapore's approach is neither "insidious" nor "unsettling," but a reflection of our own values and social mores.

Ashok Kumar Mirpuri, Washington
The writer is Singapore's ambassador to the United States.

INDICTING A PRESIDENT

Re "Can a Sitting President Be Indicted?" by Adam Liptak (Striber, May 30): President Trump may be immune to criminal prosecution for acts committed after Jan. 20, but can a sitting president be charged for alleged crimes committed before becoming president?

The Paula Jones action against President Clinton seemed to raise Clinton's vulnerability to some 75 claims now working their way through the courts, to say nothing of whether the F.B.I. uncovers improper dealings with Russians before the inauguration.

Would a criminal finding against the president in any of those cases affect his stay in office, separate from an impeachment proceeding?

Carl Mezzoff, Stamford, Conn.

CORRECTION

An Op-Ed article on May 23 misidentified the writer Tony Wilson as being from England. It was Jesus College, Cambridge, not Jesus College, Oxford.

When it's O.K. to lie

POWELL, FROM PAGE 1

Even those who have suffered personally from terrorism can see the need for such secret contacts. Colin Perry, whose 12-year-old son, Tim, was blown up by an I.R.A. bomb in Warrington in 1993, said that if anyone had told him that his government was in touch with the I.R.A. as his son lay dying in his arms, he would have been horrified, but that if anyone had told him the same thing six months later, he would have been delighted — because he would have known his son had not died in vain, and that there would be peace.

In Spain, the Socialist government set up a similar deniable channel to ETA, the Basque separatist movement, that led to the end of the conflict in 2011. The Spanish government ran the negotiations through an independent organization based in Switzerland and insisted its representatives should be not a minister but a local party official, so that it could deny there were official talks if their existence ever leaked.

President Juan Manuel Santos in Colombia used a secret channel to the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, known as the FARC, to start the talks that led to the peace agreement last year. The process was almost identical to ours with the I.R.A. The intermediaries would travel into the jungle to meet the guerrillas in their camps to negotiate their exfiltration and the beginning of the secret talks in Havana. We have seen similar secret channels to Hamas, the Palestinian group that rules Gaza, and to the Taliban in Afghanistan. We will probably see them in future with the terrorist militias in Syria and Iraq, the Nusra Front and the Islamic State, however hard that seems to imagine at the moment.

The problem with secret back channels, therefore, is not how bad the people at the other end are. The problems arise with the motivation for keeping the contacts secret and what you do with the channel. It is certainly

odd that Mr. Kushner's proposed channel to Russia was not from a government but from a transition team and that he went to such lengths to avoid government channels of communication. That could be explained by the desire to change policy from that of the Obama administration, but the choice of the closely monitored Russian ambassador as the secret go-between was clearly a mistake. This does not amount to a crime.

If the motive for deception, though, is to hide criminal activity rather than conduct a negotiation, then secret channels go wrong. The reason that the Iran-contra affair became such a scandal during the Reagan administration was that it was used to fund and train for the Contras fighting the Sandinistas in Nicaragua, in contravention of the Boland Amendment. That was why Colonel North and his cronies ended up in court, and, as Gallup reported, Reagan's approval ratings dropped to 47 percent from 63 percent.

A judgment can be made only when Mr. Kushner's motive for attempting to set up his secret channel is known. The point of a secret back channel, above all, is to set it up so that it remains confidential until its work is done. If news of it leaks, that is a fatal error — as Colonel North learned. In that respect, Mr. Kushner has already failed.

JONATHAN POWELL was the British government's chief negotiator in Northern Ireland from 1997 to 2007 and is the author of "Talking to Terrorists: How to End Armed Conflicts."

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Culture

'Bittersweet' resolution over looted art

AMSTERDAM

An old master painting seized by the Nazis will be sold at auction

BY NINA SIEGAL

It was 1937, Vienna, when a Jewish couple named Heinrich and Anna Maria Graf bought a vibrant 18th-century oil painting of the Grand Canal in Venice with the Punta Della Dogana in the background. The work held pride of place in their living room, the highlight of their small but treasured art collection.

One year later, Germany annexed Austria, and the Grafs and their twin 6-year-old daughters, Erika and Eva, had to flee the country. They put their art into storage and left for Italy, then France — where Heinrich was held for more than a year in an internment camp for Jews — then Spain and Portugal and ultimately New York. By the time they settled in Forest Hills, in the New York City borough of Queens, it was 1942, and all their possessions had been looted by the Nazis.

The prized painting became the focus of a 70-year recovery effort by the Graf family and its heirs — and one that is now ending on an ambivalent note. Sotheby's in London is preparing to sell the work, by the artist Michele Marieschi, at an old masters auction in July, following a restitution settlement between the heirs and a trust on behalf of the now-deceased owner, whose identity has not been released. The auction house has estimated the painting's value at \$650,000 to \$905,000.

This painful and circuitous history reflects how looted artworks that have been in private hands for decades are coming to market after settlement agreements with the rightful owners, in a way that tries to address their tainted past. These agreements may not result in the return of the paintings to the heirs, but the compromise does provide at least a form of resolution and some compensation to the heirs, and brings the art back out of hiding.

The heirs of the Grafs were not able to recover the painting, "La Punta Della Dogana e San Giorgio Maggiore" (1739-40), because the deceased owner and the trust declined to return the work. Instead, the parties reached an agreement that involves sharing the proceeds of the Sotheby's sale. No one involved would disclose details of the deal.

Stephen Tauber, a son-in-law of the Grafs, said in a telephone interview that the resolution was "bittersweet." His wife, Erika, died in 2012 at 79; her sister, Eva, lives in a retirement community in Canton, Mass.

"Our preferred solution would have been to get the painting back for my parents-in-law during their lifetime, or fail-



"La Punta Della Dogana e San Giorgio Maggiore" by Michele Marieschi. The painting, the focus of a 70-year recovery effort, will be auctioned by Sotheby's, and the heirs of its prewar owners will share in the proceeds.

ing that, to their heirs," he said. "We brokered a compromise, which we signed. It is not really satisfactory, but it is acceptable. It was the best that we could achieve. Ideally, it would have been returned in total to our family. That wasn't possible, so we settled for what we could get."

A representative of the trust did not respond to a request for comment.

Like many paintings looted during World War II, "La Punta Della Dogana e San Giorgio Maggiore" went through several hands after the Grafs had to leave it behind. Their Vienna storage facility, Schenker, informed them that the contents of their storage locker had been confiscated by the Gestapo on Nov. 16, 1940, according to Andrew Fletcher, head of sales for Sotheby's old masters paintings department in London.

The painting's exact whereabouts during the war years is unknown, but in 1952 a minor art dealer, Henry James Alfred Spilner, sold it at auction to a leading London old masters dealer, Edward Speelman, who was probably unaware of the painting's history, Mr. Fletcher said. Mr. Speelman sold it a year later to the now-dead owner.

The Graf family had been searching for the painting since 1946, when Heinrich Graf filed a claim for the work in Austria. In 1968, the two daughters, assisted by the Art Loss Register, a database of lost and stolen art that also provides search services, posted an advertisement in The Art Newspaper seeking information.

Charles Beddington, an old masters painting dealer who had worked as a specialist at Christie's, recognized the

"Ideally, it would have been returned in total to our family. That wasn't possible, so we settled for what we could get."

work, which he had seen in the home of the owner some 15 years earlier.

"I knew where it was," Mr. Beddington said in a telephone interview. "But then I thought I'd better ask Christie's if it was O.K. to reveal the client's name, and they said no."

The sisters asked a British judge to issue an injunction against Christie's to release the name of the owner; after a favorable ruling, Christie's disclosed the name to the family, according to Mr. Tauber. (He declined to share it.) The Art Loss Register and the Vienna Israel-

ite Community then tried to reach out to the owner on behalf of the sisters, but to no avail: He refused to talk.

The owner died in 2013, Mr. Tauber said, and the painting came into the hands of a trust. In 2015, the trust contacted Christopher Marinello at Art Recovery International, which specializes in mediating restitution claims. That is when negotiations with the heirs began.

The painting, though prized by the Graf family, is not widely considered to be a major work. Jonathan Green, an owner of the Richard Green Gallery in London, which specializes in old master paintings, said that Sotheby's price estimate for the July auction seemed fair.

"It's not the best Marieschi I've ever seen, not by a long shot, but it's a fair one," he said. "The price is right, presuming it's in good condition." He placed

Marieschi "fourth in the pecking order of 18th-century Venetian view paintings," after Canaletto, Guardi and Bellotto. "I've seen about 20 to 30 of his works at auction in the last 20 years, and the exceptional ones can sell for as much as \$2 million," he added.

The Graf family and the estate reached the restitution agreement in December. Mr. Tauber, 85, and his son, Andrew Tauber, 54, a lawyer in Washington, were able to spend an hour with the painting when it was in the Paris Sotheby's offices in April.

"Finally, finally, after decades of hearing about this painting, I was getting to see it with my own eyes," Andrew Tauber said. "Knowing that my grandparents, with whom I was very close, loved this work so much, it was a very emotional experience."

Why he bought it

TOKYO

The billionaire who paid a record amount for a Basquiat canvas explains

BY MOTOKO RICH AND ROBIN POGREBIN

As Sotheby's contemporary art auction heated up in New York in mid-May, the Japanese billionaire Yusaku Maezawa sat on the floor of his living room here, streaming the auction live on his laptop and relaying bids for Jean-Michel Basquiat's 1982 skull painting on his iPhone to a Sotheby's specialist. After the price sailed past the \$80 million guaranteed minimum, Mr. Maezawa — who hadn't gone into the sale with his own limit in mind — felt that the competitive bidding reinforced the work's enormous value.

"I decided to go for it," Mr. Maezawa said in an interview at his home.

As Mr. Maezawa was bidding, Basquiat's sister Jeanine Basquiat was about 7,000 miles away in New Jersey, hoping the auction would turn out well. When she heard that Mr. Maezawa had paid \$110.5 million — the record price for an American artist at auction — she called her older sister, Lisane Basquiat, in California. "There wasn't a lot to say," Lisane said in a telephone interview. "We were speechless."

If members of the Basquiat family are keepers of the Basquiat flame, Mr. Maezawa has now ensured it will continue burning, at least in the near future — in no small part because he posted about his purchase on Instagram and Twitter right after the auction.

"Vast numbers of people are aware of Jean-Michel Basquiat all over the world," said the dealer Jeffrey Deitch, a Basquiat expert, "and that is really only because of the immense price."

Whether or not the sale recalibrates the market for this Brooklyn-born artist, who died of a heroin overdose at 27, remains to be seen. While collectors are



The Japanese billionaire Yusaku Maezawa in his Tokyo home. He purchased Jean-Michel Basquiat's "Untitled" for \$110.5 million.

likely to consign their works by him in an effort to ride this wave, few top paintings are expected to come up for sale soon. And auction prices don't necessarily translate into intrinsic value.

Still, most agree that the Basquiat sale has cemented his place in the revenue pantheon with Pablo Picasso and Francis Bacon; confirmed that he is not some passing trend; and forced major museums to acknowledge that, by not having the artist in their collections, they passed over a crucial figure in art history.

"It's an artist who we missed," said Ann Temkin, the chief curator of paintings and sculpture at the Museum of Modern Art, which does not own a single Basquiat work. "We didn't bring his

paintings into the collection during his life or thereafter."

In part, Mr. Maezawa's purchase may help correct this omission, given that he plans to open a museum to showcase his collection in Chiba, his hometown. "I want to show beautiful things and share them with everyone," he said, adding that he plans to lend pieces to museums around the world. "It would be a waste just to keep it all to myself."

Technically, however, his Basquiat is in private hands rather than public institutions, as are the other examples widely considered the artist's best work — generally paintings made from 1981 to 1983. Given Basquiat's short career (1980-87), there are simply not a lot of great Basquiat works out there. (Peter Brant,

Elis Broad and Philip Niarchos are among the collectors who have them.)

"You're talking about a handful of masterpieces, which are distributed among a few collectors who are not sellers," said the art dealer Bret Gorvy, a former Christie's chairman. "You're going to have to wait a long time if you are a major collector to see another extraordinary painting like this."

Even the Basquiat estate does not have many leading pieces left, art experts say; the two it sold at Phillips this season, for example, each went for under \$4 million.

The Basquiat sisters, in a joint telephone interview, said they didn't need the price to tell them their brother's work belonged in the history books. But

it was still nice to have Jean-Michel's auction value enter the stratosphere. "It's humbling and satisfying to see this happen 30 years after he passed away," Lisane said. "We have been walking on Cloud 9."

The sisters had never seen this particular painting before — it had not been on the market since 1984, when it sold for \$19,000 to Jerry and Emily Spiegel — so Sotheby's invited them to New York to view it in advance. Lisane called it "breathtaking."

Mr. Maezawa, too, got a private pre-sale viewing. "He's a very serious collector," said Amy Cappelletto, a Sotheby's spokeswoman, "hugely engaged."

While he "didn't expect the price to go that high," Mr. Maezawa said his love for Basquiat runs deep — he paid the previous high price for the artist last year (\$57.3 million). And he saw that others felt the same, including one other buyer willing to go the distance (later revealed to be the casino magnate Frank J. Fertitta III), since the two wound up in a bidding war.

"I learned that so many people wanted to have this piece of art so much," Mr. Maezawa said. "I was sure that my eye was certain."

Mr. Maezawa, who is 41, said he started collecting about 30 years ago, and the apartment he rents in Tokyo is testament to his passions for art — Richard Prince's "Runaway Nurse" (\$9.6 million at Christie's last year) in the stairwell; a Roy Lichtenstein in the dining room; a large Christopher Wool (\$33.9 million) in the living room, along with two Calder mobiles.

Mr. Maezawa is also seen as ushering in a new chapter of collecting in Japan, a country previously known for the Impressionist art bubble of the '80s. He is a collector "who became a businessman, and not a businessman who became an art collector," said Aki Ishizaka, the former head of Sotheby's in Japan and now an art adviser.

Curled up in a scarlet red armchair designed by the French designer Jean Royère, Mr. Maezawa — who does not work with an art adviser — said he was driven entirely by his love of art and not

financial investment. "I just follow my instinct," he said. "When I think it's good, I buy it."

Having forgone college to form an indie rock band — he was the drummer — Mr. Maezawa started his company in 1998, now the large Japanese online fashion mall, Zozotown. His net worth of about \$3.5 billion makes him the 14th richest person in Japan.

Given a culture here in which people are typically reluctant to flaunt their wealth — buyers at last year's Tokyo Art Fair said they did not even want their wives to know about their purchases — Mr. Maezawa is considered something of a renegade.

He is also a flashy presence on social media, posting photos of his purchased artworks on Instagram — along with pictures of his Bombardier Global 6000 private jet and collection of watches by Patek Philippe and Richard Mille.

By contrast, the Basquiat sisters say they guard their privacy, having taken over management of the estate — along with their stepmother Nora — from their father, Gerard, who died in 2013.

"Jeanine and I have been Basquiat since the day we were born," Lisane said. Although they take pride in their brother, she added, "we also have our own lives."

The sisters said Jean-Michel's "genius" was evident early on. "He was creative, and that's what fed him — he absorbed everything," Jeanine said. "He saw himself as someone who was going to be big."

Lisane added: "He always had a pen in hand and something to draw on or write on. He got into the zone, and it was a beautiful thing to watch."

When the hammer came down on the Basquiat last month, Mr. Maezawa said he felt overwhelmed and relieved, "like an athlete who wins a gold medal and cries."

Asked whether he aimed to buy another major Basquiat in the future, Mr. Maezawa said with a puckish smile, "Don't you think two is enough?"

Makiko Inoue and Hisako Ueno contributed reporting from Tokyo.

Mr. Courtroom writes a beach book

John Grisham is releasing his 30th novel, and this one is lawyerless

BY JANET MASLIN

John Grisham's publisher, Doubleday, got a nice surprise last January. Grisham, whose yearly delivery of a legal thriller is as reliable as the sunrise, had written a little something extra on the sly: a lawyerless caper. It had a picturesque Florida setting, a fun-filled story about book lovers of many stripes (from those who write them to those who steal them) and a heroine who spent time in a bikini and sandals. Mr. Courtroom had written a beach book. His first.

"Camino Island," his 30th novel, will be out Tuesday, but in mid-May he was already getting a huge kick out of what a surprise it would be to his fans. As he sat in the lobby of the Mercer Hotel in New York's SoHo neighborhood, backed by a wall of books too fashionably designed to be his and dressed in non-black (two plaids, glasses hanging from his neck), the 62-year-old guy who has sold nearly 300 million books went completely unspotted as he talked about his career's latest plot twist. Does anybody ever recognize him in New York? "Never!" And he likes it that way.

Grisham and his wife, Renee, dreamed up the idea for "Camino Island" on a drive from their home outside Charlottesville, Va., to their beach house in Florida. Its working title was the name of the place where they have a vacation home, but he eventually changed it for reasons of privacy. Its cover still looks just like the view from the Grishams' boardwalk to the beach.

It was Renee who suggested working literary treasures into the plot, which involves the theft from Princeton University of the original manuscripts of the five novels written by F. Scott Fitzgerald — or "FITZ-gerald," as the Arkansas-born, longtime Mississippian Grisham pronounces it. The book features two not-quite-adversaries: Bruce Cable, a rare-books dealer on Camino Island, and Mercer Mann, a stymied young writer hired to get close to him.

Grisham briefly thought the novel might include parts written by his wife. He wanted her to write the chapters involving Mercer, the female lead. "By the time we got to Florida 10 hours later she had made up her mind: She's not writing a word of this," Grisham said. Nor has she written a word of any of her husband's other books either.

Grisham collects rare books by Fitzgerald ("I do not have 'The Great Gatsby' because it's very rare and very expensive. I can't bite the bullet"), Hemingway, Steinbeck and Faulkner, all of whom were candidates to star in the story. But Faulkner wrote too many books to steal. The locations of Steinbeck's and Hemingway's manuscripts are too scattered. Only Fitzgerald had a conveniently portable five-book collection stored in a single place, Princeton's Firestone Library.

As a point of principle, Grisham never set foot in there as he worked out the totally credible unfolding of the fictional theft. For anyone who wonders where he gets the precise details on which his books' suspense depends, the answer isn't shoe leather. It's often Google. "I faked every bit of it," he boasted. He wants as little real information as possible in order to avoid inspiring copycat crime. And he enjoys the challenge. "I love piecing together intricate thoughts that people find compulsively readable



RYAN PFLUGER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

John Grisham's legal thrillers have included "A Time to Kill," "The Firm," "The Client" and "The Pelican Brief."

and they can't put down," he volunteered, and he will never need a better blurb than that. Literary status is not what he cares about. Selling books is.

Grisham is garrulous and funny when talking about himself, much more so than the tone of rectitude in some of his books might suggest. But another unexpected side of him also stands out: the accountant. (He has written books called "The Abduction," "The Accused," "The Activist," "The Appeal" and "The Associate." "The Accountant" was a movie that had nothing to do with him.) Much is made of the fact that Grisham, whose father was a construction worker and cotton farmer, went to law school at Ole Miss and served from 1983 to 1990 in the Mississippi House of Representatives. Not much is made of the fact that he also has a bachelor's degree in accounting. He still has that old fiscal pragmatism when it comes to the

state of the Grishamverse.

His breakout hit wasn't his first book, "A Time to Kill" (1989). It was "The Firm," which came out two years later. He has very happy memories of 1991, and mentions that year a lot. It was the first year friends sent him pictures of people reading his books in the wild.

But it was also the year he made what was arguably his biggest financial blunder. A small publisher, Wynwood Press, had printed 5,000 copies of "A Time to Kill," many of which wound up stacked unsold in Grisham's office. He got rid of them. Bad idea, especially for a guy who now collects first editions. Doubleday bought the rights to republish the debut novel in 1991, after Grisham's reputation had been established and after the author had passed on the opportunity to secure the rights himself.

"My agent at the time advised me against it," he said. "I got a \$15,000 ad-

vance for 'A Time to Kill,' and he did not want to cough up his 15 percent of \$15,000! I was too dumb to know it and too naïve, and no one knew what was coming." And where does "A Time to Kill" stand now? "It's pushing 20," he said, as in 20 million copies sold. " 'S a lot of books."

Sure is. But one of Grisham's conversational habits is to say, "I don't spend much time worrying about it," after showing just how thoroughly he's thought something through. At the beginning of his career, Grisham thought about movie sales all the time. "If you look at the first four, five movies" — "The Firm," "The Pelican Brief," "The Client," "A Time to Kill" — "they made them quickly, they paid top dollar." Those were the days when he and Michael Crichton were one-upping each other with best-selling books and lucrative movie adaptations. Grisham and

Crichton hadn't met but "we had the biggest racket in the world. He would sell a book for one dollar more than I got, and I would come back the next year, back and forth. And they're throwing money at us. They would take the manuscripts before they were even published."

The movies worked, too, on a global scale. "They're on cable TV somewhere tonight, being recycled, and they still sell books — that's the amazing part. That model doesn't work anymore." Its enemy, he believes, is the superhero blockbuster that might make \$1 billion in China. It just so happens that "Camino Island," with its female lead, inviting location and huge plot whammy, is his most Hollywood-friendly book in years.

He doesn't worry much about book sales either, except he's very alert to the numbers. "The biggest change for me has been that I'm selling about half the books I sold before the Great Recession," he said. "Maybe a little bit more than half. This is discretionary spending, and people are not spending."

"The biggest change for me has been that I'm selling about half the books I sold before the Great Recession. Maybe a little bit more than half."

Whatever else Grisham does — and he has branched out into sports ("Calico Joe"), boyhood memories ("A Painted House"), a kid lawyer (the Theodore Boone series) and miscellaneous ("Skipping Christmas") — he absolutely has to write his October legal book. The financial terms for those are bigger, and so are the sales. "My readers have some patience when I step outside the thriller," he said. "But they really want the thriller. They want it every year."

The next traditional thriller, as yet untitled, will be about student debt, a subject that has lit a fire under him. It will be topical, like "The Confession" (2010), which was about the death penalty and mostly set in Texas — with a preening, ambitious governor who bore an amazing resemblance to Rick Perry. "Ah, well, no," Grisham jokily insisted. "Fictional character. Rick is a very devout Christian who doesn't drink, and the governor in 'The Confession' was drinking some very good bourbon every afternoon."

I asked Grisham why alcohol issues come up in so many of his books. Does he have an agenda, points he wants to make about drinking or recovery? "Nah. I've never been close to the edge of the cliff," he said. "I've been very careful. We have a wine collection. My wife is a very light drinker. We've all had friends who got in trouble. I have writer friends who battled it a long time, and it's not a pretty sight. But I really enjoy it so much that I don't want to quit."

This was an interesting moment for Renee Grisham to appear. She'd been out shopping, and she was a little taken aback when she heard her husband explain what he'd been discussing. "We're talking about drinkin' and what," he said, the Southern accent suddenly strong. "You're lookin' worried." Well, yeah, she was, but she seemed used to his loose cannon side. They have been married for 36 years.

As for why drinking and sobriety turn up in the books, including "Camino Island," he picked up the thread: "I write about a lot of writers and lawyers. Those two professions have produced a lot of world-class drunks. The legal profession's filled with guys and ladies who've abused it because of a bunch of factors.

I'm not really tolerant with excuses. Somebody says 'Well, he or she was driven to drink because of this, this and this.' Their problems were too much, and that's their excuse. I don't really buy that. I think it's a matter of self-control and being able to take care of yourself."

This is the old-school side of him. It's tough, but it suits stories of characters skating around the law. The part of him that advocates personal responsibility also has no patience for self-pity. "I tell my friends, 'Just stop whining. You're lucky to be where you are in life, you're lucky to be here, shut up. I don't want to hear it. Nobody wants to hear your gripes.'"

Grisham's friends, family, publisher and close associates are the only people who can reach him. He lives nearly off the grid outside Charlottesville and has an office in town, where he says he's seldom bothered. If there's an emergency he can be found, but he long ago decided he liked lying low. Watching Tom Cruise get screamed at by fans during the filming of "The Firm" was one learning experience. So were stories he heard at Square Books in Oxford, Miss. — the readers' and writers' shrine that he relocates to Camino Island in exact detail — from the writers Larry Brown, Willie Morris and Barry Hannah, who told him a book tour was a horrible thing.

But 25 years since he last toured, Grisham is going out into the world again. He will visit 12 cities to promote "Camino Island," doing Q. and A.s with local writers and meeting up to 200 fans at each stop. He still signs 2,000 copies of anything he publishes for Square Books; that's how much he loves the place, as well as a few other independent stores that get similar treatment. But he's needed his arm massaged after some marathon signings, so this time he's setting limits.

And looking forward to it enormously. What does he have to lose? He's someone who candidly says, "It's all about selling books," and the tour will certainly do that.

Readers of "Camino Island" will learn a lot about how Grisham sees the rest of the writing world. He has described in it everything from what it feels like to sit down and type "Chapter 1" (probably not bad, for him) to how a box of brand-new books smells.

In the novel, we mingle with several writers who gather at the fictional island, and together they present a Grisham's-eye view of what fellow authors look like to a superstar. The popular ones want literary credibility. The literary ones want to be more widely read. There's one "literary snob who can't sell and hates everybody who can," and a "Vampire Girl" who "hit pay dirt with a series about vampires and ghosts and some such junk." Most popular stereotypes are represented. E.L. James must vacation in another state.

Where's the John Grisham type? Maybe there's no such thing. There's only one of him, and that one was beginning to sound tired a couple of books ago. He mentioned how closely his books are tracked by his publisher, and that "The Whistler" (2016) has been a bigger success than "Rogue Lawyer" (2015). I murmured that that's because "Rogue Lawyer" wasn't as good. He shot me a "What?" and a momentary sidelong look. But then: "O.K. Doesn't hurt my feelings." And he's fine. He's not going to spend much time worrying about it.

Janet Maslin, a longtime film and book critic for The Times, is a frequent contributor to the paper.

Soul of the '60s

BOOK REVIEW

OTIS REDDING: AN UNFINISHED LIFE
By Jonathan Gould. *Illustrated.* 533 pp. Crown Archetype. \$30.

BY ALAN LIGHT

Fifty years ago this month, the rock community held its first large-scale gathering at the Monterey Pop Festival. For several of the performers — Jimi Hendrix, Janis Joplin, the Who — the event marked the moment of their discovery, at least by American listeners. For Otis Redding, though, Monterey represented a transformation of his audience.

Redding had already scored five Top 5 albums and more than a dozen Top 20 singles on the R & B charts, but he had never made a significant dent on the pop (that is, white) side. But closing the second night, dressed in a teal-green suit — in contrast to the tie-dyed or Victorian splendor of the hippies on stage and in the crowd — Redding mesmerized the festivalgoers with the overpowering emotion and astonishing depth of his voice. "Otis seemed to be drawing on a different dimension of feeling and experience than that of any other performer who would be heard at Monterey," Jonathan Gould writes in his impressive biography "Otis Redding: An Unfinished Life."

Later that summer, Redding re-

treated to a houseboat in Sausalito and, inspired by the brand-new "Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band" ("You got to listen to this," he said to his wife, Zelma. "This is *bad*."), began to explore new directions in his songwriting. Six months after Monterey, though, Redding was gone, killed at the age of 26 when his rickety private plane crashed into a frigid lake en route to a show in Madison, Wis. ("Sittin' on) The Dock of the Bay," released a few weeks after his death, would fulfill the promise of Monterey and go all the way to the top of the pop charts.

There have been several previous attempts to tell Redding's story (most recently, Mark Ribowsky's 2015 "Dreams to Remember"), and there has been talk for decades of a biopic about this titan of soul. Gould, author of the insightful Beatles history "Can't Buy Me Love," runs up against the same limitations all these efforts have faced: The singer did only a couple of interviews, and there's a fundamental lack of tension in the life of a person who virtually no one will say a bad word about. ("He wasn't just a magnificent talent," Redding's loyal manager Phil Walden said. "He was a magnificent man.")

Access to Redding's surviving family helps Gould flesh out his upbringing and offstage personality; he comes across as more quick-witted ("nobody ever taught him anything; he just knew everything," his sister Louise says) and cocky (while working as an



BRUCE FLEMING/ASSOCIATED PRESS

Otis Redding performing at the Monterey Pop Festival in California in June 1967.

orderly at a hospital, he slapped one of the doctors) than his usual simple, solid image.

Exhaustive research into Redding's early years as a performer reveals both his dedication and his uncertain musical vision. One fascinating figure is Johnny Jenkins, a local guitar hero in Redding's hometown, Macon, Ga.,

who takes Redding under his wing — opinions vary widely as to whether Jenkins was an underappreciated genius or an overrated showboat. He plays a key role in the story, though, when he blows his 1962 audition at Stax Records in Memphis and Redding, who had driven Jenkins and his band to the gig, is allowed a turn at the micro-

phone just to fill time at the end of the session.

His solemn, simmering performance of "These Arms of Mine" changed not just his own life, but the sound of pop music to come. "The utter simplicity of 'These Arms of Mine,'" Gould notes perceptively, "recalls such minimalist debuts as James Brown's 'Please, Please, Please' and Sam Cooke's 'You Send Me,' both of which served to highlight the distinctiveness of the singer's voice by giving him nothing but a feeling to work with."

Music historians like Peter Guralnick, Rob Bowman and Robert Gordon have all done essential work on the history of Stax, but Gould takes a contrary and provocative position on the label's relationship to its greatest star. He argues that while the Stax co-founder and head honcho Jim Stewart was scrupulous in paying his artists, creatively he was in way over his head; "his consistent misjudgment of records that proved to be hits" illustrated that he was "content to sit and wait for songs to walk in the door." Gould makes a convincing case that, while Redding's recordings are never less than compelling thanks to his remarkable voice, Stewart's shortcomings — he couldn't fathom the contemplative, almost folk-based "Dock of the Bay" — held Redding back as a songwriter and repeatedly stymied his popular momentum.

Though Redding wrote or co-wrote classics like "Respect" and "I've Been

Loving You Too Long," certainly much of his greatest work came as an interpretive singer, often of such seemingly unlikely material as "Satisfaction" (a rare example, Gould writes, of "a black artist soliciting the attention of white listeners by riding roughshod over one of the great pop songs of the day") or his showstopping, sweat-drenched version of "Try a Little Tenderness" ("an act of cultural appropriation, not accommodation").

Famously, Otis Redding couldn't dance worth a damn. And he wasn't flashy — he was happiest at his Big O Ranch in rural Georgia. (When he and Carla Thomas playfully trade insults on 1967's "Tramp," she says to Redding, "you're country" and he replies, "That's good.") But what his voice conveyed to listeners was an immediate, almost unparalleled connection; he could wring inconceivable intensity and complexity out of a minimal phrase and returned, most often, to the basic, raw power of love. He was, Gould writes, "soul music's greatest apostle of devotion."

For Otis Redding, the idea was simple, even when the people around him sometimes didn't get it. "Always think different from the next person," he once said. "Don't ever do a song as you heard somebody else do it."

Alan Light is the author of several books, including "The Holy or the Broken: Leonard Cohen, Jeff Buckley and the Unlikely Ascent of 'Hallelujah.'"

TRAVEL

On the water? That’s just part of the charm.

LODGING

BY ELAINE GLUSAC

Whether they sit beside city-splitting rivers, Alpine lakes or oceans, water-front hotels connect guests to nature, through merely a glance out the window. The following new and renovated European hotels and resorts enjoy the reflected light of their littoral locales.

DUBROVNIK, CROATIA

HOTEL EXCELSIOR DUBROVNIK

The 1913 landmark Hotel Excelsior Dubrovnik has long been celebrated for its location near the gates of the walled city overlooking the Adriatic Sea. In May, it will reopen after a seven-month renovation, promising 158 contemporary rooms divided between the original Villa Odak and a modern addition. Public spaces, including a light-flooded lobby and piano bar, have been reimagined, and outdoor dining, with views of the town’s red rooftops, remains. Rooms from 600 euros, or about \$655; adriaticluxury-hotels.com.

EXMOUTH, ENGLAND

LYMPSTONE MANOR

Opened in April in a former estate, Lymptstone Manor overlooks the protected Exe Estuary. Each of its 21 rooms is named after a bird found near the estuary, such as kingfisher or heron. The space blends modern elements like free-standing bathtubs in living areas with vintage chandeliers and fireplaces. Owned by the chef Michael Caines, the country-house hotel makes food its focus. The seven-course “Taste of the Estuary” menu features local seafood. Guests can walk off any food splurges on the site’s 28 acres. Rooms from 305 pounds, or about \$395, including breakfast; lymptonstmanor.co.uk.

HAMBURG, GERMANY

WESTIN HAMBURG

Designed by Herzog & de Meuron, the new Elbphilharmonie building on the Elbe River is best known for its concert hall within a glass crown atop a vintage brick warehouse. But it also contains the new 244-room Westin Hamburg, where curved window walls frame views to the river and the ships coming and going from the Hamburg port. The eighth-floor BridgeBar serves port and tonic



ADRIATIC LUXURY HOTELS, HOTEL EXCELSIOR



DESIGN HOTELS



LUNGARNO COLLECTION

Clockwise from top left: Hotel Excelsior Dubrovnik, Lymptstone Manor, Hotel Lungarno and Hôtel Les Roches Rouges.

cocktails and those panoramic views. An expansive spa features saunas, steam baths and an indoor swimming pool. Rooms from €273; westinhamburg.com.

MÁLAGA, SPAIN

GRAN HOTEL MIRAMAR

The new Gran Hotel Miramar in Málaga, built in 1926 as a hotel and serving more recently as a courthouse, returns to its original purpose. The palatial property sits opposite a Costa del Sol beach. Indoors, the arched atrium has

been restored as a lobby, and geometric-patterned screens, keyhole recesses and perforated metal pendant lamps lend an Andalusian accent to its 200 rooms. Opened in January, the hotel will add two outdoor swimming pools and a spa, and bring the number of restaurants and bars to five this spring. Rooms from €184; granhotelmiramarmálaga.com.

ST. MORITZ, SWITZERLAND

SUVRETTA HOUSE

The serene Alpine lakes Champfer and

Silvaplane lie below the stately Suvretta House, a 1912 mountain resort reopened this year with 181 refurbished rooms. Guests can take a chairlift above the Engadine Valley for mountain hikes, descend to walks along the chain of lakes threading the valley or just work up an appetite en route to two chalet restaurants run by the Suvretta House. Glaciers and lakes provide a scenic backdrop to tennis matches on the resort’s clay courts, swims in the outdoor pool or time out on lounge chairs scattered across the lawn. Rates from 660

Swiss francs, or about \$660, including breakfast; suvretthouse.ch.

IBIZA, SPAIN

NOBU HOTEL IBIZA BAY

The chef Nobu Matsuhisa and his partners are expanding their hospitality empire to a growing string of Nobu Hotels. In June, they plan to open Nobu Hotel Ibiza Bay on curvy Talamanca Bay. Its 152 guest rooms, most with sea views and all with terraces, adopt a palette of golden sand, pale driftwood and marine blues. There will be a Nobu restaurant,

with the chef’s signature Japanese-Peruvian dishes, and, in keeping with Ibiza’s reputation as a party place, a beach club. Rooms from €490; nobuhotelibizabay.com.

LONDON

GOOD HOTEL

The Good Hotel doesn’t just face the Thames River. It floats on it or, at least, on a port off the river, known as the Royal Victoria Dock. It’s a cable car ride across the water from Greenwich. The 148-room pop-up hotel crossed the North Sea to London from Amsterdam, opening last December for an intended five-year stay. Social sustainability is at its heart, with materials and food sourced locally and training for the unemployed. Most rooms are ship-style compact, but industrial public areas, including a work space, restaurant and a parklike roof space, encourage lingering in view of the river. Rooms from £80; goodhotel-london.com.

ST. RAPHAEL, FRANCE

HÔTEL LES ROCHES ROUGES

On the French Riviera, between St. Tropez and Cannes, the 50-room Hôtel Les Roches Rouges, a Design Hotel opening in May, pares an original 1950s building to its core to emphasize its sea-side location. Nautical accents and Provençal ceramics decorate rooms, some with ocean views (even from the marble bathrooms). Two saltwater pools edge the sea; the lap pool is cut into shorefront rock. Activities include snorkeling and paddleboarding. On land, guests can stroll the gardens, play pétanque or attend the outdoor cinema, all while listening to the surf. Rooms from €210; hotellesrochesrouges.com.

FLORENCE, ITALY

HOTEL LUNGARNO

The “lungarno” in Hotel Lungarno translates to “along the Arno,” the river that bisects Florence. The luxury hotel is just steps from the Ponte Vecchio bridge. Owned by the fashion-famous Ferragamo family, the hotel closed this year for renovations, and will reopen in June with 64 expanded rooms, including 10 spacious family rooms; 40 will overlook the Arno, as does the lounge terrace. The hotel also features a 400-piece art collection that includes works by Picasso and Cocteau. Rooms from €410; lungarnocollection.com.

Go local, with hotels’ help

ITINERARIES

Feeling Airbnb’s pinch, chains are offering more than just a place to sleep

BY LIZ MOYER

“Tourist” has become a dirty word in the hospitality business. The preferred word? Local.

Travelers who want to seem like locals can now sign up through hotels and tour operators for experiences arranged by locals. The latest to join the trend are Marriott International, which recently took a stake in PlacePass, the tour- and activity-booking start-up, and Royal Caribbean Cruises, which just introduced GoBe, a seller — online and through an app — of land-based tours and activities.

The experiences can be grand, and they can be unexpected. On PlacePass, guests can book a private tour of “Downtown Abbey” filming locations, pasta-making lessons with a local celebrity chef or family-friendly outings.

The new moves by these established companies reflect the increasing draw of home-sharing sites like Airbnb, which promise travelers the chance to live like a local, said Fiona O’Donnell, the director of travel and leisure research at Mintel, a market research firm.

“Guests want to feel like they are experiencing something in the design or the local flavor,” she said. “They want it to be memorable and part of the local scene, not like they are tourists.”

The moves are also an extension of a trend where hotels are moving away from a uniform experience, no matter where they are, to one in which properties blend into their communities and offer travelers access to local artists and businesses.

Hotel operators already have a trove

of data about the preferences and behavior of their frequent guests, said Bjorn Hanson, a professor at the Jonathan M. Tisch Center for Hospitality and Tourism at New York University. Now, he said, the hotels are using that data to get travelers to spend more money when they visit. “Growth is slowing, so they have to shift their model to target more spending” per guest, he said.

Last year, Airbnb started its own Trips booking site, on which local “experts” sell experiences they put together, like a seven-hour day working and dining in an urban garden with a Los Angeles documentary filmmaker, or a three-day burlesque dancing class in London, complete with a workshop on making nipple tassels.

TripAdvisor, the online travel booking site, bought Viator three years ago. The booking site’s nonhotel revenue rose 31 percent last year, while revenue from its main hotel-booking business was down slightly.

The start-up Hello Scout offers concierge service and activities booking via its website and text message for independent boutique hotels in six cities, including New York, San Francisco and Seattle.

Hotel guests use it to text local experts to book events, or find restaurants or other hangouts. Travelers pay a fee for the bookings, and the service is free to the hotels.

There are also start-ups that connect travelers with locals for dining-in experiences, like BonAppetour, where guests can book lunch or dinner at the home of a chef in Rome or go to a Parisian dinner party in a 19th-century apartment near the Champs-Élysées.

At the Stafford Hotel in London, the executive concierge, Frank Laino, created and is the host of a walking tour for guests to his favorite places in the St. James neighborhood, including visits to places not open to the public like Spencer House, Princess Diana’s ances-

tral home, and Lock & Company, the world’s oldest hat shop.

Marriott’s investment in PlacePass — the amount wasn’t disclosed — adds to its existing membership rewards program, which it had been building into an “experiences marketplace,” where points could be redeemed for local music, sports, food and dining, and cultural activities. The technology will be incorporated into the mobile app that hotel rewards members use to check in and out and to unlock their room doors.

Marriott is using big data technology to analyze and interpret customer activity on the app and to make suggestions about PlacePass experiences to try, whether or not that customer is staying at a Marriott property.

“Marriott is adding value to consumer lives besides just a bed in a hotel room,” Stephanie Linnartz, the company’s global chief commercial officer, said.

Marriott sees its Moxy brand as a boutique hotel with the heart of a hostel, Vicki Poulos, the brand director, said. The hotels are typically in urban settings that are destinations for travelers seeking a new experience. Ms. Poulos said, different from a hotel in a suburb where travelers are not necessarily staying over to learn something new.

“We’re really making sure we infuse that local culture,” she said. “People are determined to get to know what the community has to offer.”

Its Times Square location is set to open this summer, to be followed by a second site in Manhattan and three others in Denver, London and Seattle. Rooms in the Times Square hotel and others are 183 square feet, creating a space challenge in keeping with living in the Big Apple.

Moxy calls this “urban camping,” and has installed wall pegs to move furniture off the ground and make room for yoga, Ms. Poulos said.

Another brand that Marriott inherited with its acquisition of Starwood Hotels last year, Aloft Hotels, sponsors live music performances by area artists.

Hilton Hotels’ budget Canopy and higher-end Curio brands also draw on the local scene. The Darcy, which opened this spring in the Logan Circle neighborhood of Washington, is a Curio hotel that will feature local celebrity chefs and room service with drinks featuring locally made Green Hat Gin and other products.

Radisson Red, which recently opened in Minneapolis and is set to expand into other markets in the United States next year, has an app that allows checked-in guests to talk to one another in a group forum, share tips for the best nearby restaurants and bars, and arrange meetups.

For travelers who are combining work and play, “you want to check things out,” Heather Boschke, Radisson Red’s brand manager, said. “You want to see something new and different.”



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MARRIOTT HOTEL

A rendering of a room in the Marriott Moxy hotel in New York, meant to echo a hostel.