

“All the News
That’s Fit to Print”

The New York Times

THE WEATHER
Today, partly cloudy, not as cold as recent days, high 48. **Tonight**, partly to mostly cloudy, dry, low 38. **Tomorrow**, cloudy, periodic rain and drizzle, high 43. Weather map, Page B12.

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Prices in Canada may be higher

\$4.00



LILLIAN SUWANRUMPHA/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE — GETTY IMAGES

Prayers for a New Year
Worshippers at the Wat Mangkon Kamalawat, a Chinese Buddhist temple, in Bangkok on Monday, the eve of the Lunar New Year.

NEWS ANALYSIS

U.S. Messages Baffle Europe

3 Talks at Munich Vary on What Allies Share

By **STEVEN ERLANGER** and **DAVID E. SANGER**

MUNICH — In the space of just a year, European leaders have heard three descriptions of how the Trump administration is reimagining the American relationship with its allies. Each strikes a bit of a different tone, but all are intended to push them into a new era in which Washington’s commitment to defend them faces new limits.

One was delivered by Vice President JD Vance last year, a blistering condemnation of European-style democracy, arguing that waves of immigrants and Europe’s restrictions on its own far-right parties pose a greater threat to the continent than Russia’s aggression.

The second was a far easier-to-swallow version of a similar message from Secretary of State Marco Rubio on Saturday. He described a hazy and sometimes idealized cultural history shared by Europe and the United States and argued that each faced “civilizational erasure” unless it figured out a way to control its borders.

Then, at the same conference, the most senior defense official to attend, Elbridge Colby, the under secretary of defense for policy, offered a classic American national-security message about shared interests, not values, recommending that both sides focus on “nuts and bolts kind of stuff.”

If the Europeans emerged a bit confused, it’s understandable.

Mr. Vance and Mr. Rubio could well end up as rivals for the presidential nomination in 2028 — or as running mates. So how they described America’s role and purpose with its allies was intended as much for audiences at home. They know each phrase will be weighed by MAGA supporters who are suspicious of the degree to which the Trump administration has intervened around the world, whether in Venezuela or in Iran, Syria or Greenland.

But their immediate audiences were NATO allies. While the

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Kansans Rally Behind Mayor Facing Deportation

By **MITCH SMITH**

COLDWATER, Kan. — A standing-room-only crowd jammed recently into the only courtroom in Comanche County, Kan. Residents came on their lunch breaks, trekked in from their ranches and even closed down a hardware store so they could watch.

They were there for the man at the defendant’s table, Joe Ceballos, who just weeks before had been re-elected mayor of Coldwater in a landslide, with 101 votes to his opponent’s 20. There had been no time to celebrate. Hours before the votes were tallied, Mr. Ceballos, a legal permanent resident of the United States, was charged in

A Permanent Resident Is Charged With Voting Illegally

state court with voting illegally as a noncitizen.

Now Mr. Ceballos, 55, sat in the high-ceilinged courtroom, glancing downward as a prosecutor from the Kansas attorney general’s office rattled off a list of felony charges that could lead to years in prison: three counts of election perjury, three counts of voting without being qualified.

When the charges were an-

nounced a few weeks before the hearing, the municipal politics of Coldwater suddenly became national news. Many conservatives from outside Comanche County framed the case as an example of rampant voter fraud. Before the first court hearing in December, the Trump administration drew attention to the case, pledging to seek Mr. Ceballos’s deportation if he were convicted.

“This alien committed a felony by voting in American elections,” Tricia McLaughlin, a spokeswoman for the Department of Homeland Security, said in a news release that included a photo of Mr. Ceballos and of his signature on a

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LOREN ELLIOTT FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

A Way Out for Hemmed-In Mountain Lions
California’s cougars are dying as they’re squeezed by freeways. A giant project might help. Page D1.

Cleaning Up Carnival, Bead by Plantable Bead

By **JACKIE DELAMATRE**

New Orleans is having Mardi Gras regrets, and not just the kind that come from too many daiquiris. In recent years, the city’s huge, weeklong party has been producing more waste than ever: an average of 1,123 tons per year for the last decade, according to the city’s Sanitation Department.

“It’s an environmental catastrophe,” said Brett Davis, who runs a

A Greener Mardi Gras in New Orleans

nonprofit group, Grounds Krewe, that is trying to make Carnival greener.

The New Orleans area is especially vulnerable to climate change because of hurricanes and coastal erosion. Yet for weeks of ebullient parading, which culmi-

nate on Tuesday, those problems are forgotten as float riders fling plastic beads, cups, doubloons and foam footballs at teeming crowds. In the moment, these baubles can seem like treasures. Within days, though, much of what was caught, as well as the excess left on the streets or dangling from oak trees like Spanish moss, ends up in the trash.

Now, a coalition of nonprofit organizations, city officials and sci-

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An Open Road To Guzzle Gas With Impunity

Deregulation in Effect Kills M.P.G. Rules

By **HIROKO TABUCHI**

The momentous end to the federal government’s legal authority to fight climate change makes it official.

The United States will essentially have no laws on the books that enforce how efficient America’s passenger cars and trucks should be.

That’s the practical result of the Trump administration’s yearlong parade of regulatory rollbacks, capped on Thursday by its killing of the “endangerment finding,” the scientific determination that required the Environmental Protection Agency to regulate greenhouse gases because of the threat to human health.

“The U.S. no longer has emission standards of any meaning,” said Margo T. Oge, who was the E.P.A.’s top vehicle emissions regulator under three presidents and has since advised both automakers and environmental groups.

“Nothing. Zero,” she added. “Not many countries have zero.”

Transportation is the largest single source of greenhouse gases in the United States.

Car buyers could still vote with their wallets, demanding more fuel-efficient cars. California has vowed to sue to maintain stricter standards. The Department of Transportation still regulates fuel economy under rules meant to conserve oil, and the E.P.A. still regulates other tailpipe emissions, like nitrogen oxides, that harm human health.

But last year, the Trump administration proposed weakening the fuel economy standards to largely irrelevant levels. The Republican-controlled Congress set civil penalties for violations at \$0, essentially making them voluntary for automakers. In addition, Congress last year blocked California’s clean-car rules.

The bottom line is that the United States is set to stand apart from a majority of the world’s industrialized nations, which have mandatory fuel economy or greenhouse gas tailpipe emissions rules.

The Biden administration had sought to tighten limits on emissions to encourage automakers to

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BANNON KEPT UP LINKS TO EPSTEIN AMID ALLEGATIONS

EAGERNESS TO ADVISE

Relationship Was Meant to Fuel Film, MAGA Leader Insists

By **SHARON LaFRANIERE** and **TERESA MONDRÍA TEROL**

Midafternoon in late June 2019, Stephen K. Bannon sent Jeffrey Epstein an excited series of texts. “Dude!!!!!!” he wrote. “Is this real Tell me this is real.”

Mr. Epstein had just texted him a headline from The Miami Herald. It reported that victims of Mr. Epstein’s sexual abuse had lost a court battle to nullify a decade-old agreement that protected him from prosecution for those crimes.

Off and on for months, Mr. Bannon, a leader in the MAGA movement and a former top aide to President Trump, had been advising Mr. Epstein on how to handle resurrected allegations that he was a serial pedophile. Mr. Bannon recommended which lawyers to hire — his own — when to lie low and when he should jump on an opening to push his narrative. He scheduled what the two men called “media training.”

“First we need to push back on the lies; then crush the pedo/trafficking narrative; then rebuild your image as philanthropist,” Mr. Bannon wrote to Mr. Epstein in April 2019. That was five months after a Miami Herald series exposed how prosecutors had ignored evidence of Mr. Epstein’s crimes.

The three million pages of Epstein-related documents released by the Justice Department on Jan. 30 reveal for the first time the extent of Mr. Bannon’s efforts to advise Mr. Epstein when many of his friends were abandoning him. In the six months before Mr. Epstein was arrested and charged with the sex trafficking of minors in July 2019, Mr. Bannon’s name appears nearly every day in the files, often because the two men exchanged texts.

In a statement to The New York Times, Mr. Bannon said his relationship with Mr. Epstein was strictly professional.

“I am a filmmaker and TV host with decades of experience inter-

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ROBERT DUVAL, 1931-2026

Protean Actor Who Lit Screen Amid Corleones and Napalm

By **CLYDE HABERMAN**

Robert Duvall, who drew from a seemingly bottomless reservoir of acting craftsmanship to transform himself into a business-focused Mafia lawyer, a faded country singer, a cynical police detective, a bullying Marine pilot, a surfing-obsessed Vietnam commander, a mysterious Southern recluse and scores of other film, stage and television characters, died on Sunday. He was 95.

His death was announced in a statement by his wife, Luciana Duvall, who said he had died at home. She gave no other details. He had long lived on a sprawling horse farm in The Plains, in Fauquier County, Va., west of Washington.

Mr. Duvall’s singular trait was to immerse himself in roles so deeply that he seemed to almost disappear into them — an ability that was “uncanny, even creepy the first time” it was witnessed, said Bruce Beresford, the Australian who directed him in the 1983 film “Tender Mercies.”

In that film, Mr. Duvall played Mac Sledge, a boozy, washed-up



SARA KRULWICH/THE NEW YORK TIMES

Robert Duvall won one Oscar; he was nominated for six more.

country star who comes to terms with life through marriage to a widow with a young son. The performance earned him an Academy Award for best actor, his sole Oscar in a career that brought him six other nominations in both leading and supporting roles.

“He is the character,” Mr. Beresford said of Sledge. “He’s not Duvall at all.”

Mr. Duvall, though, wasn’t busy-

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Dozens of Sedanka’s men joined the army. Will recognition that the government promised ever arrive? PAGE A8

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Over a year into a cease-fire, the mechanical whir of Israeli drones remains a constant presence. PAGE A4

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Allies of the health secretary, Robert F. Kennedy Jr., want to end state laws that require shots for children before entering day care or kindergarten. PAGE A9

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An attack at a high school hockey game in Rhode Island left two dead, as well as the shooter, the police said. PAGE A14

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Alfred Blumstein used systems theory and quantitative analysis to reveal behavioral patterns. He was 95. PAGE A15

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Adeliia Petrosian, 18, has the résumé of a medal contender — and ties to coaches who were at the center of a doping scandal. PAGE B7

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Owners are jumping on a new tax provision that allows them to immediately deduct the cost of a racehorse. PAGE B1

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Offshore resources could be extracted and exported quickly, especially as U.S. sanctions begin to be eased. PAGE B1

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George W. Bush pays tribute to a predecessor who “ensured America wouldn’t become a monarchy, or worse.” PAGE C1

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