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FRANCE – EUROPE

Germany, France confident of unlocking aid for Greece



ABC News
4 minutes

President Trump arrived in Israel shortly after noon on Monday on the second stop of his first foreign trip as president.

The two-day visit there will include private meetings with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas, a wreath-laying at the Holocaust memorial Yad Vashem and a visit to the Western Wall in Jerusalem.

Trump touched down in Tel Aviv around 12:30 p.m. local time and was greeted by Prime Minister Netanyahu, his wife Sarah Netanyahu, Israeli President Reuven Rivlin and his wife Nehama Rivlin for the official welcome ceremony.

"On my first trip overseas as president, I have come to the sacred and ancient land to reaffirm the

unbreakable bond between the United States and the state of Israel," President Trump said, delivering remarks on the tarmac of Tel Aviv's Ben Gurion Airport upon his arrival.

"We have before us a rare opportunity to bring security and stability and peace to this region and to its people, defeating terrorism and creating a future of harmony, prosperity and peace. But we can only get there working together."

The stop in Israel comes after the president's visit to Saudi Arabia, the birthplace of Islam, and will be followed by a trip to the Vatican, where Trump will meet with the pope.

In Israel, Trump is to be the first sitting U.S. president to visit the Western Wall, which has pleased Israeli officials. But in preparations for the planned visit, a junior U.S. official commented to Israelis that the Jewish holy site is "not your territory. It's part of the West Bank" - a remark that an Israeli official said was "received with shock."

White House press secretary Sean Spicer sought to clarify the U.S. official's comment, saying it does not reflect American policy and that "the Western Wall is obviously one of the holiest sites in the Jewish faith."

In a briefing previewing the president's trip, National Security Adviser H.R. McMaster declined to discuss the thorny question of jurisdiction over the land where the Western Wall is located.

"That sounds like a policy decision," McMaster said.

The president will not during his visit announce any move of the United States embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, according to a senior White House official who cautioned that it's not the right time for such a pronouncement as the administration is focusing on brokering a peace deal between Israelis and Palestinians.

Moving the embassy had been a campaign promise of Trump's going back to the Republican primary campaign. As early as a March 2016

speech to the American Israel Public Affairs Committee, Trump vowed, "We will move the American embassy to the eternal capital of the Jewish people, Jerusalem."

Most foreign nations' embassies in Israel, including that of the U.S. since 1966, are in Tel Aviv. Any potential move of the embassy to Jerusalem would likely be viewed as provocative to leaders of the region's Arab nations and to Palestinians, who claim that city as the capital of a future state.

President Trump also does not expect to convene a joint meeting with Abbas and Netanyahu on this trip although he hopes that will happen after another round of solo meetings with each of the leaders, the senior White House official said.

"We're not here to force people to do things one way or the other with regards to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict," the official said.



France's Macron hosts Italy's Gentiloni ahead of G7 meeting

France's President Emmanuel Macron, left, welcome Italian Prime Minister Paolo Gentiloni for a dinner at the Elysee Palace in Paris, France, Sunday, May 21, 2017. French President Emmanuel Macron meets Italian Prime Minister Paolo Gentiloni head of next week's

G7 summit in Italy. (AP Photo/Michel Euler)more +

French President Emmanuel Macron is holding talks with Italian Prime Minister Paolo Gentiloni in Paris ahead of next week's G-7 meeting in Sicily.

Macron hosted Gentiloni for a working dinner the Elysee Palace on

Sunday, when the leaders will discuss the further integration of the European Union and the migrant crisis.

In a brief statement beforehand, Macron said France and Italy share much common ground and noted the challenges Italy has faced with the arrival of large numbers of migrants.

He said: "We didn't listen to the warning cries given by Italy early enough" about the influx of migrants from northern Africa.

The two-day G-7 summit is scheduled for next weekend in Taormina, Italy. U.S. President Donald Trump is expected to attend as part of his first foreign trip.



Merkel Says 'Weak' Euro Partly to Blame for German Surplus

Arne Delfs @ArneDelfs More stories by Arne Delfs

22 mai 2017 à 06:54 UTC-4 22 mai 2017 à 08:35 UTC-4

- Euro rises after chancellor's comments on trade, aiding Macron
- German leader cites low oil prices, need to invest at home

Chancellor Angela Merkel blamed a "too weak" euro for part of Germany's trade surplus, telling a group of students that bolstering domestic consumption was the best way to address imbalances with countries such as France.

In a panel discussion that included talk of building a closer relationship with French President Emmanuel Macron, whose election Merkel called an "extraordinary event in French politics," Merkel was asked how to deal with the trade imbalance between the two nations. Part of the blame goes to European Central Bank monetary policy, she responded.

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"The euro is too weak -- that's because of ECB policy -- and so German products are cheap in relative terms," Merkel said in Berlin during a school visit on Monday. "So they're sold more."

Seeking to build on Macron's election, the two sides said German and French

finance officials will now prepare a set of proposals, including ways to reduce differences in corporate taxation, for discussion at a joint cabinet meeting in July.

The chancellor's macroeconomic discussion followed an outline of the European Union's challenge in overcoming the U.K.'s exit from the bloc, which Merkel laid out to the students. She said her main policy goal will be to keep the EU's 27 remaining member states together and to ensure that the region prevails economically.

Franco-German

That means needing "to help Macron so he's successful," Merkel said. Her finance minister, Wolfgang Schaeuble, also laid out plans to ramp up Franco-German cooperation and strengthening the euro area. He spoke Monday alongside French Finance Minister Bruno Le Maire, who made his first visit to Berlin since the French election.

"We know that strengthening the currency union is of particular importance," Schaeuble told reporters. "Both of us believe that Germany and France have a special responsibility to take the lead."

Merkel took up Franco-German trade relations to illustrate how greater consumption at home could

reduce imbalances, with more Germans buying French products as a way to bolster imports.

"But of course that requires that things are produced in other countries that will be of interest to

Germans," Merkel said. "I can't force people to buy a Renault instead of a VW. We can't legislate that."

The euro jumped on Merkel's comments, climbing 0.36 percent to as much as \$1.1246 in Frankfurt.

The joint currency had fallen to \$1.1162 earlier Monday.

A lower oil price was also partly to blame for the surplus, Merkel said, reducing the cost of imports to Europe's largest economy. If oil

were 50 percent more expensive "then we'd soon have a lot more imports."

Before it's here, it's on the Bloomberg Terminal.



Germany Is Quietly Building a European Army Under Its Command

Paul McLeary | 39 mins ago

9-11 minutes

Every few years, the idea of an EU army finds its way back into the news, causing a kerfuffle. The concept is both fantasy and bogeyman: For every federalist in Brussels who thinks a common defense force is what Europe needs to boost its standing in the world, there are those in London and elsewhere who recoil at the notion of a potential NATO rival.

But this year, far from the headlines, Germany and two of its European allies, the Czech Republic and Romania, quietly took a radical step down a path toward something that looks like an EU army while avoiding the messy politics associated with it: They announced the integration of their armed forces.

Romania's entire military won't join the Bundeswehr, nor will the Czech armed forces become a mere German subdivision. But in the next several months each country will integrate one brigade into the German armed forces: Romania's 81st Mechanized Brigade will join the Bundeswehr's Rapid Response Forces Division, while the Czech 4th Rapid Deployment Brigade, which has served in Afghanistan and Kosovo and is considered the Czech Army's spearhead force, will become part of the Germans' 10th Armored Division. In doing so, they'll follow in the footsteps of two Dutch brigades, one of which has already joined the Bundeswehr's Rapid Response Forces Division and another that has been integrated into the Bundeswehr's 1st Armored Division. According to Carlo Masala, a professor of international politics at the University of the Bundeswehr in Munich, "The German government is showing that it's willing to proceed with European military integration" — even if others on the continent aren't yet.

European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker has repeatedly floated the idea of an EU army, only to be met with either ridicule or awkward silence. That remains the case even as the U.K., a perennial foe of the idea, is on its way out of the union. There's little agreement among remaining

member states over what exactly such a force would look like and which capabilities national armed forces would give up as a result. And so progress has been slow going. This March, the European Union created a joint military headquarters — but it's only in charge of training missions in Somalia, Mali, and the Central African Republic and has a meager staff of 30. Other multinational concepts have been designed, such as the Nordic Battle Group, a small 2,400-troop rapid reaction force formed by the Baltic states and several Nordic countries and the Netherlands, and Britain's Joint Expeditionary Force, a "mini-NATO" whose members include the Baltic states, Sweden, and Finland. But in the absence of suitable deployment opportunities, such operations-based teams may as well not exist.

But under the bland label of the Framework Nations Concept, Germany has been at work on something far more ambitious — the creation of what is essentially a Bundeswehr-led network of European miniarmies. "The initiative came out of the weakness of the Bundeswehr," said Justyna Gotkowska, a Northern Europe security analyst at Poland's Centre for Eastern Studies think tank. "The Germans realized that the Bundeswehr needed to fill gaps in its land forces ... in order to gain political and military influence within NATO." An assist from junior partners may be Germany's best shot at bulking out its military quickly — and German-led miniarmies may be Europe's most realistic option if it's to get serious about joint security. "It's an attempt to prevent joint European security from completely failing," Masala said.

"Gaps" in the Bundeswehr is an understatement. In 1989, the West German government spent 2.7 percent of GDP on defense, but by 2000 spending had dropped to 1.4 percent, where it remained for years. Indeed, between 2013 and 2016 defense spending was stuck at 1.2 percent — far from NATO's 2 percent benchmark. In a 2014 report to the Bundestag, the German parliament, the Bundeswehr's inspectors-general presented a woeful picture: Most of the Navy's helicopters were not working, and of the Army's 64 helicopters, only 18 were usable. And while the Cold

War Bundeswehr had consisted of 370,000 troops, by last summer it was only 176,015 men and women strong.

Since then the Bundeswehr has grown to more than 178,000 active-duty troops; last year the government increased funding by 4.2 percent, and this year defense spending will grow by 8 percent. But Germany still lags far behind France and the U.K. as a military power. And boosting defense spending is not uncontroversial in Germany, which is wary of its history as a military power. Foreign Minister Sigmar Gabriel recently said it was "completely unrealistic" to think that Germany would reach NATO's defense spending benchmark of 2 percent of GDP — even though nearly all of Germany's allies, from smaller European countries to the United States, are urging it to play a larger military role in the world.

Germany may not yet have the political will to expand its military forces on the scale that many are hoping for — but what it has had since 2013 is the Framework Nations Concept. For Germany, the idea is to share its resources with smaller countries in exchange for the use of their troops.

For these smaller countries, the initiative is a way of getting Germany more involved in European security while sidestepping the tricky politics of Germany military expansion.

For these smaller countries, the initiative is a way of getting Germany more involved in European security while sidestepping the tricky politics of Germany military expansion. "It's a move towards more European military independence," Masala said. "The U.K. and France are not available to take a lead in European security" — the U.K. is on a collision course with its EU allies, while France, a military heavyweight, has often been a reluctant participant in multinational efforts within NATO. "That leaves Germany," he said. Operationally, the resulting binational units are more deployable because they're permanent (most multinational units have so far been ad hoc). Crucially for the junior partners, it also amplifies their military muscle. And should Germany decide to deploy an

integrated unit, it could only do so with the junior partner's consent.

Of course, since 1945 Germany has been extraordinarily reluctant to deploy its military abroad, until 1990 even barring the Bundeswehr from foreign deployments. Indeed, junior partners — and potential junior partners — hope that the Framework Nations arrangement will make Germany take on more responsibility for European security. So far, Germany and its multinational miniarmies remain only that: small-scale initiatives, far removed from a full-fledged European army. But the initiative is likely to grow. Germany's partners have been touting the practical benefits of integration: For Romania and the Czech Republic, it means bringing their troops to the same level of training as the German military; for the Netherlands, it has meant regaining tank capabilities. (The Dutch had sold the last of their tanks in 2011, but the 43rd Mechanized Brigade's troops, who are partially based with the 1st Armored Division in the western German city of Oldenburg, now drive the Germans' tanks and could use them if deployed with the rest of the Dutch army.) Col. Anthony Leuvering, the 43rd Mechanized's Oldenburg-based commander, told me that the integration has had remarkably few hiccups. "The Bundeswehr has some 180,000 personnel, but they don't treat us like an underdog," he said. He expects more countries to jump on the bandwagon: "Many, many countries want to cooperate with the Bundeswehr." The Bundeswehr, in turn, has a list of junior partners in mind, said Robin Allers, a German associate professor at the Norwegian Institute for Defence Studies who has seen the German military's list. According to Masala, the Scandinavian countries — which already use a large amount of German-made equipment — would be the best candidates for the Bundeswehr's next round of integration.

So far, the low-profile and ad hoc approach of the Framework Nations Concept has worked to its advantage; few people in Europe have objected to the integration of Dutch or Romanian units into German divisions, partly because they may not have noticed. Whether there will be political repercussions

should more nations sign up to the initiative is less clear.

Outside of politics, the real test of the Framework Nations' value will be the integrated units' success in

combat. But the trickiest part of integration, on the battlefield and off, may turn out to be finding a lingua franca. Should troops learn each other's languages? Or should the

junior partner speak German? The German-speaking Dutch Col. Leuvening reports that the binational Oldenburg division is moving toward using English.

Photo credit: Sean Gallup/Getty Images

CNBC : Ivanovitch: Trump will find a confident and prosperous Europe

Dr. Michael Ivanovitch

7-9 minutes

Michael Heffernan | Getty Images

Europe's political and economic outlook is getting brighter.

The crucially important French elections went earlier this month to safer, more predictable, decidedly reformist and pro-European political forces.

Germany's governing center-right parties are beating back the leftist challengers, and are firmly on course for a resounding victory in next September's elections.

A triumphant return a few weeks ago of Italy's tough talking former Prime Minister Matteo Renzi at the head of the Democratic Party (PD) virtually guarantees his victory in elections that have to be held no later than May 20, 2018.

The Florentine "scrapper" ("rotomatore," his hometown moniker) is a passionate European with intellect and political heft that will balance out the French-German debate about Europe and its relations with East European "partnerships," Africa and the Middle East.

Germany, France and Italy account for two-thirds of the euro area economy.

With the ECB's very effective monetary policies, all these political changes are being reflected in rising valuations of euro-denominated assets.

Over the last thirty days – roughly the time since these events occurred – the euro area equity prices (Euro stoxx 50) rose 5 percent, more than double the 2 percent gain on the Dow. During the same interval, the euro strengthened 4.2 percent against the dollar, and 3.3 percent in trade-weighted terms.

Get euro labor for Germany

The euro area's growth, employment, foreign trade and price

stability are also looking good.

Preliminary estimates for the first quarter of this year show that the economic activity rose 1.7 percent from the year earlier, indicating a continuation of steady growth dynamics observed in the second half of 2016. A strong acceleration in the volume of retail trade during the quarter to an annual rate of 2.3 percent in March is a sure sign that the growth momentum remains sound.

Unemployment in March (the latest data point available) was down to 9.5 percent, marking the lowest level over the last eight years, and a significant decline from 10.2 percent in March 2016.

It is a real puzzle that huge labor shortages in Germany cannot help to bring down unemployment rates in countries like France (10.1 percent), Italy (11.7 percent) and Spain (18.2 percent). German data show that 1.06 million job vacancies were recorded in the first three months of this year, an increase of 75 thousand job offers from the same interval of 2016.

Why aren't Germans hiring more of their hard-put fellow Europeans? There is supposed to be free movement of labor within the single market, with the same, or very similar, manpower regulations, and educational and professional standards. It seems to me that this is an area where Germany and its euro partners should make urgent progress instead of wasting time debating sterile and grandiose integration projects.

In the area of global trade, the euro area remains a world class powerhouse. Its exports in the first quarter of this year rose 10 percent from the year earlier to 536.5 billion euros, generating a quarterly surplus of 46.7 billion euros. A stronger economic growth was also reflected in a 9 percent annual increase in trade transactions within the euro area to a quarterly total of 461.2 billion euros.

Price inflation less energy came in at 1.3 percent last month, suggesting that there is still room for an accommodative monetary

stance. About 47 percent of the headline price inflation in April – 1.9 percent – was accounted for by sharply rising energy costs.

Germany won't pay

The euro area public finances are relatively sound. Budget deficits have been cut from the record-high 6.3 percent of GDP in 2009 to 1.5 percent last year. Spain and France still have some work to do to bring the deficits below the monetary union's upper limit of 3 percent of GDP.

Public debt of 89.3 percent of GDP is a much more serious issue, not only because it is significantly above the mandated limit of 60 percent of GDP, but also because its range of 68.3 percent in Germany and 132.6 percent in Italy is unsustainably huge.

This quick picture shows that – thanks to the ECB's supportive monetary policy – the euro area has come a long way along the path of recovery from a financial meltdown, aggravated by a calamitous fiscal austerity. Countries like France, Italy and Spain – half of the euro area economy – have to work harder to bring down their very high unemployment rates; they also have to cut their budget deficits and their excessively high public debt.

That is why Germans feel uncomfortable about the urgent talk on "re-founding the EU" (no less), instead of addressing much more important issues of jobs, incomes and public finances. The German Chancellor Angela Merkel has not dismissed the "re-founding" call out of hand. But in what sounded like a tongue-in-cheek comment, she said she would look into it if "we know what has to be re-founded, and whether that is necessary."

A much blunter response still keeps coming from the German media, reflecting the official views that might be impolitic to air by the federal government. And this is the message: Germany will not pay for reforms individual countries have to do, and Germany won't bear the financial burden of euro area reforms to bail out the countries that don't want to do their job.

More controversially, though, Germany -- running a huge trade surplus of nearly \$300 billion -- is allegedly refusing to rev up its economy to stabilize the monetary union. A stronger growth in Germany would raise the euro area's aggregate demand and help other member countries to reduce unemployment and budget deficits.

These are the difficult issues facing the strained French-German relationship.

Investment thoughts

France and Germany have many things to talk about to set the monetary union on a firmer footing. That would be an important step toward an EU of lasting peace, increasing prosperity and, yes, solidarity to create a more cohesive social, economic and political entity.

That talk is off for now. France has to get next month a stable parliamentary majority to govern. Germans, for their part, have to get a new administration after next September's elections.

President Trump is stepping into that sort of European inter-regnum. He would be well advised to invite the all-powerful German chancellor to the "long lunch" he has scheduled in Brussels with the French president.

That "long lunch" talk should be an opportunity for the U.S. president to review with France and Germany, the two leading military and political allies, acute security problems in Ukraine, the Balkans, Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan, North Africa, the Korean Peninsula and East China Sea. The president knows that China and Russia will also be the proverbial "elephants in the room."

The good work done by the ECB and euro area governments in building up the ongoing economic recovery has staying power. It, therefore, amply deserves investors' attention. The French and the Germans will come to terms and begin to work together. Experience has taught them that anything else would not serve their national interests.

parliamentary election. Pardon beleaguered voters for wondering

THE WALL
STREET
JOURNAL

Editorial : Britain's Manifesto Destiny

Updated May 21, 2017 6:03 p.m.

3-4 minutes

ET 12 COMMENTS

Britain's main political parties released their official platforms last week ahead of the June 8

why their leaders bothered pulling them out to the polls.

The biggest disappointment comes from the Tories, who have been leading in the polls. In her better moments, Prime Minister Theresa May is tackling some vexing entitlement problems. She pledges to end the "triple lock" on pensions, which guaranteed that state old-age benefits increase each year by the highest of consumer-price inflation, wage inflation or 2.5%. This is a huge drain on the fisc, a political burden that the previous Tory government of David Cameron saddled Mrs. May with undoing.

Mrs. May's plan to means-test government benefits for in-home care for the

elderly is another broadly good idea. If the Tories could explain this better, younger voters might notice that their taxes would no longer be diverted to support the aged who can afford their own care. Mrs. May will need youth support for this plan since it will sink like a stone among older voters worried about having to sacrifice home equity to fund their old-age needs.

The problem is everything else. Mrs. May is ditching Mr. Cameron's promise not to increase personal-income tax rates, national insurance taxes or the consumption tax. She also promises to boost the cost to employers of hiring foreign workers, in another attempt to meet the Tories' dubious pledge to reduce net

immigration to less than 100,000 per year.

Missing from anyone contesting this election is the bold thinking Britain needs to thrive after it leaves the European Union. Mrs. May's reforms are important but don't shrink the state or liberalize the economy enough to transform Britain into an Anglo-Saxon tiger.

Labour and the Liberal-Democrats are worse, with various tax-hike pledges, industrial renationalizations and other notions out of the 1930s. At least the Liberal-Democrats are honest enough to admit that it's not worth leaving the EU if this is the best Westminster can do: They promise a second Brexit referendum

in the hope that this time voters will choose to Remain.

Policy debates will shift rapidly during Brexit negotiations, so Britain will have more reform openings. But the wasted election opportunity would be to emerge with a large Tory majority but a mandate for doing little. Then again, the polls have begun to close notably in recent days as voters seem unenthralled with Mrs. May's tepid Tory manifesto. Imagine the shock if by playing it safe Mrs. May has given the Jeremy Corbyn Labourites a chance.

Appeared in the May. 22, 2017, print edition.

**NATIONAL
REVIEW
ONLINE**

Dougherty: Theresa May Practices Trumpism Better Than Trump Does

7-9 minutes

Donald Trump began fumbling the ball almost as soon as he ran away with it. The political revolution that was Trumpism is on hold for now, while the White House undergoes a series of scandals. All for reasons that are specific to Donald Trump: his lazy personnel decisions, his egotism, his inability to focus or master the forces that govern the Republican Congress. What if you could have Trumpism without Donald Trump? That is, what if you could take the same basic issues — sovereignty, immigration ruled by law, and economic policies meant to promote social stability — and get rid of Trump's moral turpitude, personal indiscipline, and the most noxious and divisive parts of his rhetoric?

Well, it would look a lot like the campaign being run by the Tory party under Theresa May. That is, it would look like an electoral juggernaut with revolutionary potential.

By now, most people have realized that the populist rebellion against globalism runs across much of the Western world. And in hindsight it is easy to see that it has been bubbling up for decades. Across different countries it basically had the same animating political logic: Its enthusiasts wanted to combine traditional conservative voters with the remains of the post-World War II proletariat, especially the part of that class that believed they were losing ground.

That political dream appeared in a recent interview with Marine Le Pen's niece, Marion Maréchal-Le Pen, who is retiring from politics. The youngest Le Pen said that to overcome the political status quo, in which

globalism sweeps all before it, a political movement would need to unite the conservative bourgeoisie with the working classes. It was the same political vision that animated Pat Buchanan when he told a Republican convention in 1992 that in the faces of unemployed steel and mill workers he saw "our people," people he described as "conservatives of the heart."

The political rationale is obvious. Such a combination would force the political center-left to become the party of Goldman Sachs and campus speech codes. It would turn the center-left into the party of the H.R. department that trains you in what to say and think because you are a Neanderthal, and then your company downsizes you, because it can get an environmental subsidy for outsourcing to the Third World the pollution associated with your job. In other words, the populist conservative promise was to reduce the opposition to a party of Hillary Clinton enthusiasts. And it is exactly what Trump did to win. He combined the heartland and southern states that were conservative stalwarts with what Michael Moore called the "Brexit states" of Pennsylvania, Michigan, Wisconsin, and Ohio.

But Teresa May is doing him one better. She is not just poised to squeak by in the upcoming snap election; she is set to inflict a rout on all the other parties in British politics. Nigel Farage's UKIP has basically collapsed in a heap now that May's Tories have embraced Brexit with zest. Some feared that Tory enthusiasm for Brexit would breathe new life into demands for a Scottish independence referendum. Instead, the misgovernment of the Scottish Nationalists in Holyrood and May's "One Nation" rhetoric have brought about the improbable resurrection of the conservative Unionist tradition in Scotland.

And now May is pushing the Tory campaign deep into the Labour heartlands. And she's taking more and more issues away from Labour. The Tory party's manifesto calls for raising the minimum wage and for price caps on energy bills. It also calls for a new statutory right to take time off work to look after loved ones on a full-time basis, a move meant to strengthen social care and possibly reduce costs that are passed on to NHS. It's enough to give orthodox Thatcherites fits.

But May is not just getting to the left of David Cameron and other Tory predecessors, she's also getting to their right. She's talked about reversing the restrictions on fox hunting, an issue that has deep cultural resonance for the English upper class and economic impact for low-paid country workers, too. She's talked about reviving the role of grammar schools in English life, selective schools whose ethos was decidedly not egalitarian but instead focused on social mobility. Grammar schools fell out of favor because they weren't focused on destroying class distinctions in British life; they aimed to recruit the best talent from below to the highest levels of British life.

The contrasting fortunes of May and Trump are a powerful lesson that politics is not just an arena where impersonal forces arrange every piece on the board; it is played by men and women.

May has hit the ground running with this political revolution in part because the intellectual groundwork was already done. In the U.K., political entrepreneurs dreamed of what an anti-globalization politics could do for each of the major parties. A decade ago, Philip Blond wrote a book promoting "Red Toryism," arguing that Britain's

political elite needed to get over individualism and focus on a conservative communitarianism. That way, the Right could steal working-class voters and leave New Labour as the party of financiers and the thought police of political correctness. On the other side, Maurice Glasman, a member of Ed Miliband's Labour-party brain trust, preached "Blue Labour," which was meant to head off any dream of the Red Tories, by reversing Labour's stance on immigration, which had alienated rank-and-file Labour voters. Labour rejected Glasman's advice and continued to trade the politics of the working class for the politics of diversity. And now the Tories are set to benefit. It's not surprising that Teresa May's chief idea man, Nick Timothy, met with Maurice Glasman to exchange ideas ahead of the release of the Tory's election manifesto.

It's also working for May because she, unlike Trump, has a very keen sense of the forces at work in her party, of where she can push it to unorthodox positions and where she cannot. She's able to round off her get-tough approach to the E.U. and the issue of migration with gestures of genuine respect to all members of Britain's life. And Brexit itself is pushing into May's party the former Labour voters in the Northeast who supported it. And the Tories might be on a trajectory for a historic majority, leaving May just as popular a figure in her own country as Angela Merkel is in Germany.

The contrasting fortunes of May and Trump are a powerful lesson that politics is not just an arena where impersonal forces arrange every piece on the board; it is played by men and women. Conservative nationalism is a winning formula. But savvy and virtue still count for a lot.

READ The Populist Politics of Theresa May — and Donald Trump Tories Reclaim Much of Their

MORE: Former Support in the Patriotic Working Class Brexit with Blinders: Theresa May's Cunning Plan

Editor's Note: This piece originally incorrectly spelled Maurice Glasman's last name. It has been corrected.

— Michael Brendan Dougherty is a senior writer at National Review.

INTERNATIONAL

**THE WALL
STREET
JOURNAL.**

Stancati

10-12 minutes

Updated May 21, 2017 7:22 p.m. ET

RIYADH, Saudi Arabia—President Donald Trump called on Muslim leaders across the globe Sunday to confront “the crisis of Islamic extremism” as he sought to rally Arab allies around a renewed, joint effort to combat terrorism and Iran’s influence in the Middle East.

Mr. Trump’s speech here set the tone for his first international trip as president, a nine-day journey that is putting him face-to-face with leaders across the Middle East and Europe. He said the U.S. global role should be guided by what he called a “principled realism” which appears to emphasize transactions on economic and security agreements over other issues such as human-rights abuses.

“We will make decisions based on real-world outcomes—not inflexible ideology,” he said in his remarks before several dozen Muslim leaders in the Saudi capital.

Mr. Trump urged other nations to share with the U.S. the moral and financial responsibility for global challenges. “Muslim-majority countries must take the lead in combating radicalization,” he said.

He sought to underpin his remarks with new security cooperation with America’s Arab allies. The measures include an agreement to target terrorism financing, with the U.S. and Saudi Arabia opening a center in Riyadh focused on the effort, and the formation of a military alliance in the Gulf that would coordinate with the U.S. to counter shared regional threats.

The U.S. and Saudi Arabia agreed during the weekend to a \$109 billion arms package and a further \$300 billion in other deals and potential investments.

“This agreement will help the Saudi military to take a far greater role in

Trump Urges Muslims to Fight Extremism in Saudi Speech (UNE)

Carol E. Lee and Margherita Stancati

security and operations having to do with security,” Mr. Trump said.

Saudi King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, who spoke at the summit alongside Mr. Trump, pledged that Muslim leaders will “not hesitate to prosecute anyone who supports or finances terrorism in any shape or form.”

Mr. Trump’s speech marked a departure from his rhetoric toward Muslims during the presidential campaign, the intention of the shift being to gain traction for important elements of his policy agenda. Most notably, Mr. Trump decided not to use the phrase “radical Islamic terrorism.” He had pointedly used the term both as a candidate and as recently as last week.

Instead, he made a conciliatory effort to draw a distinction between religion and terrorism carried out in its name. It “is not a battle between different faiths, different sects, or different civilizations” but “a battle between good and evil,” he said.

“Terrorists do not worship God. They worship death,” Mr. Trump said. “Religious leaders must make this absolutely clear,” he added, that “if you choose the path of terror, your life will be empty, your life will be brief and your soul will be fully condemned.”

Aaron David Miller, a former senior State Department official now at Washington’s Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, said Mr. Trump handled a tricky speech fairly well.

“He made a few of the right points, missed many of the bad ones, dodged the bullet on formulations of ‘radical Islamic terrorism’ that could be seen as terribly offending,” he said.

King Salman issued his own condemnation of terrorism as contrary to the teachings of Islam.

Both the U.S. and Saudi leaders delivered harsh rebukes of Iran, which on Saturday re-elected moderate President Hassan Rouhani over a hard-line opponent. King Salman said the Iranian regime is among those who exploit Islam to achieve its political goals.

Riyadh severed diplomatic relations with Iran in early 2016. Tensions between the two countries, which back opposite sides of conflicts in Yemen and Syria, have played out across the Middle East and heightened tensions between Sunnis and Shiites.

“Iran funds arms and trains terrorists, militias and other extremist groups that spread destruction and chaos,” Mr. Trump said.

Aniseh Bassiri Tabrizi, a Middle East expert who focuses on Iran at Royal United Services Institute, a London think tank, said Mr. Trump’s approach to Iran is likely to harden Saudi opposition to pursuing dialogue with Iran, and the country will “instead continue framing its policies in the region through a sectarian lens.”

Mr. Trump said the Middle East could undergo “a new renaissance” if terrorism were confronted. The first test for Muslim-majority nations is “to deny all territory to the foot soldiers of evil,” ensuring “terrorists find no sanctuary on their soil,” he said.

“This is a battle between barbaric criminals who seek to obliterate human life, and decent people all in the name of religion,” Mr. Trump said.

Mr. Trump avoided sensitive issues of human rights, repressive regimes and official support for Muslim clerics in the region who inspire some militant extremists. The absence of a human rights discussion drew quick criticism from Democratic and Republican lawmakers.

During his visit, U.S. officials didn’t publicly raise human-rights abuses by Saudi Arabia, which the American government has criticized in the past.

“I think this is a broader element of the administration’s policy, that they’re going to de-emphasize issues of human rights, that what countries do within their own boundaries, we’re essentially going to look the other way,” said Rep. Adam Schiff (D., Calif.).

Sen. John McCain (R., Ariz.) said on CNN “State of the Union” Sunday that his own approach is to be “much more forceful and open and vocal about criticizing whether it’s Egypt or Saudi Arabia for its human-rights record.”

Speaking in a nation with some of the most restrictive policies toward women, Mr. Trump briefly mentioned the importance of “empowering women.” Earlier Sunday, the World Bank announced at an event with the president’s daughter and senior White House adviser, Ivanka Trump, that Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates have pledged a combined \$100 million to a fund that will assist women entrepreneurs and small-business owners.

Mr. Trump stressed that, under his leadership, the U.S. won’t lecture other countries about “how to live, what to do, who to be or how to worship.”

Much of Saudi Arabia’s leadership follows Wahhabism, an austere form of Sunni Islam. Gender mixing in public is technically not allowed, shops close for the five daily prayers and women are forbidden to drive and required to wear full-length robes. Under Saudi law, women also need the permission of their male guardian—a father, husband or son—to travel abroad or marry.

Public displays of dissent—particularly if targeted at the ruling monarchy—aren’t tolerated. The minority Shiite Muslims are subject to widespread discrimination. Non-Muslims aren’t allowed to practice their faiths publicly.

The country’s strict social rules are slowly beginning to relax. King Salman recently called on government ministries to review the requirements on male guardianship.

U.S. officials noted the country’s budding changes during Mr. Trump’s visit. But they overwhelmingly focused on the possible economic and security transactions the two countries could undertake.

The new Arab security coalition would expand the close cooperation

that already exists between the U.S., Gulf monarchies, Egypt and Jordan. It would focus on defense and deterrence, counterterrorism financing and confronting extremist ideology, a senior U.S. official said. For the Arab countries involved, the alliance is expected to have a mutual-defense component modeled after the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

"It's good for the United States because it's about responsibility and burden sharing," the U.S. official said.

Mr. Trump is seeking warmer U.S. relations with Arab allies in part to enlist their help in pushing for a peace deal between the Israelis and Palestinians and a broader thaw between Israel and its Arab neighbors.

Mr. Trump's softer tone on Islam as a tolerant religion could play well among some in the region. But it

also risks alienating some of the president's supporters back home.

Roger Stone, a Republican operative closely involved with Mr. Trump's campaign, responded to a photograph of King Salman placing a medal around the president's neck by writing on Twitter: "Candidly, this makes me want to puke."

As a candidate, Mr. Trump called for a ban on Muslims entering the U.S. and said "Islam hates us." He also repeatedly criticized his predecessor Barack Obama for refusing to use the phrase "radical Islamic terrorism."

"The first thing you need is a president that will mention the problem, and he won't even mention what the problem is," Mr. Trump told CNN last September. "Unless you're going to say that, you're never going to solve it."

year, when he said that "Islam hates us" and called for a "total and complete shutdown" of Muslims entering the United States.

Throughout his visit, a less volatile president emerged, disciplined and relentlessly on message in a way he is often not at home. He did not brag about his electoral victory and avoided tangents. With few exceptions, he stuck carefully to his teleprompter. His mood has been sober and careful.

By refusing to hold news conferences or answer questions during brief photo opportunities, Mr. Trump orchestrated a sense of diplomatic calm that contrasted sharply with the chaos that usually surrounds him in Washington. He has not used Twitter as a cudgel against adversaries since his overseas trip began.

In his speech on Sunday, he made no mention of the executive orders he signed after taking office barring visitors from several predominantly Muslim countries. Instead, he described Islam as "one of the world's great faiths" and called for "tolerance and respect for each other."

While in the past Mr. Trump repeatedly criticized President Barack Obama and others for not using the phrase "radical Islamic terrorism," his staff sought to ensure that he would not use it before this Muslim audience. The final draft of the speech had him instead embracing a subtle but significant switch, using the term "Islamist

extremism." Islamist is often defined to mean someone who advocates Islamic fundamentalism, and some experts prefer its use to avoid tarring the entire religion.

When that moment in the speech came, however, Mr. Trump went off script and used both words, Islamic and Islamist. "That means honestly confronting the crisis of Islamic extremism and the Islamists and Islamic terror of all kinds," he said. An aide said afterward that the president was "just an exhausted guy" and had tripped over the term, rather than rejected the language suggested by his aides.

Mr. Trump addressed leaders from across the Muslim world who gathered on Sunday in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. Stephen Crowley/The New York Times

But if the speech during the second day of a nine-day overseas trip was intended as a sort of reset from his campaign and early presidency, it was also meant to turn away from Mr. Obama's approach. Rather than preach about human rights or democracy, Mr. Trump said he wanted "partners, not perfection." And he said it was up to Muslim leaders to expunge extremists from their midst.

"Drive them out," he said. "Drive them out of your places of worship. Drive them out of your communities. Drive them out of your holy land. And drive them out of this earth."

Mr. Trump received a warm welcome in the room as Muslim

leaders put behind them the messages of the campaign and the attempted travel ban, and he has gotten along well with fellow leaders, who have turned to flattery.

"You are a unique personality that is capable of doing the impossible," President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi of Egypt told him.

"I agree!" Mr. Trump responded cheerily, as laughter rolled through the room.

A few moments later, Mr. Trump returned the compliment, in a fashion. "Love your shoes," he told Mr. Sisi. "Boy, those shoes. Man!"

But some activists back in the United States gave the president mixed reviews at the start of his trip.

"While President Trump's address today in Saudi Arabia appears to be an attempt to set a new and more productive tone in relations with the Muslim world, one speech cannot outweigh years of anti-Muslim rhetoric and policy proposals," Nihad Awad, the executive director of the Council on American-Islamic Relations, said in a statement.

The speech was meant as a centerpiece of Mr. Trump's two-day stay here before he heads to Jerusalem early Monday, and it was part of a larger drive to plant the United States firmly in the camp of Sunni Arab nations and Israel in their confrontation with Shiite-led Iran. To firm up such a coalition, he spent hours meeting individually with leaders from Egypt, Bahrain,

While many Saudis have been delighted by Mr. Trump's visit, and he received a warm welcome from the royal family, the reaction from Arabs across the region has been more critical.

From Islamists to pro-democracy advocates, many have responded harshly to a U.S. president who has spoken of a ban on Muslims. Others simply saw Mr. Trump's elaborate reception from the Saudi monarchy as another sign that the administration wouldn't soon push the region's autocrats toward democratic reform.

—Tamer El-Ghobashy in Erbil, Iraq, contributed to this article.

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Appeared in the May 22, 2017, print edition as 'Trump Urges Unity on Terror.'

The New York Times Trump Softens Tone on Islam but Calls for Purge of 'Foot Soldiers of Evil' (UNE)

Peter Baker and Michael D. Shear

8-10 minutes

RIYADH, Saudi Arabia — President Trump on Sunday pivoted away from his strident assessment of Islam as a religion of hatred as he sought to redefine American leadership in the Middle East and rally the Muslim world to join him in a renewed campaign against extremism.

Addressing dozens of leaders from across the Muslim world who had gathered in Saudi Arabia, Mr. Trump rejected the idea that the fight against terrorism was a struggle between religions, and he promised not to scold them about human rights in their countries. But he challenged Muslim leaders to step up their efforts to counter a "wicked ideology" and purge the "foot soldiers of evil" from their societies.

"This is not a battle between different faiths, different sects or different civilizations," Mr. Trump said in a cavernous hall filled with heads of state eager to find favor with the new president. "This is a battle between barbaric criminals who seek to obliterate human life and decent people, all in the name of religion, people that want to protect life and want to protect their religion. This is a battle between good and evil."

The president's measured tone here was a far cry from his incendiary language on the campaign trail last

Qatar and Kuwait, then with more Muslim leaders in larger groups.

"This administration is committed to a 180-degree reversal of the Obama policy on Iran," said Mark Dubowitz, the chief executive of the Foundation for Defense of Democracies, a nonprofit research organization in Washington. "They see the Iranian threat as fundamentally linked to the nature and behavior of the regime and its revolutionary and expansionist ideology."

Mr. Trump toured the new Global Center for Combating Extremist Ideology in Riyadh, which employs 350 technicians tracking online radicalism and monitoring 100 television channels in 11 languages. The Trump administration and Saudi Arabia also announced the creation of a joint Terrorist Financing Targeting Center to formalize longstanding cooperation and search for new ways to cut off sources of money for extremists.

Mr. Trump made little mention of human rights in any of the meetings, and he promised in his speech not to do so publicly. "We are not here to lecture," he said.

"We are not here

to tell other people how to live, what to do, who to be, or how to worship. Instead, we are here to offer partnership — based on shared interests and values — to pursue a better future for us all."

That approach drew bipartisan criticism back in Washington. "It's in our national security interest to advocate for democracy and freedom and human rights," Senator Marco Rubio, Republican of Florida, said on CNN's "State of the Union." On the same program, Representative Adam B. Schiff, Democrat of California, called it "a terrible abdication of our global leadership."

Michele Dunne, the director of the Middle East program at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, said the president had laid blame for terrorism on Muslim leaders who he says have not done enough. "There are elements of truth to Trump's narrative," she said, "but it ignores the deeper grievances, the political and economic injustices, that make young people in the region especially susceptible to extremist ideologies at this particular time."

**The
Washington
Post**

Trump summons Muslim nations to confront 'Islamic terror of all kinds'

<https://www.facebook.com/PhilipRuckerWP>

11-14 minutes

RIYADH, Saudi Arabia — President Trump forcefully summoned the Muslim world to confront "the crisis of Islamic extremism" here Sunday on the eve of visits to Israel and the Vatican as he seeks to unite followers of disparate faiths against global terrorism.

Speaking from the birthplace of Islam, Trump implored the leaders of dozens of Muslim nations to take their destinies in hand and, together with the United States, eliminate the "wave of fanatical violence" committed in the name of religion.

"This is not a battle between different faiths, different sects or different civilizations," Trump said in the first major foreign policy address of his presidency. "This is a battle between barbaric criminals who seek to obliterate human life, and decent people, all in the name of religion — people that want to protect life and want to protect their religion. This is a battle between good and evil."

Trump implicitly rejected the aspirational goals and call for democracy and human rights of

former president Barack Obama, who also delivered a major speech to the Islamic world early in his presidency. "We are adopting a principled realism," Trump said.

"We are not here to lecture," he said. "We are not here to tell other people how to live, what to do, who to be or how to worship. Instead, we are here to offer partnership, based on shared interests and values."

Trump called for unity in confronting Iran over its funding of terrorists and promotion of a "craven ideology." He called on the Muslim world to help isolate Iran and, just days after Iranians reelected a moderate president, Hassan Rouhani, to "pray for the day when the Iranian people have the just and righteous government they so richly deserve."

[Trump campaigned against Muslims but will preach tolerance in Saudi speech]

Trump was addressing a rare gathering of leaders of about 50 Muslim nations at the Arab Islamic American Summit.

It was the second day of a marathon foreign trip that will take Trump to Israel on Monday, where he is scheduled to meet with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and President Reuven Rivlin and visit

And yet the change in the president's tone about the relationship between Islam and terrorism was striking. As he assailed Mr. Obama last year for not using the phrase "radical Islamic terrorism," Mr. Trump asserted that "anyone who cannot name our enemy is not fit to lead this country." He used the phrase again in his inaugural address in January.

Even after Lt. Gen. H. R. McMaster, the national security adviser, told his staff that the phrase was problematic and should not be used, the president defiantly repeated it days later in an address to a joint session of Congress.

Still, General McMaster said in an interview broadcast on ABC's "This Week" on Sunday that Mr. Trump had been listening to the Muslim leaders he has met since becoming president and understood their views better. "This is learning," General McMaster said.

Secretary of State Rex W. Tillerson told reporters, "The president clearly was extending a hand, and understanding that only together can we address this threat of terrorism."

While Mr. Trump's administration is still appealing court rulings that blocked his temporary travel ban, the president has not publicly raised the issue as much lately, and the page on his campaign site calling for the "total and complete shutdown" of Muslim immigration has been taken down.

Some advisers who advocated stronger action and language about what they call the Islamic threat have either left the administration or faded in influence. Michael T. Flynn, General McMaster's predecessor as national security adviser, was fired for other reasons. Stephen K. Bannon, the president's chief strategist, has lost sway. And Sebastian Gorka, a deputy assistant to the president, has been reported to possibly be leaving the White House at some point.

Even so, the hard-liners found enough to be happy with in the speech. After the president was finished on Sunday, Mr. Gorka wrote on Twitter: "After 8yrs disastrous terror-enabling policies we now have @POTUS: 'We r going 2 defeat terrorism & send its wicked ideology in2 OBLIVION.'"

the Church of the Holy Sepulchre and the Western Wall. On Tuesday, Trump will deliver a speech at the Israel Museum and briefly visit Bethlehem for a meeting with Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas.

Trump will then fly to Rome, where he will have a private audience with Pope Francis at the Vatican on Wednesday morning. He will attend a NATO summit in Brussels and a Group of Seven summit in Sicily, Italy, later in the week.

In the run-up to Trump's visit here, there was speculation about whether he would utter the phrase "radical Islamic terrorism" in his speech, the centerpiece of his Saudi trip. On the campaign trail, Trump loudly criticized Obama for refusing to describe the terrorism threat in those terms. But some of Trump's top aides, including national security adviser H.R. McMaster, have been urging him to soften his language. Many Muslim leaders consider broad denunciations of their faith insulting.

In his Riyadh address, Trump decided to use a substitute phrase: "Islamist extremism." But he slightly veered off the prepared excerpts released earlier by the White House, saying "Islamic" instead of "Islamist" on several occasions.

[Read the full speech Trump delivered in Saudi Arabia]

Describing the fight against terrorism, Trump spoke of "honestly confronting the crisis of Islamic extremism and the Islamists and Islamic terror of all kinds."

A senior White House official later said that Trump merely misspoke in using the word "Islamic" rather than "Islamist."

"He's just an exhausted guy," said the official, who briefed reporters only on the condition of anonymity.

Lamenting the scourge of terrorism across the Middle East, Trump exhorted, "Drive them out! Drive them out of your places of worship. Drive them out of your communities. Drive them out of your holy land. And drive them out of this Earth."

The Middle East, he said, had long been home to "Arabs and Christians and Jews living side by side" and could again be a place for "every person, no matter their faith."

[Trump mocked Obama for bowing to a Saudi king. And then he ...]

By preaching tolerance and calling Islam "one of the world's great faiths," Trump departed from his previously stated views on Muslims. Anti-Muslim rhetoric and policies

were hallmarks of his nationalist presidential campaign; he proposed banning Muslims from entering the United States and proclaimed, "I think Islam hates us."

Trump gave his remarks in an opulent hall of the King Abdul Aziz International Conference Center, where crystal chandeliers hung from the gilded ceiling and attendees sat in plush armchairs. The president was seated at the front of the room, behind an ornate wooden desk and alongside the summit's host, King Salman, before taking the lectern.

No final list of the leaders in attendance was initially released. Seen chatting in the chamber and then listening intently were kings, presidents and prime ministers from Jordan, Pakistan and the Palestinian Authority, as well as Egypt and numerous other African states with Muslim majorities. Some, including Turkey and Sudan, sent lower-level officials.

Speaking before Trump, Salman appeared to be gently admonishing the United States for its strict visa policies, saying that all in the room rejected "profiling religions and countries on a religious or sectarian basis."

But he was effusive in his praise of Trump and the president's decision to make Saudi Arabia the first stop on his first overseas trip. Trump, he said, "has many hopes and aspirations with the Arab and Muslim worlds."

Salman said that his kingdom is committed to "fighting all forms of terrorism" and that "one of the most important goals of Islamic sharia is protecting life, and there is no honor in committing murder."

The king excoriated Iran, saying the Arab world had no problems with that country until its 1979 revolution brought a theocratic government that quickly turned to terrorism and regional ambitions. "These odious acts are the products of attempts to exploit Islam as a cover for political purposes to flame hatred, extremism, terrorism and religious and sectarian conflicts," Salman said.

Trump was equally generous in his praise for Saudi Arabia, a Sunni Muslim state that considers Shiite Iran its principal rival for regional power.

He made proud reference to the \$110 billion arms deal signed with the Saudis during his visit here and said the United States was willing to extend the same partnership to other nations that share its objectives.

Trump also highlighted, in terms reminiscent of his domestic boasting, what he said were the achievements of his first months in office, claiming the creation of nearly 1 million jobs.

[Ivanka Trump meets with Saudi women leaders as some activists remain critical]

The president wants to both profit from the sales and move partners in the Middle East to share more of what he has said is the unequal burden of defending against the Sunni terrorism of the Islamic State and al-Qaeda and against Iran.

"America is prepared to stand with you — in pursuit of shared interests and common security," he said. "But the nations of the Middle East cannot wait for American power to crush this enemy for them. The nations of the Middle East will have to decide what kind of future they want for themselves, for their countries and, frankly, for their families and for their children."

Overall, Trump delivered a dark decree to the leaders in attendance.

"Religious leaders must make this absolutely clear: Barbarism will deliver you no glory — piety to evil will bring you no dignity," he said. "If you choose the path of terror, your life will be empty, your life will be brief, and your soul will be condemned."

A few hours before his remarks, Trump and the leaders of six Persian Gulf states reached an agreement to crack down on terrorism financing, including the prosecution of individuals who send money to militants.

gathering of leaders from across the Muslim world and called on them to isolate a nation he said had "fueled the fires of sectarian conflict and terror."

That nation was Iran.

In using the headline address of his first foreign trip as president to

The memorandum of understanding between the United States and the Gulf Cooperation Council, comprising Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates, includes the creation of a center in Riyadh to fight extremism.

Dina Powell, Trump's deputy national security adviser, called the agreement the "farthest-reaching commitment to not finance terrorist organizations" and said the Treasury Department would monitor it along with the gulf governments.

"The unique piece of it is that every single one of them are signatories on how they're responsible and will actually prosecute the financing of terrorism, including individuals," Powell told reporters.

[Trump signs 'tremendous' deals with Saudi Arabia on his first day overseas]

Outside funding for the Islamic State, al-Qaeda and other groups has come primarily from the Persian Gulf. U.S. officials in recent years have said that the gulf states have cracked down and virtually eliminated money coming from governments in the region. But they believe certain wealthy individuals — primarily in Kuwait and, to a lesser degree, Qatar — remain funnels for money or are themselves financing the groups.

A Kuwaiti cabinet minister was forced to resign in 2014 after the United States complained about his activities, and regional governments have instituted legal crackdowns, with varying degrees of success, to stem the practice. All have signed agreements in the past to stop it.

The Islamic State, in particular, has largely funded itself through extortion and taxes in the areas it controls in Syria and Iraq and through revenue for oil it sells clandestinely. But those sources, along with kidnapping for ransom, have diminished as the militants have lost territory.

The warm embrace of Trump that was on festive display on his first day in Riyadh continued during a trio of bilateral meetings the

president held Sunday at the Ritz-Carlton hotel.

Egyptian President Abdel Fatah al-Sissi praised Trump and invited him to visit Egypt, which Trump said he intends to do. Through a translator, Sissi said, "You are a unique personality that is capable of doing the impossible."

"I agree!" Trump replied, as his advisers and others looking on laughed.

Trump went on to compliment Sissi on his fashion, telling the Egyptian leader, "Love your shoes. Boy, those shoes. Man ..."

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Trump met with Sissi this spring in Washington, breaking an Obama-era ban on receiving the Egyptian leader in the White House because of his crackdowns on political and civil expression since taking power in a 2013 coup.

Trump called Sissi "my friend" and thanked him for his help with the release of American aid worker Aya Hijazi, 30, who had been imprisoned in Cairo.

[Freed Egyptian American prisoner returns home following Trump intervention]

Trump also met with the emir of Qatar, Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad al-Thani, and noted the long friendship between the two countries and the prospects of future trade.

"One of the things that we will discuss is the purchase of lots of beautiful military equipment, because nobody makes it like the United States," Trump told reporters ahead of his talks with the Qatari leader. "And for us that means jobs, and it also means, frankly, great security back here, which we want."

Read more:

'I think Islam hates us': A timeline of Trump's comments about Islam and Muslims

Trump's first trip abroad: Everything that's happened so far

The New York Times In Saudi Arabia, Trump Reaches Out to Sunni Nations, at Iran's Expense (UNE)

Ben Hubbard and Thomas Erdbrink
7-9 minutes

RIYADH, Saudi Arabia — As voters in Iran danced in the streets, celebrating the landslide re-election of a moderate as president, President Trump stood in front of a

declare his commitment to Sunni Arab nations, Mr. Trump signaled a return to an American policy built on alliances with Arab autocrats, regardless of their human rights records or policies that sometimes undermine American interests.

At the same time, he rejected the path taken by his predecessor,

Barack Obama. Mr. Obama engaged with Iran to reach a breakthrough nuclear accord, which Mr. Trump's administration has acknowledged Iran is following.

Mr. Trump has presented the shift as a reinvestment in historical alliances with friendly nations in order to fight extremism and

terrorism. But the juxtaposition of the election in Iran and the gathering in Saudi Arabia seemed to highlight a reality of the Middle East that presidents have long wrestled with: how to choose partners and seek American interests in a region torn by sectarian splits and competing agendas.

Iran and its proxies have effectively found themselves on the side of the United States in fighting the Islamic State in Iraq, while in Syria, they have been adversaries in their support for the rule of President Bashar al-Assad. Saudi Arabia has at times undermined the United States' efforts to stabilize Afghanistan.

"We are picking one side in this geopolitical struggle, and there is very little room for gray," said Frederic Wehrey, a senior fellow in the Middle East Program at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. "Sectarianism is a byproduct of this geopolitical rivalry, and we are inadvertently picking one side in this sectarian struggle."

The two scenes — dancing in the streets in Tehran and Sunni leaders gathered in an opulent hall in Riyadh — also pointed to a complicating reality in the Middle East: There is often a disconnect between the leaders and their people.

In his remarks, Mr. Trump signaled his intention to end engagement with Iran, suggesting that it does not encourage change from inside the country.

But in Iran, many were pushing for change. Emboldened by the election results, crowds of Iranians in the capital, Tehran, demanded what they hope President Hassan Rouhani's second term will bring: the release of opposition figures, more freedom of thought and fewer restrictions on daily life.

Mr. Rouhani's supporters also expect his victory, with 57 percent of the vote, to bolster his outreach efforts to the West and the pursuit of more foreign investment to lift Iran's ailing economy.

For those who voted for Mr. Rouhani, there was a feeling of tremendous relief that his challenger, the hard-line cleric

Ebrahim Raisi, who criticized the nuclear deal with the United States and other Western powers, had lost.

"Bye-bye, Raisi," the crowds chanted during the street gatherings.

"He faces a difficult task," Fazel Meybodi, a Shiite Muslim cleric from the city of Qum, said of Mr. Rouhani. "Now he must provide more freedoms, break the hard-line monopoly on the state-run radio and television, and increase freedom of press."

To achieve all that, Mr. Rouhani must persuade the hard-line-dominated judiciary and security forces to change their outlook, Mr. Meybodi said. "If he fails to deliver on at least 70 percent of those promises, his future is dark," he added.

For decades, Saudi Arabia and Iran have competed for religious leadership and political influence across the Muslim world and beyond.

Saudi Arabia, the Sunni monarchy that controls Islam's holiest sites, sees itself as the natural leader of the Muslim world and has used its lavish oil wealth to spread its austere version of the faith.

Iran, meanwhile, is the world's largest Shiite nation and is led by clerics who seek to export the ideology of political Islam that brought them to power in 1979.

Each country accuses the other of sowing instability.

Iran accuses Saudi Arabia of spreading an intolerant creed that fuels terrorism and threatens minorities. Saudi Arabia says Iran works through nonstate actors to weaken Arab nations.

In his speech on Sunday, Mr. Trump, a guest of the Saudi monarch, spoke of a stronger alliance with mostly Sunni Muslim nations to fight terrorism and extremist ideology and to push back against Iran.

"From Lebanon to Iraq to Yemen, Iran funds arms and trains terrorists, militias and other extremist groups that spread destruction and chaos across the region," Mr. Trump told dozens of Muslim heads of state. "It is a government that speaks openly of mass murder, vowing the

destruction of Israel, death to America, and ruin for many leaders and nations in this very room."

That pointed to a departure from the policies of Mr. Obama, who pushed Persian Gulf countries like Saudi Arabia to move toward greater self-sufficiency in defense while pressing for the agreement to limit Iran's nuclear program.

Proponents of that approach hoped that engagement with Iran would lead to greater moderation among its leaders, paving the way for its eventual reintegration into the world system.

But the nuclear deal angered Gulf nations, who felt that it rewarded Iran for bad behavior while doing nothing to constrain its destabilizing activities in Arab countries.

For them, Mr. Trump's return to America's traditional allies was a great relief.

"The most important thing is that the relationship between Saudi Arabia and the United States is built on vision and numbers, not on slogans. They are building on shared interests," said Ghassan Charbel, the editor in chief of Asharq Al-Awsat, a Saudi-owned newspaper. "It shows that the majority in the Arab and Islamic worlds will be close to the United States if it chooses to engage."

The Arab nations hate Iran for using nonstate actors in Arab countries. Iran was fundamental in the creation of Hezbollah, the Lebanese militant group and political party that now has Lebanon's strongest military force. More recently, Iran has sent military aid to help Mr. Assad fight rebels seeking his ouster, while also supporting militias in Iraq, Bahrain and Yemen.

But there is a gap between Iran's older, ruling clerics and the ambitions of its people, as was made clear when Iranians came out in force to dance and protest in the streets this weekend, breaking Islamic rules and political taboos, in celebration of Mr. Rouhani's re-election.

The election outcome was widely seen as evidence that Iran's society has changed radically. Influenced by satellite television, cheaper international travel, the internet, waves of migration to big cities and access to higher education, most of

Iranian society now adheres to middle-class values.

This collided with the anti-Western ideology and strict interpretation of Islam represented by Mr. Raisi and promoted by state organizations.

Some used the election's success to criticize Mr. Trump's visit to Saudi Arabia.

"Iran — fresh from real elections — attacked by @POTUS in that bastion of democracy & moderation," Iran's foreign minister, Mohammad Javad Zarif, wrote on Twitter, speaking of Saudi Arabia.

Hamidreza Taraghi, a hard-line analyst, said of Mr. Trump, "This man just wants to sell American weapons and use Iran as an excuse."

In deepening the United States' alliance with Gulf countries, Mr. Trump is bringing it closer to nations that share few cultural values with the United States and have sometimes acted against its interests.

Saudi Arabia, for one, is a monarchy where citizens have few rights and the public practice of any religion other than Islam is banned. It has used its military and its oil wealth to protect the Sunni monarchy that rules over a Shiite majority in neighboring Bahrain and to prop up President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi of Egypt.

In adopting the Gulf perspective on Iran, Mr. Trump could be assisting a strategy Gulf leaders use when times get hard at home.

"It is feeding into the Gulf narrative, where they project a lot of their insecurities about domestic politics outward and onto the Islamic Republic of Iran," said Mr. Wehrey, the Carnegie fellow. "But is Iran the source of all evil in the region? No."

Others questioned the value of working with autocrats to fight terrorism.

"The worldview that we are fighting against needs to be countered with liberal ideas, not Salafi ideas," said Mokhtar Awad, a research fellow in the Program on Extremism at George Washington University, referring to Saudi Arabia's conservative branch of Islam.

heads of state in the region to help in "honestly confronting the crisis of Islamist extremism and the Islamist terror groups it inspires," saying terrorists should be driven "out of this earth." Mr. Trump also said "all



Trump's Visit Cements Saudi Support, Avoids Thorny Regional Issues

William Mauldin
6-8 minutes

WASHINGTON—President Donald Trump's Middle East visit achieved a measure of foreign-policy success by shoring up U.S. alliances, distracting from the president's domestic difficulties and

sidestepping some of the thornier problems simmering in the region, according to lawmakers and Mideast experts.

In a speech in the Saudi Arabian capital, Mr. Trump challenged the

nations of conscience must work together to isolate Iran, deny it funding for terrorism," without providing concrete details of U.S. strategy toward Tehran.

"This is someone who is making it clear that we're making common cause with those who are prepared to take on ISIS and the Iranians," said Dennis Ross, a former U.S. envoy in the region and senior fellow at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy.

Mr. Trump's messages were received warmly by the leaders in the region because their governments are some of the biggest targets for terrorism and are also under pressure from Iran, which supports militants in Iraq, Syria and Yemen.

"It is to some extent preaching at the choir," said Anthony Cordesman, strategy chair at the Center for Strategic and International Studies. "All of this sends a kind of message about American resolve and American concern for its Arab allies."

The visit served as reassurance for Saudi Arabia and allied nations after former President Barack Obama appeared to seek closer relations with Iran while negotiating a nuclear agreement with the country, and after the 2016 presidential campaign raised questions about the U.S. appetite for foreign entanglements.

Mr. Trump's decision to visit Saudi Arabia and Israel before other countries—and

his warm rhetoric for their leadership—signals a shift away from Mr. Obama's policy in the region, which Mr. Trump has blamed for the turmoil there.

The trip also shows Mr. Trump appears eager to use his international authority to work with allies and court success on the global stage as he faces political headaches back home that may hamper his domestic goals, said Aaron David Miller, a former senior State Department official now at Washington's Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars.

In his speech Sunday, Mr. Trump had to strike a balance between cooperation with the majority-Muslim countries and loyalty to his domestic political base, which includes supporters who backed his campaign promise to ban Muslims from entering the U.S.

"He got in and out of the speech conundrum fairly well," Mr. Miller said. "He made a few of the right points, missed many of the bad ones, dodged the bullet on formulations of 'radical Islamic terrorism' that could be seen as terribly offending."

The speech in Riyadh isn't likely to win Mr. Trump support among Muslims. "One speech cannot outweigh years of anti-Muslim rhetoric and policy proposal," said Nihad Awad, the executive director of the Council on American-Islamic Relations, a Muslim advocacy organization.

due to the coexistence of both civil law and Islamic Shariah law.

Despite some positive changes, "the current system remains treacherous for foreign investors to navigate," said Riyadh-based lawyer Christopher Johnson, who is also vice chair of the American Business Group of Riyadh, a body that promotes U.S. business interests in the kingdom.

Some officials acknowledge change will require time and patience. "The Saudi government is not very efficient," said an economic adviser to the royal court. "It's an area in which we're not doing very well."

Many blue-chip companies aren't deterred.

The U.S. and Saudi Arabia over the weekend unveiled a raft of multibillion-dollar agreements in sectors including energy, technology and health care. Among them is a partnership between General Electric Co., Saudi

"I do not believe in a summit on Islam that is headed by Trump," wrote a Saudi Twitter user, Salem Haseen al-Dosari.

Some of Mr. Trump's political partners also were turned off. Roger Stone, a Republican operative who was closely involved with Mr. Trump's campaign, responded to a photograph of King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud placing a medal around the president's neck by writing on Twitter: "Candidly, this makes me want to puke."

Mr. Trump avoided sensitive issues of human rights, repressive regimes and official support for Muslim clerics in the region who inspire some militant extremists. The absence of a human-rights discussion drew quick criticism from Democratic and Republican lawmakers.

"I think this is a broader element of the administration's policy, that they're going to de-emphasize issues of human rights—that what countries do within their own boundaries, we're essentially going to look the other way," said Rep. Adam Schiff (D., Calif.).

Sen. Marco Rubio (R., Fla.) said on CNN "State of the Union" on Sunday that his own approach is to be "much more forceful and open and vocal about criticizing whether it's Egypt or Saudi Arabia for its human-rights record."

Saudi Arabia has helped roll back meager democratic gains made in many countries after the 2011 Arab Spring by throwing its weight behind

Egypt's military and undermining political Islamist movements like the Muslim Brotherhood. It maintains tight control over its domestic politics, limiting the rights of Saudi women and minorities.

In Bahrain, Mr. Trump told King Sheikh Hamad bin Isa al-Khalifa there would be no more "strain" in the relationship between the two allies.

"Sounds like a green light for violations," tweeted prominent Bahraini human rights activist Maryam Alkhwaja, reacting to the news. Bahrain has cracked down on dissenters since 2011, violently putting down popular protests.

Still, many Saudis celebrated Mr. Trump's visit, reveling in the spotlight the U.S. president and his family have brought to the country. Social media noted the presence of his daughter and senior White House adviser Ivanka Trump. The World Bank announced at a Sunday event with Ms. Trump that Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates have pledged a total of \$100 million to a new fund assisting female entrepreneurs.

"Trump's Daughter" was the top trending hashtag on Twitter for most of Saturday, riffing off previous social media phenomena where Mr. Trump was referred to as Abu Ivanka—meaning "Ivanka's Father" in Arabic.

—Kate O'Keeffe and Tamer El-Ghobashy contributed to this article.

Write to William Mauldin at william.mauldin@wsj.com

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

Saudi Arabia Remains Tough Place to Do Business, Despite U.S. Deals

Margherita Stancati in Riyadh and Nicolas Parasie in Dubai

5-6 minutes

Updated May 21, 2017 7:09 p.m. ET

The U.S. and Saudi Arabia touted more than \$400 billion in deals and potential investments during President Donald Trump's visit to Riyadh, collectively sending a message that the kingdom was open for business.

That was the easy part. Saudi Arabia remains a tough place for foreign companies, observers say.

Challenges range from the lack of bankruptcy legislation to a culture of personal connections. Government policy decisions are sometimes abruptly reversed. And there is a lack of clarity on legal matters, too,

Arabia's ministry of oil and a government program for joint ventures. The deal, valued at \$12 billion, focuses on power generation, digitization technology and oil and gas.

The scope and size of the agreements are in tune with Saudi Arabia's desire to develop new industries at home. That is a central goal of a government effort to reduce the country's dependence on oil. That change, Saudi energy minister Khalid al-Falih said Sunday, "requires our industrial base to grow in the order of magnitude."

But as oil prices have fallen, the business environment has become more challenging. The Saudi government stopped paying construction giants such as the Saudi Binladin Group, resulting in tens of thousands of layoffs of mostly Asian blue-collar workers but also Western engineers and project managers.

Many international banks are positioning themselves to reap the benefits of Saudi Arabia's economic liberalization, including the public offering of the world's largest oil company, Saudi Arabian Oil Co., or Saudi Aramco, which could fetch the Saudi government as much as \$100 billion.

But many global lenders have struggled to find their footing in the country. BNP Paribas SA and Standard Chartered PLC lent to Ahmad Hamad Algosabi & Brothers, a troubled Saudi Arabian conglomerate that defaulted on its debts almost eight years ago, forcing its creditors into a \$6 billion restructuring that still hasn't been fully resolved.

Two years ago, HSBC Holdings PLC's Saudi Arabia unit came under investigation by regulators in the kingdom for its role in a stock listing that has left investors nursing heavy losses. HSBC's Saudi unit last year said it has taken provisions

to settle issues related to the regulator's investigation, without elaborating.

Last year, the Saudi stock-market regulator banned the local unit of Deloitte & Touche LLP from providing accounting services in the kingdom for two years because of its work with a local contracting company that allegedly had breached market regulations. Deloitte said it was disappointed but respected the regulator's decision.

**The
Washington
Post**

DeYoung

8-10 minutes

RIYADH, Saudi Arabia — Ivanka Trump brought her message of female empowerment Sunday to the world's most repressive society for women, a place where women are not allowed to drive, must cover themselves from head to toe in public and require permission from a "male guardian" to travel outside their homes.

"In every country, including the United States, women and girls face challenges," Trump told a small group of accomplished Saudi women gathered for a dialogue with her about how to build on their successes. "Saudi Arabia's progress, especially in recent years, is very encouraging," she said, "but there's still a lot of work to be done."

President Trump is also accompanied here by his wife, Melania, and she and Ivanka Trump have often been the only women present in public meetings with Saudi officials. The first lady, who was courteous but silent and largely without expression during a number of formal sessions Saturday, was praised Sunday by the English-language Arab News as "classy and conservative" for her demeanor and designer outfits, covering her arms and legs.

Neither Melania nor Ivanka Trump have worn headscarves during the visit, following the tradition of other presidential spouses who visited Saudi Arabia.

[Melania and Ivanka Trump, following tradition of Western visitors, forgo headscarves in Saudi Arabia]

Beyond the streets of this country's locked-down capital, social media has been filled with both flattering and not-so-positive comments about the Trump family, including cartoons of the president picking

In the World Bank's Doing Business Index, Saudi Arabia ranks 94 out of 190 economies. In terms of starting a business, Saudi Arabia ranks 147, trailing its Gulf neighbors in the United Arab Emirates and even Iran.

The kingdom has said it is determined to quickly improve the business environment. The government recently established new arbitration centers to handle commercial disputes and is working on a new procurement law for

government agencies and on an insolvency law, according to the kingdom's investment agency.

It also introduced a business law last year that includes measures to better protect minority shareholders, and officials have pledged to bring government bodies into the digital age by allowing more business transactions to be handled online.

"The authorities are beginning to make good progress in identifying and reducing obstacles to private-

sector growth," said Tim Callen, the International Monetary Fund's mission chief for Saudi Arabia. "These efforts should continue."

Write to Margherita Stancati at margherita.stancati@wsj.com and Nicolas Parasie at nicolas.parasie@wsj.com

Appeared in the May 22, 2017, print edition as 'U.S., Saudis Tout Deals in Tough Setting.'

Ivanka Trump meets with Saudi women leaders as some activists remain critical

By Karen Arab

pockets as he shakes hands with royal leaders and memes of him in an imam's beard beside racy photos from days when he owned the Miss Universe competition.

One cartoon showed the Statue of Liberty dolefully sitting with her chin on her fist — an apparent reference to the president's entry ban affecting six majority-Muslim countries, although not Saudi Arabia — while Trump dances a jig, holding aloft a torch spewing American warplanes.

In her meeting with the women, Ivanka Trump described herself as a "female leader within the Trump administration" and said her focus was "to help empower women in the United States and around the globe."

She noted problems of affordable child care, paid family leave and a "persistent pay gap," and she said women around the world have told her of their lack of access to capital, networks and markets.

The 15 black-wrapped women gathered at Riyadh's Tuwaiq Palace to speak with the first daughter, who was dressed in a powder-blue pantsuit, were all highly educated, many of them in the United States. They held a variety of positions: heads of a national youth organization and the first public women-only university in the kingdom, senior roles in the Jeddah Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the small-business authority, and company founders.

[Ivanka Trump moves into West Wing office, acknowledges 'no modern precedent' for her role]

Hosting the meeting was Princess Reema bint Bandar, head of the women's section of the General Authority of Sports, who said she had met Trump because both had a life in retail. "And today," the princess said, "we both find ourselves quite interestingly in governmental positions where we

hope to make a difference for the future of women."

Ivanka Trump jokes during a speech on May 21 in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, that she "may need to borrow" local contractors for an "infrastructure" project. Ivanka Trump, President Trump's daughter and adviser, joked during a speech on May 21 in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, that she "may need to borrow" local contractors for an "infrastructure" project. (The Washington Post)

(The Washington Post)

World Bank President Jim Yong Kim, the only man at the gathering, described Trump and the princess as "two incredibly successful entrepreneurs" and praised the development of the International Women's Empowerment Fund under "Ivanka's leadership." He said that Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates have together contributed \$100 million and that he expected to announce a total of \$41 billion in the fund — used to help female entrepreneurs — at the Group of 20 summit in July.

Kim called it "a stunning achievement." The German government has been deeply involved in the effort, and the World Bank has increased its involvement after critics suggested that any role for Trump in soliciting funds would conflict with her White House role.

Saudi women need permission from male guardians for life choices. Will reforms change this?

Throughout the president's two-day visit to the kingdom, neither he nor any other U.S. official has publicly mentioned human rights here, although he briefly mentioned women's empowerment in his keynote speech to Muslim leaders Sunday. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson, in a Saturday news conference, did not respond to a question about whether human rights was raised in private talks.

In its most recent assessment of human rights around the world, the State Department noted that reported problems in Saudi Arabia included "citizens' lack of the ability and legal means to choose their government; restrictions on universal rights, such as freedom of expression, including on the Internet, and the freedoms of assembly, association, movement, and religion; and pervasive gender discrimination and lack of equal rights that affected most aspects of women's lives."

Trump's message did not appear to resonate with at least some Saudi women.

"All the women that Ivanka Trump met have a guardian," said Aziza al-Yousef, a 58-year-old Saudi activist who has campaigned to abolish the guardianship rules. A retired computer science professor at King Saud University, she was recently rebuffed when she tried to deliver to the government a 14,700-signature petition on eliminating the guardian system.

"All these achievements depend on whether you're lucky to be born in a family where your guardian will be understanding, will help you," Yousef said. "If Ivanka is interested in women empowerment and human rights, she should see activists, and not just officials."

[A Saudi woman tweeted a photo of herself without a hijab. Police arrested her.]

A recent royal decree called for easing some aspects of the guardian system, which requires a father, brother, husband or other close relative to accompany women outside the home and give written consent for them to access higher education, jobs and health care. The decree, which gave agencies three months to come up with new rules, does not include the right for women to travel independently outside the country.

"It's not about Ivanka speaking at the meeting," said activist Loujain al-Hathloul, "but is it actually useful for these women from Saudi Arabia to speak as well? Is their contribution in such events helpful to us Saudi women in general, not princesses or business owners or rich women? Does it actually help us? I doubt it.

"For instance, Princess Reema has her own business; she's hiring a lot of Saudi women," Hathloul said. "Thank you for this." But as a member of the global advisory board for Uber, "she hasn't pushed for women to

drive," the activist said.

[Saudi Arabia creates a girls council to empower women — but where are the girls?]

Checkpoint newsletter

Military, defense and security at home and abroad.

Hathloul, 27, was jailed in 2014 for daring to drive in Saudi Arabia, an event she chronicled on social media. "I haven't tried since then," she said, noting that she has a Persian Gulf-wide license that allows her to drive in every other country on the Arabian Peninsula.

"My issue with these events," she said of Ivanka Trump's discussion, "is that they show these women as powerful and making an impact, making a change. But in real life, they've been given these opportunities by the men. They did not fight for them."

"We are fighting to abolish the guardianship system. Have they taken part in it?" Hathloul said about what she called "the biggest wall in front of Saudi women." The businesswomen in the group, she said, "did something to reach that level, they worked for it. . . . But what are they doing in real life to

change the laws that are restricting women from actually developing themselves?"

"Can I ever be one of those women?" she said.

Read more:

An ambitious young prince wants to reimagine Saudi Arabia — and make it fun

Trump's first trip abroad: Where is he going next?

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

4-5 minutes

May 21, 2017 12:56 p.m. ET

The arms agreements with Saudi Arabia formally signed by the U.S. over the weekend could help protect domestic jobs in an industry that has culled tens of thousands of workers over the past five years, but also boost employment in the Gulf nation.

Lockheed Martin Corp. LMT 2.05% , Boeing Co. BA 1.89% and Raytheon Co. RTN 1.51% announced a mix of deals as part of the slew of trade agreements signed by the U.S. government during President Donald Trump's official visit.

U.S. officials said the defense deals—which include proposed sales and final approvals for sales that have been in the works for many years—were potentially worth \$109 billion. Most

U.S.-Saudi Defense Deals Open Up Jobs

Doug Cameron

have yet to be completed and hinge on further government-to-government talks, with the Pentagon then contracting with U.S. defense companies to supply the equipment.

Alek Jovicic, a principal at consultant Avascent Analytics, described the headline number as "staggering," and said it raised questions over the Pentagon's ability to complete so many deals and Saudi Arabia's ability to absorb so much equipment.

For the defense companies, whose shares have come off the boil and underperformed the market since the start of the year following a postelection bump, much hinges on the timing of actual sales.

Lockheed Martin said in a statement that it amassed \$28 billion in potential new business from Saudi Arabia, including the planned sale of four modified Littoral Combat Ships, reviving a plan ditched on cost grounds two years ago. It is also selling 150 Black Hawk

helicopters that would be assembled at a new plant in Saudi Arabia, creating 450 jobs there.

Saudi Arabia also wants to acquire Lockheed's Thaad missile-defense system, which has already been bought by the United Arab Emirates, and Raytheon said it was setting up a new Saudi-based defense arm encompassing munitions and cybersecurity.

The planned ship and missile-defense sales have already been approved by Congress and are expected to be the first to make it into first into companies' order backlogs, said analyst Cai von Rumohr at Cowen & Co.

Boeing, whose chief executive was in Saudi Arabia alongside his counterparts at Lockheed Martin and Raytheon, received congressional approval earlier this year to sell around \$7 billion in Chinook and Apache helicopters to the country. The sale is part of a deal first tentatively agreed in 2010, which is included in a \$60 billion

package negotiated with the Obama administration.

Saudi Arabia is the world's second-largest arms importer by value after India. Like other Persian Gulf states, it also wants to build more of its own military equipment to diversify an energy-dependent economy. Last week, the country announced plans to establish the state-owned Saudi Arabian Military Industries, which aims to create over 40,000 jobs by 2030. It is part of the Saudi Vision 2030 plan announced three years ago to source half of its defense requirements from domestic suppliers, compared with just 2% at present.

The largest existing Saudi arms contract from a U.S. company is the \$10 billion deal signed in 2015 to buy hundreds of military vehicles from the Canadian arm of General Dynamics Corp.

Write to Doug Cameron at doug.cameron@wsj.com



TODAY

4-5 minutes

President Trump and Saudi King Salman in Riyadh on May 21, 2017. (Photo: Mandel Ngan, AFP/Getty Images)

President Trump's speech in Saudi Arabia on Sunday came with a much needed change of tone in his descriptions of Islam's relations with the West.

A candidate who called for a "complete shutdown of Muslims entering the United States" now, as president, wants to reach out to the Islamic world. In his speech, he called for a partnership with Muslim

Editorial: In Saudi Arabia, President Trump turns Sunni

The Editorial Board, USA

nations, one "based on shared interests," to drive out extremism.

Nothing wrong with that, but Trump's welcome shift in tone only partially obscured a troubling departure on policy. He drew an explicit line between good and evil — and a more implicit line between Saudi Arabia and the Sunni sect of Islam on the one hand, and Iran and the rival Shiite sect on the other.

U.S. support for the Sunni camp was made clear by the fact that Trump made Riyadh his first foreign stop as president, by his willingness to sell the Saudis \$110 billion in military equipment, and by his repeated criticisms of Iran during his speech.

Why the United States would want to tilt toward either side in the

Sunni-Shiite divide is mystifying. These two sects have been at odds for centuries, with no signs of a detente.

OTHER VIEWS:

The Islamic State of Iraq and Syria, the world's most dangerous terrorist organization, is Sunni. The same goes for al-Qaeda, the group founded by Osama bin Laden that brought down the World Trade Center on 9/11.

The bulk of the 9/11 terrorists were Saudi citizens. And the Saudi government has long supported an ultra orthodox form of Islam known as Wahhabism, which has been a kind of gateway drug to radical Islam.

To be sure, much of the reason that Sunni extremism dominates the

world of terrorism is that it is the much larger of the two predominant sects. But radical Sunnis have been more aggressive than militant Shiites, such as Hezbollah, in attacking Western homelands.

Iran, home to the world's largest Shiite population, is a nasty theocracy in which ultimate power resides in the hands of an autocratic supreme leader. Yet it does have an elected president who has increasingly come to speak for a population yearning for better ties with the West. Indeed, as Trump arrived in the conservative kingdom of Saudi Arabia — a nation where women are still not allowed to drive — Iran's president, Hassan Rouhani, was re-elected in a landslide.

President Obama rightly saw Iran as a country worth cultivating, and did so with a deal that rolled back sanctions in return for a suspension of Iran's nuclear weapons program. Obama, in a 2009 speech in Egypt, also cited the human rights abuses and lack of economic opportunity that help make Arab nations a breeding ground for extremism.

Trump was notably silent on those issues Sunday, signaling to Sunni leaders that they wouldn't be called out for repression. Perhaps he calculates that a policy popular with Israeli leaders (who, like Saudi Arabia, were staunchly opposed to efforts to engage Iran) is a good way to keep Jews and evangelical Christians within his base.

Whatever the reason, Trump, like Obama, appears destined to discover that one speech in the heart of the Muslim world, no matter how well received, is hardly sufficient to alter ancient enmities.

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**THE WALL
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COMMENTS

5-6 minutes

Editorial: Trump's Middle East Reset

May 21, 2017
5:59 p.m. ET 225

spectrum approved by Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei and the Revolutionary Guards. That includes Mr. Rouhani, who is often called a moderate in the West but has presided over continuing domestic repression and regional aggression.

Mr. Rouhani will probably honor the broad terms of the 2015 nuclear deal, not least because it has provided the mullahs a much-needed financial reprieve from sanctions. The regime is likely to exploit the accord at the margins, however, including ballistic-missile launches and technical progress in secret that could allow a nuclear breakout when most of the accord's major restrictions sunset in eight to 13 years.

Contrary to Mr. Obama's hopes, there is no evidence that the nuclear deal has changed Iran's hostility to the U.S. or its designs for regional dominance. The Revolutionary Guards continue to support Bashar Assad's marauding in Syria, Shiite militias in Iraq, the Lebanese terror group Hezbollah, and Houthis in Yemen. Tehran sees the Gulf states as a collection of illegitimate Sunni potentates who must bow before Shiite-Persian power—and the U.S. as the only power that can stop its ambitions.

This is the strategic backdrop for Mr. Trump's visit to Riyadh, which was remarkable for the public

display of support for the U.S. alliance. The Saudis have long preferred to cooperate with the U.S. in more low-key fashion. But they laid on a summit of regional Arab leaders, announced substantial (\$110 billion) new arms purchases and investment in the U.S., and offered Mr. Trump the chance to deliver his first speech as President on U.S. relations with the Muslim world.

The two countries also issued a public "joint strategic vision declaration" that called for "a robust, integrated regional security architecture." The test of this vision will come in places like Syria and Yemen, but one early sign was the weekend launch of Saudi Arabia's new Global Center for Combating Extremist Ideology. This is a welcome development in the heart of Wahhabi Islam that nurtured Osama bin Laden and other jihadists.

Mr. Trump's speech on Sunday was notable for its conciliatory tone, calling for a "partnership" with moderate Muslim states. The arch rhetoric of his campaign was gone as he invoked the shared desire of Muslims, Christians and Jews to live without fear of religiously motivated violence.

He was also blunt in addressing Iran as "a government that speaks openly of mass murder, vowing the destruction of Israel, death to

America, and ruin for many leaders and nations in this room." Until Iran's regime "is willing to be a partner for peace," he added, "all nations of conscience must work together to isolate Iran, deny it funding for terrorism, and pray for the day when the Iranian people have the just and righteous government they deserve."

All of this will reassure the Gulf Arabs and other U.S. allies who questioned America's commitment during the Obama years of retreat. The Saudis are imperfect allies, but they are linchpins of the U.S.-led order in the Middle East, and their assistance is essential to defeating Islamic State in Syria.

In 31-year-old Deputy Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman, Saudi Arabia also finally has a serious modernizer who wants to diversify the economy from oil, expand the public space of women and ease other cultural strictures. The U.S. has a stake in his success and in particular should help him prevail as soon as possible against the Houthis in Yemen.

The eight-year decline of U.S. credibility in the Middle East can't be reversed in a single summit, but Mr. Trump's weekend in Riyadh is a promising start that will be noticed from Tehran to Damascus to Moscow.



Bergen: The real reason Saudis rolled out the reddest of red carpets

By Peter Bergen,
CNN National

Security Analyst

Story highlights

- Peter Bergen: President Trump's visit to Saudi Arabia could not come at a more opportune time
- As the Saudi economy struggles to sustain itself on oil revenue alone, Trump is offering an opportunity to diversify the country's economic prospects, writes Bergen

Peter Bergen is CNN's national security analyst, a vice president at New America and a professor of practice at Arizona State University. He is the author of "United States of Jihad: Investigating America's Homegrown Terrorists."

Riyadh (CNN) Imagine Houston run by an efficient version of the Taliban, and you get an approximation of what it is like to live in Riyadh, the Saudi capital.

But to understand the significance of President Donald Trump's visit to Riyadh and his much-anticipated speech on Islam, you must also

understand a bit more about the center of Saudi power.

Riyadh is a sprawling city of more than 6 million built by massive oil revenues, punctuated by soaring skyscrapers, stitched together by smooth freeways and surrounded by endless sand-colored suburbs that march ever outward to the empty deserts.

But Riyadh, despite its seemingly shiny veneer, is in trouble. For the first time in decades the Saudi monarchy can no longer rely on the revenues from oil to maintain its position as the leading Arab state and to buy off any aspirations that

the Saudi population might have to play a real role in politics.

That's because the days of \$100-a-barrel oil are long gone and are unlikely to return anytime soon. And it is this reality that made President Trump's trip to Riyadh and his speech on Sunday so important to the Saudi monarchy.

It's not just that they share a common interest in checking what they both regard as excessive Iranian influence in the Middle East. Both sides also see great value in the almost \$110 billion arms deal signed during Trump's visit, which aims, in part, to bulk up domestic

Saudi arms production and create new jobs in Saudi Arabia. And that's in addition to \$55 billion in deals with US companies that were also announced during Trump's visit.

The rationale for these deals is simple -- to jump-start the Saudi economy and bring new jobs to the private sector, as Saudi Foreign Minister Adel al-Jubeir explained at a press conference on Saturday. "We expect that these investments over the next 10 years or so will provide hundreds of thousands of jobs in both the United States and in Saudi Arabia," he said. "They will lead to a transfer of technology from the US to Saudi Arabia, enhance our economy and also enhance the American investments in Saudi Arabia, which already are the largest investments of anyone."

When oil wealth seemed an endless spigot of gold, the absolute Saudi monarchy created, somewhat paradoxically, a quasi-socialist state: an astonishing 90% of Saudis work for the government and have long enjoyed subsidies for water, electricity and gas. Health care and education are free.

But, in late 2015, the IMF warned that, given falling oil prices, the Saudi government could run out of financial reserves in five years if it kept up its present rate of spending.

With oil prices holding steady at around \$50 a barrel, the Saudi government is now cutting government salaries and reducing subsidies. Trump's visit -- and deals -- therefore create a critical opportunity in the private sector for Saudis who can no longer exclusively depend on the government.

King Salman -- who became King in 2015 and for almost five decades was the governor of Riyadh, overseeing its explosive growth from a city of a few hundred thousand in the mid-1960s to the massive city it is today -- has empowered his 31-year-old son, the Deputy Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, to also play a role in addressing Saudi's immediate demands. He is charged with modernizing Saudi society slowly and diversifying the Saudi economy quickly.

The Saudi government calls it "Vision 2030." The aim is to privatize the education, health care, agriculture, mining and defense sectors and to sell off Saudi

Aramco, perhaps

the wealthiest company in the world, which is estimated to be worth around a trillion dollars. The Saudis expect the United States to be a key player in all this, particularly given Trump's expertise in corporate America.

And the time is ripe for the Saudi monarchy to begin to transform its economic base. Its country is both young and incredibly connected -- 70% of the population is under 30, and 93% of Saudis use the Internet, far more than in the United States.

The declining role of the religious police

Riyadh sits in the Nejd heartland of Saudi Arabia, where in the mid-18th century the first Saudi King allied with Muhammad bin Abdul-Wahhab, a cleric who promoted a harsh interpretation of Sunni Islam.

This alliance is a marriage of convenience that has survived for more than two and half centuries and is the key to the political economy of Saudi Arabia in which the Saudis have retained absolute authority -- so much so that their family name is embedded in the name of the country -- while the Wahhabi religious establishment sanctions the rule of the absolute monarchy and has largely held sway over the social mores of Saudi society.

Until a year ago, compliance with the dictates of Saudi-style Wahhabi Islam were rigorously enforced by members of the feared religious police, known as the Committee for the Promotion of Virtue and the Prevention of Vice (the same name that was used by the Taliban's religious police when the Taliban were in power in Afghanistan).

The religious police patrolled the streets looking for purported malefactors and were given a more or less free hand to do so. In one notorious episode in 2002, in the holy city of Mecca, the religious police prevented girls from fleeing a school that was on fire because they were not properly dressed. Fifteen of them perished in the flames.

But, last April, the wings of the religious police were clipped by King Salman and his son MBS, as he is universally known here. They no longer have the power to arrest suspects and now can only report them to regular police units.

In addition to getting the religious police to back off, the Saudi monarchy has allowed some music concerts to happen, but their biggest ambition, as described above, is to wean Saudi Arabia from its almost total dependence on oil revenues.

The Saudis see the Trump administration as a key to this, and that's why they rolled out the reddest of red carpets for the President's visit.

In return, Trump received the perfect platform to give his speech on Islam. After all, where better to make that speech than in the holy land of Saudi Arabia, home to the sacred cities of Mecca and Medina? And who better to convene the leaders of every Muslim country to hear Trump speak than the Saudi royal family?

The speech

In Riyadh, the city where Osama bin Laden was born six decades ago, President Trump delivered his much-anticipated speech Sunday to leaders from around the Islamic world.

The stakes needless to say were high. Candidate Trump had previously opined that "Islam hates us" and had called for "the total and complete shutdown of Muslims entering the United States," an argument he has since modified and moderated.

Nonetheless, such rhetoric on the campaign trail made Trump an unpopular figure across the Muslim world. A poll released in early November ahead of the US presidential election found that only 9% of those polled in the Middle East and North Africa would have voted for Trump versus 44% for Hillary Clinton.

After he was elected, Trump had also attempted to ban temporarily travel from a half dozen Muslim countries to the United States, an order that was midwifed by a top policy adviser, Stephen Miller, who now had the unenviable task of also being the "lead pen" for the President's keynote speech on Islam.

Trump's speech was billed as a "reset" with the Muslim world, just as President Obama's was eight years ago when he went to Cairo and declared "I have come here to seek a new beginning between the United States and Muslims around

the world; one based upon mutual interest and respect..."

During the presidential campaign in August, Trump panned Obama's Cairo speech, castigating Obama for a "misguided" speech that didn't condemn "the oppression of women and gays in many Muslim nations, and the systematic violations of human rights, or the financing of global terrorism..."

Of course, it's all a lot more complicated when you are President, and Trump raised none of these issues in his Riyadh speech, instead emphasizing the scourge of terrorism, which is something that pretty much anyone in the Islamic world and the West can agree upon.

Trump did use the term "Islamic terrorism," which critics assert conflates Islam with terrorism, but his speech, which was received with polite attention from the leaders of the Muslim world, was a largely anodyne account of the need for civilized countries to work together to defeat terrorist groups in the name of our common humanity and -- minus some swipes at Iran -- could have been delivered by President Obama.

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Speeches, of course, are not policies, and Obama's initial popularity in much of the Muslim world waned after he ordered a large surge of troops into Afghanistan, greatly ramped up drone strikes in Pakistan and Yemen and failed to intervene in any meaningful way to end the Syrian civil war.

The same surely will hold true for Trump. If his administration continues to pursue its travel ban from six Muslim-majority countries in the courts and does little to bring peace to the Middle East, whether in Syria or between the Israelis and the Palestinians, any bump he might get from his Riyadh speech will prove as ephemeral as the sandstorms that occasionally blast through the Saudi capital.

But even if Trump's speech does not herald any real changes in US national security policies, the business deals that the Trump administration is helping to broker with the Saudis will help move the Saudi economy away from its total dependence on oil.

meeting between the president of the United States and heads of government from more than 50 Muslim states — was

unprecedented. To that was added sessions with Saudi leaders and leaders of the Gulf Cooperation Council.

The president's speech, replete with respect for Islam, added to the sense that far from being a hater of Islam, he was a Westerner approaching it with dignity and common sense. One possible effect: How might federal judges henceforth hold that his executive orders limiting access to the United States for certain Muslims are motivated by nothing more than pure hatred? They have relied on campaign rhetoric, but this speech showed (as have so many other Trump actions) that campaign rhetoric is no guide to his positions and motivations as president.

Trump was tough as nails on Iran, which will gratify his Saudi hosts and the many Americans who found the Obama approach unconscionable. Obama saw Iran as a potential partner in the Middle East and subordinated every American interest to getting his nuclear deal done. Trump made it clear that he has entirely jettisoned this approach.

Trump's analysis of the terrorists was also powerful: They are nihilists, he suggested, not Muslims. Thus, he said: "Every time a terrorist murders an innocent person and falsely invokes the name of God, it should be an insult to every person of faith. Terrorists do not worship God. They worship death."

The speech also called upon Muslim governments to be far more active in the fight against terrorism and extremism. He warned them that the United States could not and would not try to solve this problem for them: "It is a choice between two futures — and it is a choice America cannot make for you." Among the already famous "Drive them out" lines was the first: "Drive them out of your places of worship." This was as close as Trump came to stating clearly that Muslim extremism is a religious problem that has invaded mosques and in fact invaded Islam

itself, and that Muslims need to clean out the networks of mosques and madrassas and imams upon which extremism feeds.

Trump was tough as nails on Iran, which will gratify his Saudi hosts and the many Americans who found the Obama approach unconscionable.

But two factors undermined the impact of Trump's strong words about terrorism and extremism.

The first was that the speech was too discursive. He tried to cover too much, mentioned too many countries, and even included mention of bilateral U.S.–Saudi trade and arms deals. These had no place in a major speech about Islamist extremism. Trump called his announcement of the various deals totaling \$400 billion "blessed news," a bad misuse of the term "blessed" in a speech largely about religion.

The second factor was far more significant. Twice Trump called Islamist terrorism and extremism an "ideology," suggesting that he understands it is a belief system. But he appeared to be arguing that military action alone would defeat it. It won't: Islamist extremism is a terrible and dangerous idea, and it will not be defeated by military action alone. We need other, better ideas to battle against extremist ideas.

To put it another way, Trump's military approach would work if terrorists had dropped out of the sky like creatures in some action movie about the invasion of Earth. But terrorists don't descend upon us like that: They actually emerge from the societies whose leaders he was addressing. *Why?* That is the great question that Trump buried. Why in the last several decades do Muslim societies produce brutal terrorist murderers? What's the explanation? George W. Bush, relying on the 2002 Arab Human Development Report and many other Arab opinions, suggested that the "freedom deficit" was at the heart of

the problem. Trump presented no theory, and no solution — unless we think we can kill all the terrorists if only we cooperate more.

Two examples of the problem: Trump complimented Bahrain in his speech, saying it "is working to undermine recruitment and radicalism." This is quite wrong. The Sunni royal family's oppression of the country's Shia majority is in fact creating a breeding ground for radicalism and opening a door for Iranian subversion. Trump also, though with better reason, stayed completely away from the embarrassing fact that Saudi Arabia's Wahhabi Islam is at least a gateway drug for extremism. All around the world, Saudi money is being used to suppress indigenous forms of Islam. Saudi preachers, mosques, and schools teach that local and moderate versions of Islam are impure and must be replaced by the only true version: the Saudi Wahhabi version. But that version of Islam treats unbelievers with contempt and often hatred, oppresses women, and opposes democracy.

It would have been impolite and in fact nasty for Trump to say this in public as a guest in Saudi Arabia, but one wonders what he said privately. Trump announced the new Global Center for Combating Extremist Ideology, to be located in Saudi Arabia and presumably funded by them. But combating extremist ideology must start at home for the Saudis, and it is to be hoped that Trump told them so in his private sessions.

Trump did use the word "reform" in his speech, and the word "justice," but his main message about Muslims societies that are giving rise to terrorists was that we would not raise this question. He said: "We are not here to lecture — we are not here to tell other people how to live, what to do, who to be, or how to worship. Instead, we are here to offer partnership based on shared interests and values." What are those values? Equality for women? He did not say so with clarity. Liberty? Not mentioned. Religious

freedom for non-Muslims? Hinted but not stated.

Trump appeared to attack what I would call a straw man, but the speechwriters no doubt thought the target was George W. Bush and Barack Obama:

Our partnerships will advance security through stability, not through radical disruption. We will make decisions based on real-world outcomes, not inflexible ideology. We will be guided by the lessons of experience, not the confines of rigid thinking. And, wherever possible, we will seek gradual reforms, not sudden intervention. We must seek partners, not perfection.

This approach will win kudos from most of those in the room, but will it be effective in ending terrorism? Partnerships with repressive regimes may in some cases exacerbate rather than solve the problem for us. Gradual reform is exactly the right approach, but will we see President Trump pushing President Sisi of Egypt (with whom he is friendly), or Erdogan of Turkey, or the Bahrainis, for gradual reform?

This visit to Riyadh has cemented old friendships and showed the Sunni Muslim world that we are on their side against Iran and its dreams of Shia hegemony. It offered American help in the military, intelligence, and police actions needed against terrorism. But it offered no explanation of the origins of terrorism and extremism, and no suggestions as to how we and our Muslim allies can change those conditions so that the terrorists do not gain new cadres every year.

— Elliott Abrams is senior fellow for Middle Eastern studies at the Council on Foreign Relations. He is the author of *Realism and Democracy: American Foreign Policy after the Arab Spring*, to be published in September by Cambridge University Press.



Re-elected Iran Moderate Rouhani Faces Entrenched Interests

Asa Fitch and
Aresu Eqbali

6-7 minutes

May 21, 2017 1:46 p.m. ET

TEHRAN, Iran—A decisive re-election win for Iranian President Hassan Rouhani is likely to fuel his push for foreign investment and better relations with the West, but it will also likely mobilize conservative

forces that have resisted rapprochement and advocate domestic development.

Mr. Rouhani has called for more foreign investment and trade as part of his plans to ease unemployment and raise living standards. And he has pledged to continue efforts to get sanctions on Iran lifted, as some were under the 2015 deal with six world powers to curb Tehran's nuclear ambitions.

Yet going down that path could lead Mr. Rouhani, who captured 57% of the vote in Friday's election, into confrontation with some of Iran's most powerful interests, concentrated around Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, who has the final say in most matters of state.

"The next four years will challenge Rouhani considerably," said Behnam Ben Taleblu, a senior Iran analyst at the Foundation for

Defense of Democracies in Washington.

Despite Mr. Rouhani's sound defeat of his main hard-line rival, Ebrahim Raisi, he is likely to face considerable resistance from conservative institutions such as the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, or IRGC, an elite arm of the military charged with defending the country's Islamic revolution.

The IRGC oversees the country's ballistic-missile program, which recently drew new U.S. sanctions. The IRGC also operates a business empire with interests ranging from infrastructure and energy to telecommunications and real estate.

For any Iranian president, the IRGC is a power center to be reckoned with. For Mr. Rouhani, who has advocated a more open marketplace with plenty of foreign competition, a clash with the IRGC could be even more pronounced.

Speaking at a rally in the holy city of Mashhad two days before the election, Mr. Rouhani said the IRGC's businesses were welcome as long as they didn't elbow others out.

"We have no problem with you having news agencies, cultural entities, businesses and companies," he said. "Just leave some room for other people too."

For its part, the IRGC has taken swipes at Mr. Rouhani's signature accomplishment, the nuclear deal.

The deal gave Iran some relief from sanctions. But the IRGC's commander, Maj. Gen. Mohammad Ali Jafari, has questioned its benefits and played down the notion it was a model for fixing other economic issues.

Esmail Kosari, a former parliament member and IRGC commander, said the guards' involvement in economic activities was a necessity when it came time to rebuild the country after the Iran-Iraq war in the 1980s.

"The guards were not seeking such a role," he said, adding that it abided by the law in carrying out its activities. "They were assigned to it."

Some Iranian business owners complain that entities close to Mr. Khamenei, the supreme leader, still enjoy special treatment.

"Here some people escape from paying taxes and tariffs, but some others like us, we have to," said Davoud, who owns three clothing stores in Tehran and imports his goods from Turkey and China. "That's not fair."

The IRGC's political and economic influence is deeply rooted. It has won billions of dollars' worth of government contracts without having to bid for them. Its deep coffers allow it to fund Iranian military interests abroad and lead the country's participation in the Syrian and Iraqi conflicts.

In the past, resistance to the IRGC's aims has led to tension between presidents and the clerical establishment. The IRGC clashed with Mohammad Khatami, the

reformist who was president between 1997 and 2005, over what it saw as the president's weak response to student protests in 1999. Mr. Khatami lost those political battles, and is currently barred from appearing in media.

It isn't impossible for Mr. Rouhani to work with the IRGC. Mr. Rouhani negotiated with foreign companies, including France's Total SA, to develop Iran's giant South Pars gas field after IRGC entities dominated projects there under hard-line President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, Mr. Rouhani's predecessor.

The IRGC could even benefit from Mr. Rouhani's push to win the removal of all sanctions that remain on Iran after the nuclear deal—including many that target the IRGC. But the IRGC's commanding position in the Iranian economy is unlikely to change quickly.

"Incremental progress is possible, but it requires the president to build consensus around his policies," said Ali Vaez, a senior Iran analyst at the Brussels-based International Crisis Group.

If Mr. Rouhani finds himself increasingly at odds with the IRGC, the climate for foreign investment could dim. Yet so far, the IRGC has managed to maintain its economic edge and even profit through ownership of large businesses benefiting from increased trade after

the nuclear deal, Mr. Ben Taleblu said.

While it is unclear whether there will be a flood of postelection investment, a renewed influx would help Mr. Rouhani deliver on his argument that openness is good for Iran.

It also remains to be seen what role, if any, a newly staunch alliance between the U.S. and Saudi Arabia that aims to contain Iran's regional activities could play in steering foreign companies away during Mr. Rouhani's second term.

These uncertainties only compound other basic roadblocks for Iranians and their foreign partners, said Ferial Mostofi, a businesswoman and the president of the Iran Chamber of Commerce's investment commission. Despite Mr. Rouhani's negotiation of the nuclear deal, financial transactions abroad are still difficult to do because big banks remain wary of Iran.

"The economy can go into in full swing once this banking system for money transfers goes in full swing, which it has not," she said.

Write to Asa Fitch at asa.fitch@wsj.com

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U.S., Europe Face Divisions Over Iran Policy

Jay Solomon
6-7 minutes

May 21, 2017 4:48 p.m. ET

WASHINGTON—The landslide reelection of Iranian President Hassan Rouhani threatens to put the Trump administration on a collision course with Europe over future policy toward Tehran.

European officials hailed the news of Mr. Rouhani's win as heralding a more moderate path for Iran over the next four years. But President Donald Trump, speaking to Muslim leaders in Saudi Arabia, sought to rally the international community behind a new campaign to push back Iran's influence in the Middle East.

Indeed, Mr. Trump signaled a significant hardening of the U.S. position toward Iran, suggesting only the removal of its theocratic leadership could stabilize the region.

"Until the Iranian regime is willing to be a partner for peace, all nations of conscience must work together to

isolate Iran...and pray for the day when the Iranian people have the just and righteous government they deserve," Mr. Trump said.

Mr. Rouhani, a pragmatic Islamic cleric, secured a second term Saturday on a campaign platform to promote an Iran that is more open to the West and willing to embrace political and economic changes.

Many European governments hope he will use his next four years to moderate Tehran's overseas policies, particularly its support for Shiite militias fighting in Syria, Iraq and Yemen. Few of the U.S. president's top aides, however, believe Mr. Rouhani can deliver serious change in a political system dominated by hardline Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei and its elite military unit, the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps.

They say Iran's regional aggression increased over the past four years, despite Mr. Rouhani's more pragmatic politics and the landmark nuclear agreement, called the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, or JCPOA, forged between global powers and Iran in 2015. They point

to Mr. Khamenei and the IRGC as pushing these policies.

Trump administration officials privately worry Mr. Rouhani's reelection could help shelter Iran's hardline factions from the increased financial and military pressure the U.S. seeks to exert. Indeed, European leaders roundly applauded his victory this weekend and outlined a policy toward Iran diametrically opposed to Mr. Trump's.

"#EU ready to continue work for full JCPOA implementation, bilat engagement, regional peace, and meet expectations of all people in #Iran," European Union foreign policy chief, Federica Mogherini, tweeted on Saturday.

The Trump administration is currently conducting an interagency review of its overall Iran policy, including whether to maintain U.S. support for the nuclear agreement. Trump officials said the review also explores ways to support democracy promotion in Iran and how to blunt more effectively Tehran's ability to arm its proxies in the Middle East region.

On Wednesday, the administration extended the life of the nuclear deal by granting sanctions waivers to companies and countries trading oil with Iran. But the White House also imposed new financial penalties on Iranian and Chinese firms allegedly involved in developing Tehran's ballistic missile program.

"This [granting of waivers] should not be seen as giving Iran a clean bill of health," said a senior administration official, stressing a final decision on the nuclear deal hasn't been made.

Mr. Trump's hardline position on Iran is dividing traditional U.S. allies and adversaries alike.

The Arab states and Israel have embraced the American leader's toughening position. The U.S.'s announcement on Saturday of more than \$100 billion in arms sales to Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates is largely seen as aiding their efforts to challenge Iran's growing military arsenal and support for proxies in key Arab countries.

Mr. Trump has already increased military support for Saudi and UAE military operations in Yemen, which

pit their militaries against the Iran-backed Houthi militia. His administration also twice attacked the forces of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, a close Iranian ally, something the Obama administration didn't do.

"If Iran wants to be a normal country and wants others to treat it like a normal country, it has to act in accord with international law and the values and the morals of the international system," Saudi Foreign Minister Adel al-Jubeir said Saturday, in response to Mr.

Rouhani's win. "But this is not the Iran we see."

The EU, China and Russia, key players in the nuclear talks, have told the Trump administration they won't support any effort by the U.S. to renegotiate or abrogate the nuclear deal.

Mr. Trump's toughening position on Iran is also rekindling a domestic political fight that broke out over the nuclear deal in 2015.

In recent weeks, Democrats and former Obama administration officials have mobilized against

what they fear could be an effort by the Trump administration to back out of the accord. They are particularly concerned about new sanctions measures that are being drafted in Congress.

This new legislation "could provoke a terrible reaction in Iran and with our allies," a former Treasury Department official, Adam Szubin, wrote the Senate's leadership in May.

Despite tough rhetoric, members of Mr. Trump's cabinet aren't ruling out holding high-level talks with Iran on the nuclear deal and other strategic

issues. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson has suggested in the past he might try to toughen the terms of the landmark deal.

"I've never shut off the phone to anyone that wants to talk or have a productive conversation," Mr. Tillerson said in Riyadh on Saturday. "At this point, I have no plans to call my counterpart in Iran, although, in all likelihood, we will talk at the right time."

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Lake: Iranians Re-Elect a Fake Reformer in a Fake Election

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8-9 minutes

Middle East

Rouhani was the lesser of two evils, but Westerners vastly overestimate what an Iranian president can do.

21 mai 2017 à 14:52 UTC-4

Believe if you want to.

Photographer: Majid Saeedi

In the days before President Hassan Rouhani's re-election victory in Iran this weekend, a video of one of his old speeches circulated on social media. Speaking at Iran's parliament, Rouhani says dissidents against the new regime should be publicly hanged during Friday prayers as a message.

Rouhani was a younger man in this speech, in his early 40s. The revolution was also young. And many Iranian leaders of that era have taken the journey from revolution to reform. The reason Rouhani's speech though is so relevant to Iran today is because, in public at least, the president of Iran has changed his tune.

During his campaign, he told voters that he would be a "lawyer" defending their rights. He criticized his main rival, Ebrahim Raisi, for his role in ordering the executions of political dissidents. He promised gender equality and a freer press.

All of that sounds pretty good. And for those in the west looking for an Iranian version of Mikhail Gorbachev, it makes a nice talking point. Unfortunately, there is no reason to believe Rouhani will deliver, or even try to deliver, on any of these promises.

There are a few reasons for this. To start, Rouhani delivered the same

line back in 2013 when he first won the presidency. We now know that human rights in Iran have further eroded during his tenure. A lot of this has been documented by the Center for Human Rights in Iran. The organization noted in October that Rouhani supported a law that would essentially place all Iranian media under government control. The center also documented a wave of arrests of journalists in November 2015, following Iran's agreement to the nuclear bargain with the U.S and five other world powers. In the run-up to Friday's vote, 29 members of the European Parliament wrote an open letter urging Iran to end its arrests, intimidation and harassment of journalists in the election season.

Sadegh Zibakalam, an activist and professor of political science at Tehran University, summed this up well in November: "Rouhani did not have the power to free political prisoners or end the house arrests, but he didn't even pretend that he wanted to do something."

In fairness to Rouhani, much of this is beyond his control. As anyone who pays attention to Iran knows, the real power in the country resides with the unelected supreme leader, Ali Khamenei, and the security services, which operate more like rival mafias these days, controlling many of Iran's industries and businesses. This means in practice that Rouhani can inveigh against crackdowns and house arrests of the democratic opposition (which he mainly does during elections), but ultimately it's not his call.

Rouhani also doesn't have much of a say on Iran's foreign policy. Despite the completion of the nuclear deal and a U.S. president desperate to restore diplomatic ties, Iran escalated its predations in the Middle East in the final years of Barack Obama's presidency. Iranian officers were helping to direct the ground campaign against

Aleppo, Syria, this fall, when rebels finally lost control of a city the dictator had starved.

Obama administration alumni will say that Rouhani's election in 2013 was an important precondition for getting a nuclear deal. This, too, overstates the importance of Iran's president. It's true that secret negotiations picked up after Rouhani won in 2013. But there would be no nuclear deal without the blessing of the supreme leader. What's more, at the time the Obama administration said they were able to get the Iranians to negotiate because the U.S. led an international effort to impose crippling sanctions on the state's banking system and oil industry.

All of this should inform how we in the West understand what just happened in Iran. It's true that turnout for the vote was high. It's also true that genuine reformers and dissidents urged their followers to vote for Rouhani. But this masks a deeper point: Iranian elections have the legitimacy of votes for a high school's student government association. Many students may vote from a narrow set of options, but the students they elect most yield to those who wield real power, the teachers and the school's administrators.

And yet reading the Western press, you'd think Iran was like any other free country. Rouhani won in a "landslide," many headlines blared. It is widely interpreted as a rebuke of hardliners. I look forward to a BBC analysis of Rouhani's get-out-the-vote effort in Isfahan.

Western journalists and analysts are hardly alone. Obama, too, suffered from the delusion that Iranian politics were contested between reformers and hardliners. In his 2015 message to Iranians for the Nowruz holiday, Obama said, "My message to you, the people of Iran, is that together we have to

share the view that we will speak up for the future that we seek."

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Iranians did speak up for their future in 2009. That was during another election. The hardliner Mahmoud Ahmadinejad was challenged by the Green Movement that campaigned on expanding rights for the people and ending confrontation with the West. But Ahmadinejad stole that election, and the state arrested thousands of citizens who had the temerity to take their grievances to the street. The leaders of that movement remain under house arrest, despite Rouhani's promise in 2013 to free them.

And this gets to why it's so dangerous for free nations pretend that there is real political competition in Iran. If you accept that premise, it leads to fuzzy policies aimed at strengthening reformers and moderates, while chalking up Iran's arrests of dual nationals or its provocations of U.S. ships to the infighting of Iran's hardliners.

It's understandable that Iranians forced to live under the thumb of the mullahs voted for the least-worst option. But Westerners should never lose sight of a better Iran, where politicians can actually deliver on popular promises to free dissidents and support equal rights for women. Congratulating Iran for its fake elections only legitimizes a system where real elections are not possible.

This column does not necessarily reflect the opinion of the editorial board or Bloomberg LP and its owners.

Rogin : How Trump could deal a blow to Iran — and help save Syria

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Lebanon and Syria through Baghdad to Tehran.

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Despite President Trump's reluctance to get deeply involved in the Syrian civil war, the United States now finds itself in the middle of an escalating battle in the country's south that last week led to a clash between the U.S. military and Iranian-backed pro-government forces. If he can seize the opportunity, Trump could deal a blow to Iranian regional influence and help save Syria in the process.

To hear the Trump administration tell it, the coalition airstrike May 18 near the al-Tanf base on Syria's border with Jordan and Iraq was a one-off event. A statement from U.S. Central Command said that "pro-regime forces" had crossed into an "established de-confliction zone," posing a threat to opposition forces and the U.S. troops who are training them.

But the skirmish near al-Tanf was not an isolated incident. According to officials, experts and rebel leaders on the ground, an ongoing and rapidly accelerating confrontation in that area was triggered by an offensive by Iranian-backed militias. Iran is trying to establish strategic control over territory creating a corridor from

If successful, the Iranian campaign would drastically reshape the regional security situation, harm the fight against the Islamic State in the nearby city of Deir al-Zour and directly undermine U.S. efforts to train and equip an indigenous Sunni Arab fighting force, which is essential to establishing long-term stability.

In short, it's a fight that the United States cannot and should not avoid. It's also an opportunity for Trump to accomplish what his administration says it wants to do in the Middle East: Push back against Iranian aggression and expansionism.

So far, the White House doesn't see it in that light. An official told me that the decision to strike regime and Iranian-backed forces last week was made by military commanders on the ground, not by the White House. The commanders have the authority to strike whenever they believe U.S. troops are under threat, the official said, stating that there has been no change in U.S. policy in Syria.

"There was no large, big-picture change that resulted in this scenario," the official said.

The strikes did change Tehran's calculus. The Middle East Institute's Charles Lister said that the bombs hit a militia backed by the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Forces called Kataib Imam Ali. After the strikes, the Iranian FARS news agency reported that Iran will send 3,000 Hezbollah fighters to the al-Tanf region to thwart a "U.S. plot."

A Syrian opposition rebel leader who works with the U.S. military said that while there are a mix of regime, Iranian and militia forces fighting in the area, the Iranians are in command of the campaign. Their first goal is to establish control over a security triangle that would give them free movement between the eastern Syrian towns of Palmyra and Deir al-Zour and Baghdad.

The Iranians' second goal is to block the U.S.-supported rebels in al-Tanf from Deir al-Zour. If the rebels take the city from the Islamic State, it would be a huge boon for the Sunni opposition to the regime of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad.

Two Syrian rebel groups opened up a front against the Iranian-backed forces about two weeks ago, in response to the Iranian campaign, the rebel leader said. One of them is working directly with the U.S. military. The other is supported by the military operations center led by the CIA and allies in Jordan.

Even absent public acknowledgment from Washington, the rebel groups believe they have tacit support from the United States to prevent Iran and the regime from taking over the area. That belief is uniting rebel groups on the ground, who have long wanted to fight Iran and the regime, in addition to the Islamic State.

Those who support the Syrian opposition in Washington are also noticing a shift in the U.S. approach toward confronting Iran in Syria. Whether that represents mission creep or a deliberate change in approach on a policy level is unclear — and ultimately irrelevant. Perhaps by accident, Trump is moving toward a Syria policy that is tougher on Iran and the Assad regime, and it's having real effects on the ground.

"The United States has two major adversaries in Syria, that is Iran and ISIS. Both represent huge risks to U.S. national security and interests in the region," said Mouaz Moustafa, executive director of the Syrian Emergency Task Force.

The battle for Syria's south is on, and the Trump team must decide if the United States will play a decisive role. Trump could fulfill his promises to thwart Iran and bring greater stability to Syria — if he acts fast.

Preparations for Trump's Visit Expose Political Rifts in Israel

Isabel Kershner

7-8 minutes

and ease conditions in the West Bank and elsewhere.

The confidence-building measures were aimed as much at convincing Mr. Trump of the Israelis' commitment to seek an agreement as they were intended for the Palestinians. Mr. Trump has said that he wants to seal the "ultimate deal" to resolve the decades-old Israeli-Palestinian conflict, an ambitious goal that has so far eluded two generations of American presidents and numerous international mediators.

Expectations are low for any major breakthrough during Mr. Trump's nearly 36-hour visit to Israel and the West Bank, but neither Mr. Netanyahu nor President Mahmoud Abbas of the Palestinian Authority wants to risk angering the American president, or be portrayed as the reluctant party to resuming long-stalled peace talks.

Mr. Trump is scheduled to meet Mr. Abbas on Tuesday in Bethlehem, in the West Bank. The Palestinian areas are seething, with a mass

hunger strike of prisoners in Israeli jails entering its sixth week and violent protests in support of the strike that have turned deadly.

On the Israeli side, Mr. Netanyahu said at the start of his cabinet meeting on Sunday that he would discuss with Mr. Trump ways to strengthen the Israeli-American alliance, and added in English: "Mr. President, we look forward to your visit. The citizens of Israel will receive you with open arms."

But the preparations for the visit have been charged, both logistically, with major schedule changes that have left the Jerusalem police scrambling, and regarding some diplomatic and emotional issues of fundamental importance to the Israelis and Palestinians.

Trump Shifts Stances on Key Israeli Issues

The president has backtracked on several issues that are key to Israel, including the location of the U.S. embassy and settlement-building.

By CAMILLA SCHICK and IAN FISHER on May 22, 2017. Photo by Stephen Crowley/The New York Times. Watch in Times Video »

Some in the Israeli news media have already described the visit as "hysterical," rather than "historical." And squabbling within Mr. Netanyahu's governing coalition has marred much of the festivity surrounding Mr. Trump's visit: Right-wing politicians are disappointed that the Trump administration appears to be adhering to longstanding American policy regarding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and they are agitating for Mr. Netanyahu to take a tougher stance.

The Israeli government is in any case likely to be more focused on American help in containing Iran's influence in the region, former Israeli officials said.

"For a long time, Israel's priority has been the Iranian threat," said Dore Gold, a former director general of Israel's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and a longtime adviser to Mr.

Netanyahu. "The shift that the Trump administration has made in wanting to block Iranian hegemonialism is significant for Israel."

Still, many experts say any cooperation between Israel and an American-led coalition of Sunni Arab states to counter Iran would require progress on the Israeli-Palestinian front. In an interview published Sunday in Israel Hayom, a newspaper largely supportive of Mr. Netanyahu, Mr. Trump said, "I think we have a very, very good chance of making a deal." The interview was conducted in Washington on Thursday, shortly before Mr. Trump left for the Middle East.

The measures the Israeli government approved for the Palestinians include the expansion of a West Bank industrial zone; the phased extension of operating hours at the Allenby Bridge between the West Bank and Jordan; and the authorization of Palestinian construction in the 60 percent of the West Bank that Israel fully controls, known as "Area

C." The authorization mostly pertains to buildings already constructed and slated for demolition on the edges of existing Palestinian towns.

Israeli officials played down the gestures to the Palestinians after approving them. In deference to hard-liners in the cabinet, the government also announced the establishment of a committee to retroactively push for the legalization of settler outposts and homes in the West Bank built without government authorization.

Some of the incentives appeared to be recycled. At a meeting last September at the United Nations, Israeli officials presented incentives including an upgrade to the Allenby Bridge and master plans for authorizing building in Area C.

Mr. Trump is scheduled to visit the Western Wall in the Old City of Jerusalem, making him the first sitting American president to visit the holiest site where Jews can pray. But even that has caused a political disagreement. Mr. Netanyahu wanted to accompany

Mr. Trump and his family to the wall, according to Israeli news reports, to emphasize Israeli ownership of the contested area, but American officials nixed that idea, saying it is a private visit.

The wall is in East Jerusalem, an area that Israel conquered from Jordan in the 1967 Arab-Israeli War and then annexed in a move that has never been internationally recognized. The Palestinians also claim the Old City, with its Jewish, Muslim and Christian sacred sites, as part of the future capital of a Palestinian state. On Sunday, Israel kicked off its celebrations marking 50 years since the reunification of the contested city.

Bezalel Smotrich, a legislator from the Jewish Home party, suggested that members of the Knesset, or Israeli Parliament, use their parliamentary immunity to pass through the police lines at the wall during Mr. Trump's visit as a way of asserting Israeli sovereignty.

Mr. Trump told Israel Hayom that he had not ruled out the possibility of Mr. Netanyahu accompanying him.

"Going with the rabbi is more traditional," he said, presumably referring to the rabbi of the Western Wall, Shmuel Rabinowitz. "But that could change."

In another twist, the Americans requested Sunday that a dinner to be hosted by Israel's defense minister, Avigdor Lieberman, on Monday for senior members of the American delegation be canceled. The guests were to include Secretary of State Rex W. Tillerson; Mr. Trump's daughter Ivanka Trump; and his son-in-law, Jared Kushner. No reason was given for the cancellation.

Israelis have also been upset by Mr. Trump's plan for a 15-minute visit to Yad Vashem, the official Holocaust memorial in Jerusalem.

"He is taking the opportunity to commemorate the victims of the Holocaust and to identify with the memory, which is meaningful," said Simmy Allen, a spokesman for Yad Vashem. But Mr. Allen said he could not imagine the program there taking less than half an hour.

**The
Washington
Post**

Trump's Jerusalem visit: No Saudi sword dance, but a private dinner with Netanyahu and a five-star hotel stay

<https://www.facebook.com/william.booth.5074?fref=ts>

6-8 minutes

President Trump grinned as he held a sword and swayed along with traditional dancers at Murabba Palace in Saudi Arabia on May 20. President Trump, Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross and Secretary of State Rex Tillerson swayed along with traditional dancers in Saudi Arabia on May 20. (The Washington Post)

President Trump, Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross and Secretary of State Rex Tillerson swayed along with traditional dancers in Saudi Arabia on May 20. (The Washington Post)

JERUSALEM — President Trump will land at the Tel Aviv airport Monday and spend two days in Jerusalem with a side visit to Bethlehem in the West Bank. The Israelis and the Palestinians are scrambling to roll out the red carpet — but, seriously, it will be hard to beat the Saudi royals, who staged a sword dance for/with Trump and hosted the first family in a real palace.

In Jerusalem, Trump will dine at Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's official residence on

Balfour Street, which is ... not a palace. His wife, Sara Netanyahu, famously described their home as a dump, with stained drapes and a sad kitchen, on a campaign video. But she favors "pink champagne." So we shall see.

Trump and his immediate entourage will stay at the granddad of Jerusalem hotels, the King David, a five-star 1931 (once blown up, more below) edifice built by an Egyptian Jewish banker during the British mandate and now owned by Mickey Federmann, chairman of the board at Elbit Systems, Israel's top defense contractor.

We've spent many hours in the King David's grand lobby, chatting up local notables and stalking diplomats. The King David is very nice. It has a great swimming pool! The bar is old-timey, but the scene is usually *meh*, a bit dull, though you can't beat it for history.

The manager of VIP services is the well-named Sheldon Ritz, who is a peach. He took us on a quickie pre-Trump tour. Ritz looked fabulous, by the way, in a crisp suit, but he confessed he hadn't really slept in days. Each visit by global pashas takes its toll, but the hotel seemed on high alert to host a fellow hotel-owner-in-chief.

The King David has provided luxe accommodations to almost all visiting heads of state to Jerusalem.

On the lobby floor, there are tiles with the signatures of past guests, some in amusing juxtapositions — Neil Young next to Al Gore next to David Ben-Gurion next to Metallica. There's Anwar Sadat, Nelson Mandela, the Dalai Lama — and Pamela Anderson.

On Thursday afternoon, we saw Ron Dermer, Israel's ambassador to the United States, rush out the doors and hail a taxi, while Trump's Middle East envoy, Jason Greenblatt, darted down a hallway.

Ritz took us up for a look at Room 634, the Royal Suite, one of three in which the Trumps may stay. The other is the Presidential Suite, which boasts a hot tub that holds four. Think of the possibilities for peace.

Asked what they've done to prepare the suite, Ritz joked, "We've imported a ton of gold."

The suite was ample: one big bed, a walk-in closet, a dining room, a parlor, a desk. The towels are embossed with the word "Dan" for the hotel chain. A few bits and bobs were down-market: the supermarket teas, a plastic steam kettle, some random coffee table books.

If you want to spend the night, it's yours for \$5,500.

"It's very nice, though it's not what he has at home at Trump Towers,"

Ritz said, pausing dramatically at the bank of bulletproof windows. "But he doesn't have this."

The view. There's the tennis court and swimming pool below and then the walls of the Old City, where the golden Dome of the Rock was shimmering in the sunlight.

The view tells a story. There's al-Aqsa Mosque, the third-holiest in Islam, a steeple of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, which marks for many believers the site of Christ's crucifixion and resurrection, and a bit of the Western Wall, the edge of the raised esplanade that marks what Jews call the Temple Mount, their most sacred site.

There's also the Palestinian village of Silwan in East Jerusalem, the concrete separation barrier and, off in the distance, Jordan.

Trump is scheduled to visit the wall and the church.

Ritz said the King David suites on Trump's floor are some of the most secure spots in Israel.

The air and ventilation systems are contained. "If, God forbid, there's a bomb, the suites will be intact," Ritz said. They are built as kind of a reinforced cage.

"When the president is here," Ritz said, "it becomes Fort Knox meets the White House."

After the press get a look at the suites, the Israelis, then the Secret Service will have a go at the rooms, which will be scanned, sniffed and probed. Robots will troll the sewers below. Surveillance balloons with infrared sensors will bob overhead.

The Israeli security services are calling their two-day mission to protect the U.S. president and his entourage "Operation Blue Shield."

At a police command center, spokesman Micky Rosenfeld said 10,000 police officers — fully one-third of the force — will be on duty. Trump will land at Ben Gurion International Airport on Monday

afternoon, be flown by helicopter to Jerusalem, then visit President Reuven Rivlin and Netanyahu, among others.

When Trump ventures into the Old City, which is considered "occupied territory" by much of the world and the Palestinians, Rosenfeld said the security forces will "shut down" and "sterilize" the area, meaning that residents will be kept indoors for a few hours and that the usual throngs visiting the Church of the Holy Sepulchre and the Western Wall will be kept back.

"There won't be any direct contact with citizens," Rosenfeld said,

though there will be guests and dignitaries.

The police spokesman said intelligence officers have not heard of any planned demonstrations along Trump's route.

Today's WorldView

What's most important from where the world meets Washington

About that bomb. There's a plaque in front of the King David that recalls in Hebrew and English a historical event. On July 22, 1946, the south wing of the hotel was bombed by the Zionist paramilitary group Irgun, led by a young Menachem Begin,

who later became prime minister — 91 people died, many of them British troops, bureaucrats and local staff.

On a happier note, one of the King David chefs, Osama Groz, said the staff these days comprises Muslims, Christians and Jews.

Asked whether he can make meatloaf, Groz said, "Of course. We can make anything the president and his guests would like."

Asked whether he had high hopes for the Trump visit, the chef said, "Sure, why not? But in this country, peace hasn't been so easy."



Israeli Intelligence Furious Over Trump's Loose Lips

Paul McLeary | 39 mins ago

6-8 minutes

Just days before President Donald Trump's arrival in Tel Aviv, Israeli intelligence officials were shouting at their American counterparts in meetings, furious over news that the U.S. commander in chief may have compromised a vital source of information on the Islamic State and possibly Iran, according to a U.S. defense official in military planning.

"To them, it's horrifying," the official, who attended the meetings, told Foreign Policy. "Their first question was: 'What is going on? What is this?'"

White House officials are touting Trump's visit to Israel next week as a chance to show U.S. solidarity with its closest Middle East ally after eight years of friction between former President Barack Obama and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

But behind the public display of harmony, Israeli intelligence officers are angry and alarmed over the U.S. president revealing sensitive information in a May 10 meeting in the White House with Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov and the Russian ambassador to the United States, Sergey Kislyak.

Trump divulged classified information gathered by Israel about specific terrorist plotting by the Islamic State. The information reportedly revealed Islamic State advances in bomb-making that could be used to mask an explosive device inside a laptop, and also referenced the city where the unfolding plot was being hatched.

The details Trump spilled likely came from a source that was also useful on Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps and its

Hezbollah proxies in Syria and Lebanon, which are much higher priorities for Israel, the official, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said.

"To the Israelis, ISIS is not that big of a concern," the defense official said, using an alternate acronym for the Islamic State. "We have a partner that has done us a favor. They went out of their way to support us in a campaign against ISIS, that they have no real skin in."

In the first 48 hours after the news broke, the Israelis saw little engagement from the Trump administration on the issue. Instead, the administration remained focused on planning for the president's visit next week.

"There's been no collaboration on this issue or any outreach. But it's like a [public relations] circus," the official said.

The revelation that sensitive information may have been passed to Russia, a partner to Iran, was particularly concerning. Israel has become increasingly anxious about Russia's military cooperation with Iran in support of the Syrian regime and its growing cyberwarfare capabilities.

In Israel, there is fear the compromise of intelligence could damage the country's interests and even jeopardize lives, the official said.

The Trump administration, however, has denied any intelligence sources or methods were revealed in the president's talks with the Russians. Trump's national security advisor, Lt. Gen. H.R. McMaster, said the counterterrorism information Trump shared was "wholly appropriate."

John Sipher, who used to run intelligence operations against Russia for the CIA, said sharing information with Moscow carried high risks. "The Russians are the

biggest and most capable worldwide service other than the United States," Sipher said. "Even giving them a little bit allows them to put it together."

While Israeli intelligence officials were aware of Trump's limited grasp of military operations and intelligence procedures, they didn't expect the inexperienced president to play fast and loose with "one of their most sensitive of accesses," the defense official said.

If the source was lost, it also could affect a U.S.-led military operation to take back Raqqa from the Islamic State with American-backed Syrian Kurdish and Arab forces, he said.

"Sources aren't infinite," he said. "They are already reassessing: 'Where are we going to be able to gain that kind of information?'"

"Sources aren't infinite," he said. "They are already reassessing: 'Where are we going to be able to gain that kind of information?'"

The value of the intelligence is virtually a holy grail for spy services, experts said. Insights into the workings of a terrorist group's inner circle are coveted and "quite rare," said Bruce Hoffman, a professor at Georgetown University who has advised the U.S. government on counterterrorism. "It's all solid gold. It doesn't get much better than that."

While the U.S.-Israel alliance will survive the episode intact, some former U.S. and Israeli officials worry that it could have a lasting effect on intelligence sharing while Trump remains in office.

"What Trump did is liable to cause heavy damage to Israel's security, as well as the source, and U.S. security," Danny Yatom, a former chief of Mossad, Israel's intelligence service, told a Tel Aviv radio station. "Especially if this information reaches our good friends, the Iranians."

Yatom said there was a danger the breach could cause a "loss of faith between the intelligence services."

Apart from dismay in Israel's security establishment over Trump's talk with the Russians, the president's scheduled visit to Israel — part of a nine-day overseas trip — has generated some PR headaches even before his arrival.

Junior advance staffers on the ground have reportedly scheduled only 15 minutes for Trump's visit to Yad Vashem, the national Holocaust memorial, which did not go over well in Israel. And it's unclear if that visit will be extended.

Trump had also wanted to give a speech at the ancient mountain fortress of Masada after a dramatic helicopter landing. But when that plan was ruled out by the Israeli military, his team opted to cancel the speech and have the president speak at the Israel Museum in Jerusalem.

Daniel Kurtzer, a former U.S. ambassador to Israel, said when Trump sits down with Israeli and Palestinian leaders next week, his counterparts may be reluctant to share sensitive diplomatic stances with a president known for his lack of discretion, he told FP.

But U.S.-Israeli relations are resilient and will ultimately survive both the scheduling hiccups and the intelligence disclosure. The alliance, defined by common interests in the region, is too important to let one intelligence leak, however damaging, upend the entire relationship.

"It's a very dangerous thing that the president did," Kurtzer said. "On the other hand, it's not a deal breaker with Israel."

FP staff writer *Elias Groll* contributed to this report.

Revivi : Israelis and Palestinians as Co-Workers

Oded Revivi
4 minutes

May 21, 2017 5:48 p.m. ET

President Trump has described the conflict between the Israelis and the Palestinians in terms of a business negotiation. Days after taking office he told The Wall Street Journal that Middle East peace would be “the ultimate deal.”

Mr. Trump might be onto something. Conventional wisdom for almost a century has dictated that for peace to prevail, Israelis and Palestinians must be physically separated. But separation is one of the main reasons the conflict drags on interminably. Peace is fostered over generations, through personal bonds and even business relationships.

Most Israelis and Palestinians don't interact with someone from the other side on a daily basis. The

exceptions are the 450,000 Israelis and more than one million Palestinians who live side by side in Judea and Samaria, or what many call the West Bank. The tens of thousands who work together every day in the area's 14 industrial zones have built the closest bonds.

During his visit to Israel this week, Mr. Trump should drop in on a business like Lipski Plastics in the Barkan Industrial Park, some 15 miles east of Tel Aviv. Half the company's workers are Palestinian and half are Israeli. They eat, laugh and solve problems together. The Palestinians at Lipski make four times the average wage in the autonomous Palestinian areas. Many are in senior management, with dozens of Israeli employees beneath them. Muslim, Christian or Jew, these people return home each day with a sense of accomplishment knowing that they can provide for their families with dignity and pride.

Islands of peace like Barkan show what could be achieved on a massive scale by a leader with true vision. Sadly, for decades these examples have been largely ignored or boycotted because of the flawed notion that any Israeli presence in Judea and Samaria is an impediment to peace.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has proposed to restart negotiations with the Palestinian Authority and offered the possibility of further investment in industrial zones bordering Palestinian towns and villages. Businesses like Lipski Plastics may not be as glamorous as an international peace summit, but they are far likelier to yield serious dividends in the long run.

The new White House has already brought a fresh perspective to the Middle East. Mr. Trump's special envoy, Jason Greenblatt, broke with decades of failed State Department policy by meeting in March with a delegation of Israeli residents of Judea and Samaria. He also met

with young Palestinians and Israelis from across the political, religious and socioeconomic spectrum. These meetings demonstrated a genuine attempt to understand the reality on the ground, something that has been lacking in international diplomatic efforts for decades. This is how peace will be built.

Millions of Americans voted for Mr. Trump because they were tired of business as usual. They saw him as a blue-collar billionaire who empathized with them and could get them back to work. If Mr. Trump really wants to broker peace between the Israelis and the Palestinians, he will need a lot of patience. Like the skyscrapers that bear his name, this deal will have to be built from the ground up, one brick at a time.

Mr. Revivi is chief foreign envoy of the Yesha Council, which represents the 450,000 Israeli residents of Judea and Samaria.

Return of warlord Hekmatyar adds to Afghan political tensions

<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=1000113>

42442800&ref=br_rs

8-10 minutes

[The long-anticipated return of Afghan warlord Gulbuddin Hekmatyar is here]

Yet since his return, he has made no mention of the past, let alone offered an apology. His speeches have bristled with defiance. One of them drew a cheering, overflow crowd of supporters to the national sports stadium for a rally that was punctuated by nostalgic war whoops.

He has made few public references to the Taliban, except to call them “brothers” and suggest that they share a common cause in wanting to rid Afghanistan of foreign troops. So far, though, the insurgents have ignored his return after denouncing him last fall as a traitor in the wake of the peace deal with Ghani.

After his provocative public debut, Hekmatyar vanished into a flurry of private meetings in an elegantly refurbished compound, welcoming supporters, militia commanders, political rivals and tribal leaders from his ethnic Pashtun group. The sprawling facility, provided at government expense, is guarded by Hekmatyar's security forces, and its high walls are covered with enormous posters of him.

The most optimistic interpretation of Hekmatyar's behavior is that he is reestablishing his tough, anti-Western credentials to impress the Taliban, who have been steadily

gaining ground on the battlefield and have shown no appetite for restarting peace talks. He has said he seeks to build bridges across Afghan society and use his influence to end the conflict.

To some observers, though, it looks as if the canny strongman is using the peace deal as a vehicle for his long-thwarted political ambitions. They fear that instead of collaborating with the government that offered him amnesty and full entree into public life, he intends to forge an array of opponents — especially fellow Pashtuns who feel left out of power — to challenge the struggling government and possibly force Ghani from office.

“I fear what will happen in the next few months,” said Isaak Gailani, a politician who has met with Hekmatyar several times since he returned April 28. “There is talk of creating an alliance against the government, against the United States, against democracy. Ghani has made a lot of mistakes, but if Hekmatyar gathers all the partners who hate him and they ally against the government, it would be very costly for the future of Afghanistan.”

So far, few Afghans have spoken out against Hekmatyar's return, but there is a growing sense that the honeymoon is already over. Government officials have been silent, though several privately

expressed shock and anger at his comments. Hekmatyar has issued no recent statements, and aides who were accessible during the run-up to his arrival have become unreachable.

[U.S. defense chief arrives in Kabul as his Afghan counterpart resigns in disgrace]

For now, most observers here are holding their breath, hoping that the aging warlord — who has spent the past 30 years fighting Soviet forces, rival Afghan militias and a series of Western-backed civilian governments — will adapt to the norms of democratic politics in a rapidly modernizing society.

Friends and advisers, including moderate members of his Hezb-i-Islami party who remained in Kabul while Hekmatyar was in hiding abroad, have pressed him to be more diplomatic. In the past week, he has paid homage at the tombs of respected anti-Soviet leaders who were once his bitter adversaries and received others for tea at his compound.

But critics suspect that Hekmatyar is unlikely to change his stripes, disarm his men or retract his harsh criticisms. He has denounced Ghani's government as the “illegitimate” creation of U.S. officials, attacked the news media and complained that ethnic minority Shiites have been given too many

rights — an appeal to Pashtun Sunni ambitions that risks arousing sectarian conflict.

"We welcomed the peace deal, but instead of surrendering to the government, Mr. Hekmatyar is acting as if the government has surrendered to him," said Mohammed Atta Noor, a provincial governor from the rival Jamiat-i-Islami party. "We should give him a little time. If he wakes up and accepts democratic principles, everyone will welcome it, but if he sticks to this provocative behavior, it will not be good for Afghanistan's future."

At this point, it is not even clear whether the divisive hard-line figure can reunite his own splintered party, let alone act as a catalyst for peace. Members of the main nonviolent Hizb faction, which built a

strong presence in politics and government while Hekmatyar was an international fugitive, worry that he will not adjust to the new, democratic brand of politics in the country he fled 21 years ago.

[After decades as fugitive, Afghan warlord Gulbuddin Hekmatyar returns with appeal for peace]

Abdul Hadi Argandiwal, a moderate Hizb leader, said he is optimistic that Hekmatyar's welcome into public life will eventually persuade the Taliban insurgents to come to the negotiating table, but he said the unrepentant warrior needs to transform himself first.

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Breaking news from around the world.

"Afghan society has changed in many ways over the past 20 years.

Nobody wants more war or destruction. We are part of that society, and we have added value to it. But he has come from war, and he has to change," Argandiwal said. Noting that Hekmatyar had agreed to visit the tombs of former rival leaders, he said, "I hope it means he will be a new Hekmatyar."

Other observers, however, worry that his unrepentant stance will have the opposite effect on the Taliban, who will view him as an armed rival rather than a model for reconciliation. They fear that he will use his new freedom to make a last bid for power — either at the polls or by other means — presenting a muscular, sternly religious alternative to the nerdy, Westernized Ghani.

Since his return, thousands of posters of Hekmatyar have flooded the capital, and wealthy Pashtun

politicians have reportedly offered him more men, weapons and cash. Supporters say his ruthless behavior in the civil war was no more excessive than that of any other militia bosses, but critics say he does not deserve a role in Afghanistan's future unless he renounces his past.

"The truly brave thing for him to do would be to apologize to the Afghan people," said Sima Samar, head of the Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission. "If he is strong enough to do that, it will heal a lot of wounds and distance people from revenge. It may even help bring peace."

The New York Times

Erdogan Says He Will Extend His Sweeping Rule Over Turkey

Patrick Kingsley

5-6 minutes

President Recep Tayyip Erdogan of Turkey addressing the Justice and Development Party, which formally reaccepted him as party leader, in Ankara on Sunday. Pool photo by Burhan Ozbilici

ISTANBUL — In a signal that Turkey faces indefinite rule by decree, President Recep Tayyip Erdogan announced on Sunday that a state of emergency, introduced as a temporary measure after last year's failed coup, would continue until the country achieved "welfare and peace."

The state of emergency allows Mr. Erdogan and his cabinet to issue sweeping decrees without parliamentary oversight or review by the constitutional court, giving him an almost untrammelled grip on power.

So far, the decrees have allowed Mr. Erdogan to jail more than 40,000 people accused of plotting a failed coup, fire or suspend more than 140,000 additional people, shut down about 1,500 civil groups, arrest at least

120 journalists and close more than 150 news media outlets.

In late April, a decree issued under the state of emergency was used to block access to Wikipedia.

Despite international criticism of these measures, Mr. Erdogan said on Sunday that the state of emergency "will not be lifted," according to Anadolu Agency, a state-owned news wire. "Until when? Until the situation reaches welfare and peace."

A recent referendum victory gave Mr. Erdogan the power to rule by decree from 2019 onward, provided that he wins presidential elections held that year. But his announcement on Sunday means he can continue to wield such power in the intervening period.

International rights groups say that while the state of emergency was initially justified because it followed a coup attempt that left at least 249 people dead, it is now being used as a pretext for quashing dissent.

"What we've seen is that instead of using the state of emergency to counter genuine threats to national security, it's been abused to stifle criticism of the ruling A.K. party," said Andrew Gardner, a Turkey

researcher for Amnesty International, using the Turkish initials for Mr. Erdogan's Justice and Development Party. "And there's every signal that that will continue."

Amnesty says it will publish a report on Monday detailing the "catastrophic impact" that the state of emergency — and the purges it has precipitated — has had on the lives of hundreds of thousands of Turkish families. "More than 100,000 people have not just lost their jobs, in a completely arbitrary process, but had their professional and personal lives shattered as well," Mr. Gardner said.

As far back as December, legal experts from the Council of Europe, an influential pressure group, warned that if the Turkish government "rules through emergency powers for too long, it will inevitably lose democratic legitimacy."

In his speech on Sunday, Mr. Erdogan shrugged off these concerns. "In my country, they tried to overthrow the state, and we gave 249 martyrs, and had 2,193 injured," he said in remarks carried by Anadolu Agency. "How dare you ask us to lift the state of emergency."

Mr. Erdogan spoke at a conference for his party, at which he was formally reaccepted as leader. Mr. Erdogan left the party in 2014 to assume the presidency, an office that was then meant to be politically neutral; last month's referendum removed that requirement, allowing Mr. Erdogan to rejoin his party.

His comments capped a turbulent week for him. In a visit to Washington on Tuesday, Mr. Erdogan failed to persuade President Trump to abandon an alliance with a group of Syrian Kurdish fighters whom Turkey regards as terrorists. Later in the day, Mr. Erdogan watched silently as his bodyguards assaulted several people protesting his policies.

Correction: May 21, 2017

An earlier version of this article misstated the circumstances under which Recep Tayyip Erdogan departed the Justice and Development Party. He left to assume the presidency, not to run for it.

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

North Korea Steps Up Pace of Missile Tests

Jonathan Cheng

4-5 minutes

Updated May 21, 2017 11:31 p.m. ET

SEOUL—North Korean leader Kim Jong Un described the results of the country's successful launch its second ballistic missile in a little

more than a week as "perfect," as Pyongyang increases the pace of its testing in its quest to develop the ability to strike the continental U.S. with a nuclear-tipped weapon.

North Korea fired the missile from the Pukchang airfield, about 40 miles north of the capital, Pyongyang, at about 4:30 p.m.

Sunday local time, according to the U.S. Pacific Command and South Korea's Ministry of Defense.

The missile flew about 310 miles, a spokesman for Seoul's Defense Ministry said, adding that authorities were analyzing the details of the test launch.

A spokesman for the U.S. Pacific Command said it tracked the missile until it splashed down in the waters between Korea and Japan.

Mr. Kim on Monday praised the results of the missile launch and ordered mass production of the solid-fuel missile for military

deployment, North Korea's state media reported.

Mr. Kim personally supervised the Sunday afternoon launch of the missile, which it called the Pukguksong-2, or the Polaris-2, North Korea's state-run Korean Central News Agency reported. The U.S. calls the missile the KN-15.

Mr. Kim said the missile was "very accurate" and declared it a "successful strategic weapon" ready for action, and ordered its rapid mass production, KCNA reported.

A White House official said the U.S. was aware that North Korea had launched what it described as a midrange ballistic missile. The official said Sunday's missile had a shorter range than the missiles fired in North Korea's

three most-recent launches.

In Tokyo, Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe called the launch a "challenge to the world." Mr. Abe said he wanted to make North Korea a principal issue at the Group of Seven summit in Italy this week. "I would like to send a clear message," he said.

The launch was the 11th missile Pyongyang has fired this year. North Korea last test-launched a missile from the Pukchang airfield in late April.

In that case, the missile blew up minutes after launch in an apparent failed test. U.S. authorities said at the time that the missile didn't leave North Korean territory.

In contrast, Sunday's successful test launch is further evidence of

added momentum for North Korea's missile program, coming on the heels of the testing of an advanced missile a week earlier that took many North Korea missile watchers by surprise.

Taken together, the two launches underscore the rapid progress the country is making as part of a drive to be able to threaten the continental U.S. In last week's test, North Korea launched a new intermediate-range ballistic missile that it claimed was capable of carrying a large nuclear warhead. It called the missile the Hwasong-12.

Independent analysts have said that, based on their calculations, the Hwasong-12 could reach the U.S. military base in Guam, more than 2,000 miles from Pyongyang.

Victor Cha, Korea chair at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington, said after the Hwasong-12 test that the successful launch "demonstrates that we have once again underestimated North Korea's nuclear and missile capabilities." He said the Hwasong-12 "represents a leap in ballistic-missile technology."

—Peter Landers in Tokyo contributed to this article.

Write to Jonathan Cheng at jonathan.cheng@wsj.com

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THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

NATO to Take Action on Trump Spending Call

Julian E. Barnes

4-5 minutes

May 21, 2017 6:59 a.m. ET

BRUSSELS—The North Atlantic Treaty Organization, under pressure from the administration of U.S. President Donald Trump, is planning a new spending initiative that will use additional money to fill armament gaps, according to a draft of the proposal reviewed by The Wall Street Journal.

Officials said they expect the new program to be approved at a gathering of allied leaders here on Thursday that is to be attended by Mr. Trump—something that would mark progress on an important foreign-policy goal for the president as he contends with political controversies in Washington.

Under the plan, NATO's members would be required to submit national blueprints detailing how they will meet alliance targets, which say each country should devote 2% of economic output to military spending.

In addition, they are to specify how money will be used to fill existing gaps in weaponry identified by the alliance, such as shortages of

warships, air-defense systems and advanced tanks. The plans will also track commitments of troops to NATO missions.

During Mr. Trump's election campaign, he criticized allies for not paying their fair share for defense. His administration has made increasing European military spending a central part of its agenda. Earlier this year, Defense Secretary Jim Mattis called on allies to adopt spending plans or risk unspecified changes in the American defense commitment to Europe.

The new NATO plan includes compromises. Some U.S. officials have said they wanted to toughen up current spending guidelines, which call for allies to hit the 2% target within a decade, and make them explicit requirements rather than goals.

But that isn't part of the new proposal, and European diplomats said the U.S. wasn't pushing for those changes in the run-up to Thursday's meeting.

Some European politicians have argued the 2% goal is neither realistic nor wise. "Money is a contentious issue," said Bruno L  t  , a NATO expert at the German

Marshall Fund in Brussels. "There is a trans-Atlantic gap."

Only five countries now spend 2% of gross domestic product on defense: the U.S., U.K., Greece, Poland and Estonia. Romania, Latvia and Lithuania are due to hit 2% by next year. Other alliance members are below the target.

Alliance diplomats have been trying to inject some muscle into NATO's defense-planning process, which establishes requirements for each country's contributions. The current plans, due to be approved in June, have set some ambitious additional requirements for some countries, notably Germany, which was prodded to strengthen its heavy tank brigades.

While German military spending is well below the 2% target, it is increasing it by 8% annually, contributing billions of additional euros to its military each year.

NATO officials say one of the alliance's primary goals is eventually to reduce Europe's dependency on the U.S.—also a demand of the Trump administration.

"We rely on the U.S. at the moment to provide a large percentage of some key capabilities," said a NATO official. "As part of our

planning into the future we're looking to reduce the dependency on the U.S. for some of those key capabilities."

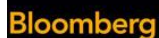
At Thursday's NATO meeting, Mr. Trump will meet for the first time with newly elected French President Emmanuel Macron. Mr. Macron has criticized Mr. Trump for his "aggressive" questioning, but acknowledged he is right to prod Europe to take more responsibility for its own defense.

On a trip to Mali on Friday, Mr. Macron said France's military operations there wouldn't be possible without the support of the U.S. "Without the cooperation of the U.S., in particular with intelligence, we wouldn't be able to operate effectively in this region, like in many others," Mr. Macron said.

Mr. Macron says he would boost France's military spending to 2% of economic output by 2025. The extra spending would be focused on France's nuclear deterrent, modernizing existing equipment and maintaining troop levels, and bolstering cybersecurity.

—William Horobin in Paris contributed to this article.

Write to Julian E. Barnes at julian.barnes@wsj.com



Editorial : The U.S. Has a Big Stake in Africa's Success

by The Editors
More stories by

Photographer: Ashraf Shazly/AFP/Getty Images

The Editors

4-5 minutes

Troops mutiny in Ivory Coast. Ebola resurfaces in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Zambia jails its most prominent opposition leader. Corruption deepens in South Africa.

These recent headlines are a reminder that terrorism and violent extremism aren't the only challenges facing sub-Saharan Africa. Yet the Trump administration shows little interest in the continent beyond this narrow concern. That's a mistake. The U.S. also has a stake in Africa's broader stability and prosperity.

The continent didn't come up in the presidential campaign's three debates. Trump's tweets -- not counting a few pre-election blasts about crime in South Africa and the many times he unwisely called for ending air travel to West Africa during the Ebola epidemic -- are likewise unrevealing. Since taking office, Trump has left senior Africa-

A smart investment.

policy positions unfilled, and has had only brief single phone conversations with three African leaders.

Those calls stressed counterterrorism and security. Trump's preliminary budget for the next fiscal year squeezed U.S. aid programs in Africa more than in any other region, cutting humanitarian funding at a time of extreme need and eliminating cultural exchange and other so-called soft-power programs. His reinstatement of the rule banning U.S. funding for aid groups that "perform or actively promote abortion as a method of family planning" will also hit Africa hard.

Given the threat posed by Islamist militants across much of the region, the commander

of U.S. defense operations in Africa is surely right to say that "the greatest threat to U.S. interests emanating from Africa is violent extremist organizations." In recent years, U.S. deployments (especially of special forces) have surged. But he also argued for a "whole of government approach" to the high unemployment and governance failures that help to breed extremism.

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That calls for maintaining, if not stepping up, U.S. aid to Africa -- the approach that Congress wisely took in blunting the administration's cuts for the remainder of this fiscal year. It also calls for building a stronger

partnership in the region with Japan, whose prime minister, Shinzo Abe, has made increased aid and investment to Africa a priority. And when it comes to tackling crises like Ebola or famine, geopolitical competition and old animosities should come second to working with countries such as China and, yes, Cuba on the problem at hand.

Investing in Africa

In the first instance, this would save and improve lives. It could pay other dividends as well -- like promoting African cooperation in implementing sanctions against North Korea, for instance. And speaking of dividends, don't forget that, despite an upsurge in Chinese involvement, the U.S. is still the continent's biggest investor, in a market

projected to be worth nearly \$6 trillion by 2025.

The U.S. and its partners have a compelling interest in helping to promote political stability and economic growth in Africa. There's nothing mushy about that idea, Mr. President. It's just good business.

--Editors: James Gibney, Michael Newman.

To contact the senior editor responsible for Bloomberg View's editorials: David Shipley at davidshipley@bloomberg.net.

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Los Angeles Times

Editorial : Trump's new global gag rule will devastate healthcare in poor countries

The Times Editorial Board
5-6 minutes

It is not surprising but it is deeply depressing that the Trump administration is reviving the "global gag rule" — so called because it bans U.S. financial assistance to non-governmental healthcare organizations in foreign countries if they provide abortions or even utter the word to their patients in counseling them or referring them elsewhere.

The rule was first put into place during the Reagan administration and since then has been repealed and revived alternately by Democratic and Republican administrations, including President Obama's.

The rule was bad enough in its earlier form, when it barred aid to family planning organizations that offered abortion or abortion counseling. The last time it was in place, during the George W. Bush administration, family planning organizations receiving \$600 million in funding were affected.

But the new Trump administration incarnation of the rule is far more expansive. Instead of applying specifically to

family planning programs, it will now cover approximately \$8.8 billion in funds given out to healthcare providers of all sorts through the Department of State, the U.S. Agency for International Development, and the Department of Defense. Healthcare providers overseas working in HIV/AIDS, maternal and child health, malaria, global health security and other fields will be required to sign on the agreement. And many of those providers also offer abortion or abortion counseling.

The rule creates particular problems for healthcare providers treating people with HIV and AIDS. Signing the agreement would mean, for example, never being able to give a pregnant woman infected with HIV counseling on abortion.

State Department officials say that the gag rule is necessary to ensure that U.S. tax dollars do not support foreign organizations that "perform or actively promote abortion as a method of family planning."

But there is already a law in place that prohibits the use of U.S. funds for abortions. So the gag rule is not necessary for that. It's just a way to pressure — and ultimately punish — organizations that provide abortions or abortion counseling.

What's worse is that the rule threatens to cripple the provision of all kinds of healthcare to underserved, wretchedly poor parts of the world. Most of the current funding for HIV and AIDS assistance as well as maternal care and family planning goes to about 30 African countries.

For healthcare organizations to stop providing abortions would be neither easy nor the right thing to do. In many places, one clinic serves multiple functions — taking care of women and children, treating HIV, testing for sexually transmitted diseases, offering family planning and contraceptives and sometimes abortions or abortion counseling — all extremely important functions.

In some countries, particularly in Africa, a legal abortion can mean life or death for a young woman who gets pregnant unintentionally. If she can't get a legal and safe abortion, she may opt for an illegal and dangerous one. In the case of an unmarried female, she may have to face the wrath of her family. Although State Department officials say that an abortion referral in the case of rape, incest, or to save the life of the woman is exempted from the rule, many providers are expected to refuse to sign on to an agreement that will generally restrict

them from offering abortion services to those who need them.

So providers are faced with a horrible choice: either refuse to provide patients with necessary information or important reproductive rights services or sacrifice desperately needed funding from the U.S.

The State Department says that if current recipients of U.S. funding decline to take any further aid because of the new policy, it will find other organizations to provide the non-abortion-related healthcare services. But healthcare advocates say it won't be easy to find other providers in the developing world to pick up the slack.

In the end, it's possible that this anti-abortion policy will result in more abortions, not fewer. Stanford University researchers found that abortions significantly increased in Africa when the gag rule was in effect during the George W. Bush administration, perhaps because of lost funding for programs offering contraceptives and family planning counseling.

The global gag rule will hamper the delivery of desperately needed healthcare in the developing world. If the administration truly cares about protecting life, it should scrap this policy immediately.

The New York Times

Editorial : China and India Make Big Strides on Climate Change

The Editorial Board
4-5 minutes

Tim Peacock

Until recently, China and India have been cast as obstacles, at the very least reluctant conscripts, in the battle against climate change. That reputation looks very much out-of-date now that both countries have greatly accelerated their

investments in cost-effective renewable energy sources — and reduced their reliance on fossil fuels. It's America — Donald Trump's America — that now looks like the laggard.

According to research released last week at a United Nations climate meeting in Germany, China and India should easily exceed the targets they set for themselves in the 2015 Paris Agreement signed by more than 190 countries. China's

emissions of carbon dioxide appear to have peaked more than 10 years sooner than its government had said they would. And India is now expected to obtain 40 percent of its electricity from non-fossil fuel sources by 2022, eight years ahead of schedule.

Every one of the Paris signatories will have to reduce emissions to ward off the worst consequences of global warming — devastating droughts, melting glaciers and unstoppable sea level rise. But the tangible progress by the world's number one producer of greenhouse gases (China) and its number three (India) are astonishing nonetheless, and worth celebrating.

There is also a lesson here for the United States. Piece by piece, agency by agency, the Trump administration seems determined to destroy or undermine every initiative on which President Obama based his pledge in Paris to substantially

reduce America's greenhouse gases: his plan to close old, coal-fired power plants, his proposals to reduce methane emissions from oil and gas wells, his mandates for more fuel-efficient vehicles. The excuse given in every case is that these rules would cost jobs and damage the economy — the same bogus argument once used by Vice President Dick Cheney to persuade President George W. Bush to renege on his campaign promise to combat global warming.

China and India are finding that doing right by the planet need not carry a big economic cost and can actually be beneficial. By investing heavily in solar and wind, they and others like Germany have helped drive down the cost of those technologies to a point where, in many places, renewable sources can generate electricity more cheaply than dirtier sources of energy like coal. In a recent auction in India, developers of solar farms

offered to sell electricity to the grid for 2.44 rupees per kilowatt-hour (or 3.79 cents). That is about 50 percent less than what solar farms bid a year earlier and about 24 percent less than the average price for energy generated by coal-fired power plants.

The shift from fossil fuels has thus been much faster and more pronounced than most experts expected. China has reduced coal use for three years in a row and recently scrapped plans to build more than 100 coal power plants. Indian officials have estimated that country might no longer need to build new coal plants beyond those that are already under construction. One other heartening fact: Electric vehicle sales in China jumped 70 percent last year, thanks in large part to generous government incentives. India is much further behind in this area, but the country's minister of power said last month

that all cars sold in the country should be electric by 2030.

China and India's enthusiasm for cleaner energy arises in part from a wish to reduce the terrible air pollution that afflicts cities like Beijing and New Delhi; any move away from coal would make a big difference in public health. Investments in cutting-edge energy and transportation technologies would also bolster the economy as a whole.

There are, of course, formidable challenges, not least developing batteries to store the excess electricity generated by solar farms on sunny days and wind farms on windy days. And there are emissions from industry and agriculture to worry about. Still, Beijing and New Delhi — not, embarrassingly enough, Washington — are showing the way forward.



U.N. Ambassador Nikki Haley Vows Support for Refugees

Felicia Schwartz
5-6 minutes

since 2012, mostly under the Obama administration.

Ms. Haley's visit to Zaatari Sunday was part of a packed four-day schedule in Jordan and Turkey, where she said she hopes to take stock of conditions for refugees in camps and the quality of other services provided to them.

On Monday she will meet with Jordan's King Abdullah II, visit the U.S. Embassy in Amman and tour a facility that provides psychological support to Syrian schoolchildren. Later Monday she travels to Turkey to meet Turkish officials and visit a refugee camp.

"I'm here to make sure that we're doing everything that the United States can possibly do on the ground to make sure they know that we love our Syrian brothers and sisters," Ms. Haley said.

The trip is her first as the U.S. ambassador to the U.N.

In the less than five months she has been on the job, Ms. Haley has emerged as a leader in articulating President Donald Trump's foreign policy. At times, she has taken a view more in line with the foreign-policy establishment Mr. Trump railed against on the campaign trail.

Ms. Haley, for example, was the first Trump administration official to suggest that Mr. Trump might respond militarily to a chemical weapons attack in Syria's Idlib province in April. After the U.S. did so, she told the U.N. Security Council the U.S. would be prepared to strike again.

Ms. Haley spoke about her admiration for the Syrian people throughout Sunday's events. Her stops included a visit to a border crossing between Jordan and Syria that is a main hub for humanitarian aid deliveries; a U.S.-built school in Amman where Syrian and Jordanian children take lessons; and an airport to inspect World Food Program aid that will be airdropped into Deir Ezzour, Syria.

Her words, as well as the numerous hugs, kisses on the cheeks and handshakes she exchanged with Syrian refugees Sunday sharply contrasted with Mr. Trump. Early in his presidency, he moved to ban all Syrian refugees from entering the U.S.—a move that is being held up in court—and has described them as potential security risks.

"The fact that I'm here shows we want to see what else needs to be done," she said, when asked if Mr. Trump's efforts to cut U.N. funds and his rhetoric about Syrian refugees and other migrants from predominantly Muslim countries interferes with her message.

Ms. Haley said the Trump administration didn't know enough about Syrian refugees to let them into the U.S., but regardless the U.S. should focus on trying to keep families together and create the right conditions to help them return to Syria.

"From the administration's standpoint, if they're going to protect the American people, they have to know who's coming in," she said. "Every person I've talked to

whether it was the group of women, whether it was the families, whether it was the children, anybody, the No. 1 thing they said was 'we just want to go home.'"

Ms. Haley's trip was her first to Jordan. She traveled with a small group of aides and listened to several briefings on education, aid delivery and refugee camps.

She showed particular interest in a biometric database being used at Zaatari instead of debit cards. By using eye scans at the grocery store, people briefing Ms. Haley said they could avoid fraud as well as have detailed information about the families they were helping. The system has potential applications in refugee resettlement as well, officials said. She later watched several people use the system at a grocery store at the camp, including a man whose face and head was covered in bandages.

She later nodded solemnly as eight women who lived at Zaatari, some who had been there as long as six years, described their children's psychological trauma related to the Syria conflict and how desperately they wanted to return home and resume their studies. Ms. Haley asked them if they ever thought of leaving the refugee camp.

"Where should we go?" one responded.

Write to Felicia Schwartz at Felicia.Schwartz@wsj.com

Updated May 21, 2017 6:20 p.m. ET

ZAATARI CAMP, Jordan—United Nations Ambassador Nikki Haley, touring a sprawling refugee camp and other facilities in Jordan serving refugees, vowed support on Sunday for those displaced by the region's conflicts.

As she stood overlooking the camp—which has become Jordan's fourth-largest city—Ms. Haley said the U.S. would remain the top provider of humanitarian aid for the Syria conflict. The six-year-long Syria conflict has killed 400,000 and displaced millions, according to the U.N.

"We're the No. 1 donor here through this crisis, that's not going to stop," Ms. Haley said in an interview after U.N. officials briefed her on the camp. She also took a tour of a supermarket, viewed vocational training classes and met with eight women who live there.

Ms. Haley said her open-armed approach to refugees didn't conflict with President Donald Trump's rhetoric regarding Syrian refugees.

Her pledge comes as the administration looks to cut funds to U.N. programs and is battling in court to impose strict limits on refugees and immigration. The U.S. has provided \$6.5 billion in humanitarian aid to the conflict

Editorial : In Mexico, journalism is literally being killed off

<https://www.facebook.com/washingtonpostopinions>

4 minutes

The Post's View

Opinion

Opinion A column or article in the Opinions section (in print, this is known as the Editorial Pages).

By Editorial Board

The Post's View

Opinion

Opinion A column or article in the Opinions section (in print, this is known as the Editorial Pages).

May 21 at 7:34 PM

WHEN ONE of his colleagues at Mexico City's daily newspaper was

gunned down in March, Javier Valdez issued a passionate statement about the importance of the work of journalists who cover the network of organized crime, drug trafficking and corruption that plagues Mexico. "Let them kill us all, if that is the death sentence for reporting this hell," he tweeted. "No to silence."

The words proved horribly prophetic when Mr. Valdez last week became the latest casualty of the drug-fueled violence that has claimed tens of thousands of Mexican lives over the past decade. The life and death of this courageous reporter should serve as inspiration and prod to the Mexican government to undertake reforms needed to end the impunity that allows the country's lawlessness to flourish.

Mr. Valdez, 50, was shot and killed at midday May 15 on a busy street

in the northwest state of Sinaloa. Authorities said unidentified attackers fired 12 shots at his car. Sinaloa is a drug trafficking destination perhaps best known as the home of Mexican drug lord Joaquín "El Chapo" Guzmán; Mr. Valdez, a correspondent for La Jornada, co-founded a regional weekly newspaper there in 2003 because of his belief in the need for honest reporting of the crime and corruption that victimize Mexicans — despite the risks.

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He is the sixth journalist to be killed in Mexico this year and one of more than 100 journalists who have been murdered since 2000. Eleven days before Mr. Valdez's death, a delegation from the Committee to Protect Journalists met with

President Enrique Peña Nieto to present its newly released report "No Excuse: Mexico Must Break Cycle of Impunity in Journalists' Murders." Among the recommendations were better protections for at-risk journalists, timely investigation of threats and training prosecutors in how to pursue crimes against freedom of expression.

It's good that Mr. Peña Nieto immediately and strongly condemned Mr. Valdez's murder, but that is clearly not enough. Recommendations of the CPJ report should be embraced, and the chronic failure of the judicial system in investigating and prosecuting crimes must be addressed. A good place to start is making a priority of finding those who shot Mr. Valdez and those who ordered it.

O'Grady : Cuba's Proxy War in Venezuela

Mary Anastasia O'Grady

5-6 minutes

May 21, 2017 5:50 p.m. ET

Venezuelan strongman Nicolás Maduro is responding to mass demonstrations by selectively killing civilians. If, as a result, some branch of the military breaks with the regime, the country will descend into civil war. But until then it's a one-sided slaughter.

It's also a Cuban proxy war. More than a dozen high-ranking Cuban officers are said to be in Venezuela, along with thousands of Cuban intelligence agents. Their job is to keep Venezuelan army officers under constant surveillance to prevent the feared military uprising to restore democracy. If the international community wants to head off disaster, a good place to start would be in Havana.

On Thursday Miami's El Nuevo Herald reported it has a recording of Venezuelan generals—at a meeting in Barquisimeto three weeks ago—"giving orders to use snipers to control demonstrators." According to the Herald they did so "with the argument that they find themselves on the threshold of a civil war."

Maybe the generals know something not yet acknowledged publicly—that the commitment to Mr. Maduro among the nation's soldiers and police is breaking down.

It happened once before, in April 2002, when snipers backing the regime picked off protesters during a demonstration in Caracas. When some members of the army refused to help then-President Hugo Chávez crack down on the crowd, he was forced to step aside, albeit temporarily.

Once back in power, Chávez accelerated the recruitment and arming of paramilitaries. Thousands now show up at antigovernment protests, firing weapons into crowds and using their motorcycles to run down demonstrators. If the Cubans remain the power behind the throne, there will be no one to stop these trained killers from slitting the throats of the opposition.

The possibility of a break inside the armed forces seems to be on the rise. As the Journal's Anatoly Kurmanaev reported on Wednesday, National Guard riot police are worn down from taking on thousands of street protesters almost daily since the beginning of April. Rank-and-file soldiers also are not immune to the hardship and hunger caused by Mr. Maduro's senseless economic policies. They say they too are underpaid and underfed.

The dictatorship is clearly worried about this and recognizes it will lose a war of attrition. One source in Caracas who marched in the streets Thursday observed a noted increase in regime repression.

In recent weeks government enforcers also have launched

attacks on lower middle-class neighborhoods where Maduro critics live. They break down gates and doors, rampage through apartment complexes, fire tear-gas canisters through windows and loot homes.

On May 7 the Venezuelan newspaper El Nacional reported that between April 4 and May 5 the National Guard, together with National Bolivarian Police and *chavista* militia, invaded 11 different residential areas in Caracas. One family of four in the El Paraíso district, requesting anonymity, told of how they cowered together in a bathroom for eight hours to keep from being asphyxiated by the tear gas that had inundated the rest of their apartment.

It wasn't the first blitz on the building complex known as Terrazas del Paraíso. On April 19 pro-government thugs smashed an iron grille to get in and rob one of the neighbors. On April 26 civilian-clothed militia entered the complex and fired rubber bullets, injuring some residents. "But it was to frighten us, because they didn't steal anything," one of the victims told the newspaper.

On May 11 El Nacional reported that since this most recent wave of protests began, state security forces and paramilitary have engaged in similar violence and theft against 13 condominiums in six cities including Maracay, Valencia, Barquisimeto and Merida. Forty-seven people have been killed in the violence

perpetrated by the antiriot squads and paramilitary madmen since early April.

This is state terrorism. But it may not have its intended effect. Most of the country is solidly against the government, and this includes low-income Venezuelans, once the base for *chavismo*. Paradoxically the repression seems to be strengthening opposition resolve. Perhaps Venezuelans have reached a tipping point. They will get new elections and freedom for political prisoners, or are ready to die trying.

The brutality also may be eroding the confidence of the men and women in uniform. Many seem not to have the stomach for the cruelty their Cuban handlers expect from their South American protégés. On May 5 opposition leader Henrique Capriles said 85 members of the armed forces, including some young captains and sergeants, had been detained by the regime for criticizing the repression. On May 19 a member of the National Guard was arrested in Táchira for having crossed over to defend protesters.

The international community has the power, through sanctions, to rein in Cuba. If it fails to do so, the Venezuelan opposition will be massacred.

Write to O'Grady@wsj.com.

ETATS-UNIS

The
New York
Times

Caught in White House Chaos, Justice Dept. Official Seeks Neutral Ground (UNE)

Julie Hirschfeld Davis and Rebecca R. Ruiz

10-12 minutes

Lawmakers and former colleagues were left to wonder how an experienced and scrupulous lawyer known as being apolitical allowed himself to be drawn into a highly politicized firing, either as a willing participant or an unwitting accomplice.

"It's been a little bit of a roller-coaster ride in terms of Rod's reputation," said Douglas F. Gansler, former attorney general of Maryland, who worked closely with Mr. Rosenstein when he was United States attorney.

Mr. Rosenstein, who was confirmed 94 to 6 by the Senate last month, was swept into the turmoil when the president cited a three-page memo from him as a pretext for dismissing James B. Comey, the F.B.I. director, blaming Mr. Comey's handling last year of the investigation into Hillary Clinton's use of a private email server as secretary of state.

But Mr. Rosenstein knew Mr. Comey was to be ousted before he ever sat down to write his memo, he has told lawmakers. Soon after Mr. Comey's sudden dismissal on May 9, Mr. Trump and aides began offering varying explanations, with the president admitting within days that he had made the decision himself, as he fumed about the investigation Mr. Comey was leading into his campaign's ties with Russia.

The day after the firing, in an at-times tense conversation with Donald F. McGahn II, the White House counsel, Mr. Rosenstein stressed that he did not want to be part of an effort to obfuscate or "massage" the facts about it, according to a person with knowledge of the discussion.

Nearly a week later, The New York Times reported that Mr. Trump had asked Mr. Comey in February to quash the Russia investigation, raising the specter of obstruction of justice.

By then, Mr. Rosenstein, the top law enforcement official overseeing the inquiry, had few options. A day

later, he named a former F.B.I. director, Robert S. Mueller III, as a special counsel to lead the investigation.

Mr. Rosenstein gave minimal notice to Mr. Trump or Attorney General Jeff Sessions, who recused himself from overseeing the Russia investigation in March and was at the White House when Mr. Rosenstein signed the order appointing Mr. Mueller.

The sequence of events suggested Mr. Rosenstein was determined to keep the investigation from being imperiled by the political tumult and wanted to reassert his own independence from it.

"Do I think he was prepared to have that memorandum treated the way it was by the White House? Not a chance," said Andrew C. White, who worked as a federal prosecutor in Maryland with Mr. Rosenstein and has been in contact with him in recent days.

"But it's very symbolic" how he responded, Mr. White added, "because the record was set straight, taken care of quietly and out of the spotlight. It's classic Rod."

Mr. Rosenstein, who did not respond to requests for an interview, emphasized the rule of law in a statement last week explaining his decision.

"Based upon the unique circumstances, the public interest requires me to place this investigation under the authority of a person who exercises a degree of independence from the normal chain of command," he said. "A special counsel is necessary in order for the American people to have full confidence in the outcome."

Mr. Rosenstein, 52, is an improbable character in the theatrics surrounding Mr. Trump. Reserved and bookish, he spends most of his time, friends say, working or spending time with his wife and children, including frequently shuttling his two teenage girls to soccer and softball games.

"He's a deputy attorney general and sports taxi," Mr. White said. "But now his sports taxi has two armored Suburbans, and one is a decoy car."

He and his wife, Lisa Barsoomian, a former prosecutor who later worked as a lawyer for the National Institutes of Health and took time off to raise their daughters, live in the Washington suburb of Bethesda, Md., in a brick raised ranch house.

Mr. Rosenstein's quirks, according to friends and colleagues, include handing out books by the management guru Peter Drucker to colleagues and sending lengthy emails to his staff before federal holidays, documenting their history and little-remembered factoids about their observance.

Mr. Trusty, now a partner at Irah Law in Washington, recalled the day he met Mr. Rosenstein during a job interview at the United States attorney's office in Maryland, where talk turned to sports and the Washington Redskins.

"He mentioned he was from Philadelphia, and I said, 'You're probably an Eagles fan,'" Mr. Trusty said. "Rod's like, 'I don't really care for professional football.' And I just thought to myself, here's this really serious guy — I don't think I'll ever get along with that dude."

But when they worked together on a case of tax preparer fraud a couple of years later, Mr. Trusty was astonished with Mr. Rosenstein's effectiveness in the courtroom, which he attributed to preparation and legal skill.

"The jury was just eating out of his hand," Mr. Trusty recounted.

He is also supremely careful, say those who know him, and unwilling to subvert the rules. For Mr. Rosenstein, Mr. Comey's unusual decision to go public last July with his conclusions in the Clinton investigation was deeply troubling, almost to the point of being a personal affront.

Mr. Rosenstein believed Mr. Comey had compromised longstanding traditions at the Department of Justice, and did severe damage. In his memo, Mr. Rosenstein called Mr. Comey's actions "a textbook example of what federal prosecutors and agents are taught not to do."

Mr. Rosenstein grew up in the Philadelphia suburbs, in Lower Moreland, Pa., the son of Robert and Gerri Rosenstein. His father ran

a small business and his mother worked as a bookkeeper.

After graduating from the University of Pennsylvania, Mr. Rosenstein went to Harvard Law School, where he edited the Harvard Law Review and got his degree in 1989.

In 1990, Mr. Rosenstein began his decades-long career at the Justice Department, starting as a trial lawyer in the public integrity section of the criminal division in Washington, and within a few years moving to the deputy attorney general's office.

He was later tapped to join the team of prosecutors working under Kenneth W. Starr, the independent counsel, on the Whitewater investigation into President Bill Clinton's business dealings.

In 2005, President George W. Bush nominated him to be Maryland's United States attorney. Mr. Rosenstein stayed there for 12 years, throughout the Obama administration and until last month.

Mr. Rosenstein's endurance across administrations concerned Mr. Comey, according to a friend, Benjamin Wittes, who told The Times that Mr. Comey had said of Mr. Rosenstein: "You don't survive that long without making some compromises."

His allies defended Mr. Rosenstein, saying he never shrank from tough cases.

Mr. Gansler cited Mr. Rosenstein's work on the Black Guerrilla Family case in Maryland, an investigation into gang activity at Baltimore city jails that resulted in corruption charges against many correctional officers.

"It had a lot of political overtones, and he just did his job," Mr. Gansler said. "He said, 'Here are the facts, here is the law, here's what we're doing.'"

Yet his exacting approach and zealous pursuit of cases have sometimes earned him criticism. Attorney General Eric H. Holder Jr. appointed Mr. Rosenstein to run the high-profile leak investigation involving James E. Cartwright, a retired four-star Marine general and former vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff accused of sharing classified information with reporters.

Senior Obama administration officials, speaking on the condition of anonymity because they did not want to prejudice potential future professional dealings with Mr. Rosenstein, said he and his team had taken a remarkably aggressive and adversarial tone during the investigation, including with anyone who might have spoken to journalists who had discovered confidential information.

Mr. Rosenstein won a guilty plea in the case last year, but General Cartwright was later pardoned by President Barack Obama. Mr. Rosenstein would not discuss the investigation at his confirmation hearing beyond what was in the public record, but wrote in a sentencing memo in January that General Cartwright's case should serve as an example.

"The need for deterrence is strong," Mr. Rosenstein



Can Trump Pardon Himself?

Paul McLeary |
38 mins ago

9-11 minutes

With the appointment of Robert Mueller as a special counsel, the chatter about President Donald Trump's impeachment has started to migrate from the purely hypothetical to the realm of potential practical reality. All citizens have a duty to stay informed during such a moment. But legal and political experts have the added responsibility of anticipating the many constitutional dilemmas that loom on the horizon. Donald Trump is an unprecedented president in many ways, and there is good reason to think any early departure of his from office would be unprecedented as well.

Consider the following situation. Whether or not presidents can be prosecuted while in office (no one knows for sure), the law is clear that they can be prosecuted after they have left. That makes it conceivable that President Trump, if he perceives that a team of prosecutors is closing in on him, could attempt to solve his problem by simply pardoning himself.

I have been writing about presidential self-pardons for years. My position has always been that they would be legally invalid. I have also believed that a self-pardon is unlikely to ever happen because there are too many incentives weighing against it. But I am not sure that applies to Trump, who has proved he has a high tolerance for personal risk and a taste for

wrote. "Every day across the United States government, individuals are entrusted with highly sensitive classified information. They must understand that disclosing such information to persons not authorized to receive it has severe consequences."

Mr. Sessions first contacted Mr. Rosenstein late last fall about taking the job as deputy.

The two met not long after and discussed getting rid of Mr. Comey, part of an effort, Mr. Rosenstein told senators in a briefing last week, to restore the F.B.I.'s credibility, "respect the established authority of the Department of Justice, limit public statements and eliminate leaks."

So when Mr. Trump decided that it was time for Mr. Comey to go, Mr. Rosenstein's views on the matter were well known to him and Mr.

attempting the never-before attempted.

So what would happen if Trump attempted a self-pardon? First, some pardon fundamentals: Article II, Section 2, Clause 1 of the U.S. Constitution gives the president the power to "grant Reprieves and Pardons for Offences against the United States, except in Cases of Impeachment." Pardons thus can only cover federal criminal offenses and cannot thwart an impeachment (which technically is not a criminal prosecution anyway).

A person can be pardoned before being convicted and even before being charged with anything. The pardon need not specify what offenses are covered.

A person can be pardoned before being convicted and even before being charged with anything. The pardon need not specify what offenses are covered. President Richard Nixon's case exemplifies this breadth; Nixon had not been indicted, but President Gerald Ford pardoned him preemptively for every federal offense he had "committed or may have committed" while in office.

No president has ever tried to pardon himself, let alone been prosecuted after trying to pardon himself, so no court has had a chance to rule on the validity of self-pardons. Nixon considered pardoning himself just before he resigned. His lawyer advised him that he had the power, but Nixon decided against it. President Bill Clinton rendered the issue moot by reaching a settlement with his special prosecutor the day before

Sessions. Mr. Rosenstein has refused to answer questions about why he wrote the memo, frustrating lawmakers eager to determine what led to Comey's ouster.

"We asked that question about 25 different ways," Senator Chris Coons, Democrat of Delaware, said last week after emerging from the closed-door briefing with Mr. Rosenstein.

He is keenly aware that the public, including a highly skeptical Congress, is scrutinizing his every move. Weeks before his March confirmation hearing, Mr. Rosenstein told acquaintances that he expected few fireworks, with attention focused on higher-profile nominees.

But that changed after Mr. Sessions recused himself from any investigation involving Russia, after revelations that he had not

he left office (and pardoned 140 people other than himself).

If a court ever did consider the issue, the decision could go either way because there are reasonable arguments on both sides. The president (or ex-president) would have a very simple case that his self-pardon was valid: There is nothing in the Constitution that explicitly forbids it.

The prosecutor's argument, while much more complicated, is a stronger one. First, a textual argument: The word "pardon" means something inherently bilateral, something that a sovereign bestows upon a subject. Consider more colloquially that you can beg someone else's pardon, but you never seek or receive one from yourself. While there is admittedly no explicit limitation on self-pardons, there is no need for one, because a self-pardon is by definition not a "pardon." Other examples show that the pardon power is subject to inherent limitations like this. For instance, the law is clear that a pardon cannot be prospective — it can only reach offenses committed before the pardon is issued — but that limit is not spelled out in the Constitution either. It is implicit in the definition of a "pardon" as opposed to a suspension of the law.

The prosecutor can also appeal to the venerable maxim that no one may be the judge in his own case. If a federal criminal defendant feels unjustly accused, he must convince one of the following to back him: the U.S. attorney (who can drop the prosecution), a majority of the grand

disclosed meetings with the Russian ambassador. Mr. Rosenstein's hearing was suddenly transformed into a focal point for concerns by members of both parties about what his role would be in the Russia inquiry, including whether he would name a special counsel.

"Big day — good luck!" Gregg Bernstein, who is in private practice after leaving his state's attorney post in Baltimore in 2015 and is close to Mr. Rosenstein, wrote his friend in a text message before the hearing.

Mr. Rosenstein responded dryly: "I have bipartisan opposition."

jury (which can refuse to indict), the judge (who can dismiss the case), any member of the trial jury (which can fail to unanimously convict), or the president (who can pardon). But people cannot prosecute, judge, or sit on juries in their own cases. Like a judge who would have to submit to the authority of another judge if he were being prosecuted, a president must seek a pardon from his successor.

The Constitution provides an interesting analogy. It empowers the vice president to preside over the Senate, with one explicit exception: When the Senate is holding the impeachment trial of a president, the chief justice presides. So who presides over the impeachment trial of a vice president? Following the logic of the president's "it doesn't say I can't" self-pardon argument, if a vice president is impeached, he would preside over his own trial. Following the prosecutor's self-pardon argument that one cannot be the judge in his own case produces the more compelling conclusion that the vice president would have to step aside.

The prosecutor has historical evidence as well. James Madison's notes of the debates at the Constitutional Convention in 1787 record Edmund Randolph proposing that the pardon power not extend to treason. "The President may himself be guilty," Randolph worried. "The Traytors may be his own instruments." James Wilson responded that if the president "be himself a party to the guilt he can be impeached and prosecuted." Wilson's view carried the day, and no exception for treason was carved out. But what about self-pardons?

They never came up, which is a very telling omission in a discussion about criminal presidents abusing the pardon power. If anyone had thought that self-pardons were possible, Wilson's argument would not have persuaded them. It apparently went without saying — literally — that self-pardons are not possible.

Besides these legal arguments against self-pardons, there are also some practical reasons why a president would not want to pardon himself even if he thought he could. The most important is that it would look so craven and corrupt that it would greatly weaken the president's political position with all but his most die-hard supporters. If he were facing impeachment, it would increase his chances of being removed from office. If there were an election anytime soon, he and his party could pay a tremendous price.

These political reasons are important



6-7 minutes

By Fred Hiatt Editorial Page Editor
May 21 at 7:48 PM

To everyone dreaming of a quick and easy impeachment: What do you imagine happens the day after?

Passions subside. President Pence begins his orderly reign. Donald Trump retreats to Mar-a-Lago. Normalcy returns.

That's about what you have in mind, right?

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Dream on.

Here's a likelier scenario: Trump goes to Mar-a-Lago to regroup, not retreat. Early in the morning, he tweets: "Join me on Day One of our campaign to reverse the most corrupt theft in political history and reclaim the White House in 2020." His supporters vow to reverse the coup d'etat.

Will Trump be impeached? It's far less likely than some Democrats are suggesting Democrats are openly suggesting President Trump could be impeached. Here's how it would actually happen. (Peter Stevenson/The Washington Post)

(Peter Stevenson/The Washington Post)

because they speak to the very reason that the framers of the Constitution gave the president the pardon power: He is politically accountable. That is why certain political norms have come to govern the use of pardons. While presidents do still have the pardon power even when they are lame ducks, or are terribly unpopular, or are facing imminent removal, using the power in an aggressively self-serving way at such times has been rare and, when done, extremely controversial.

But

President Trump has shown many times, in many ways, that he is not particularly interested in convention.

President Trump has shown many times, in many ways, that he is not particularly interested in convention. No president in recent memory has been as likely to answer the establishment's gasps ("You can't do that!") with defiance ("I just did!"). As such, if push

comes to shove — if he ever fears being prosecuted and he is on his way out of office — it is easy to imagine President Trump giving self-pardoning a try. There is no precedent that says he cannot pardon himself and a decent legal argument that says he can.

One final thing might give him pause: A self-pardon might itself be a crime. By analogy, if a president agreed to veto legislation in exchange for a bribe, the veto would be valid, but the bribe would be a felony. Depending on the circumstances, a self-pardon might similarly be valid in its function as a pardon but felonious as an obstruction of justice. Since a pardon can only cover past actions, moreover a criminal self-pardon could not cover itself. A president might still find it worthwhile to trade a raft of criminal charges for a single count of obstruction of justice. But this adds one more item to the list of reasons not to self-pardon.

There are two questions on the table. First, might Trump pardon himself? It is far too early to speculate about him facing criminal liability, but he certainly acts like someone who wouldn't hesitate to deliver himself such a plum.

Second, if Trump did it, what would happen? This question is easier to answer. If he weren't already on his way out of office, a self-pardon would bring nearer that day. Any prosecutor who was already pursuing him would not roll over and assume that the self-pardon was valid. Instead, the prosecutor would press forward and force the courts — and surely the Supreme Court, eventually — to decide the issue. The court could potentially rule either way. But one would hope it would rule in favor of justice and the rule of law and not in favor of unaccountable presidential plunder.

Photo credit: Tom Pennington/Getty Images

Hiatt: So, let's say Trump gets impeached. Then what?

<https://www.facebook.com/fhiatt1>

And the wars intensify.

Impeachment should not be ruled out. If special counsel Robert S. Mueller III gathers evidence of high crimes and misdemeanors, Congress should proceed, regardless of partisan advantage or political fallout.

But Trump opponents are kidding themselves if they think that sacking him will restore comity and peace to the nation. And they are dodging the work they need to do if they let a focus on impeachment or removal under the 25th Amendment keep them from offering solutions to problems that contributed to Trump's victory.

Impeachment has been and should be considered a "drastic remedy," as attorney Gregory Craig called it when he was defending President Bill Clinton before the House Judiciary Committee in 1998.

Trump was legitimately elected by Americans who knew they were voting for an inexperienced, bombastic, intermittently truthful, thin-skinned, race-baiting businessman. If Trump turns out to be an inexperienced, bombastic, intermittently truthful, thin-skinned, race-baiting president, that should not come as a surprise. Nor is it grounds for impeachment.

Even if Trump turns out to be worse than feared, a failure, a disappointment even to his voters, someone who would, say, boorishly disparage America's FBI chief as a "nut job" while speaking to America's adversaries — even that

would not be grounds for impeachment. The remedy for poor performance is not to reelect. It is a decision for the voters.

Impeachment (by the House) and conviction (by a two-thirds vote in the Senate) would stoke, not calm, political anger. Even if some of his voters felt let down by his performance, many would see his removal from office as an undemocratic short-circuiting of the process. Already his reelection committee is claiming that Trump is a victim of "sabotage," as The Post's Abby Phillip reported.

"You already knew the media was out to get us," a recent fundraising email began. "But sadly it's not just the fake news. . . . There are people within our own unelected bureaucracy that want to sabotage President Trump and our entire America First movement."

Would Trump, if convicted by the Senate, stage a run for redemption in 2020, fueling and feeding on that kind of paranoia? That would depend on many factors, including whether Congress chose to bar him from future service, which it is allowed but not required to do in an impeachment trial.

But certainly many among the 46 percent of the electorate who rallied to Trump's side in order to "drain the swamp" of Washington elitism would not subside quietly in the swamp, as they saw it, swallowed him. Maybe their candidate would be Donald Jr. or Eric Trump, who last week tweeted, "This entire thing is a witch hunt

propagated by a failed political campaign." Maybe they would find another champion.

What's least conceivable is that they, and other voters, would suddenly be satisfied again with the old Republican and Democratic parties. Which is why Trump opponents can't afford to think that getting rid of Trump is all they need to do.

Neera Tanden and Matt Browne, in a recent Post op-ed on the French presidential election, noted that Emmanuel Macron did not win his landslide victory simply by stressing the danger of electing his populist, Russia-sympathizing opponent, Marine Le Pen. Although many observers said Macron lacked a substantive platform, Tanden, who is president and chief executive of the liberal think tank Center for American Progress, and Browne, a senior fellow there, argued that Macron actually set out a "bold agenda" for political reform.

"For progressives in the United States, this is a critical lesson," Tanden and Browne wrote. To rebut the politics of "ethno-nationalist populism" progressives need to offer more than opposition — they need "an aggressive agenda for political reform."

We are far from knowing the whole story of Russia's intervention in the 2016 election, its relationship over the years with Trump and his businesses, and the administration's possible efforts to keep the truth from emerging. The country needs Mueller and

members of Congress, of both parties, working overtime to expose

that story.

But the country also needs to beware of the fantasy that the

nation's problems, and the Democratic Party's, could be solved if only that one man could magically be made to disappear.

THE HILL

Judd Gregg: Trump and the chaos theory

Judd Gregg

4-6 minutes

The chaos theory of mathematics — to the extent I understand it, math not being my strongest subject — in essence holds that a small event can lead to many really big events.

The same idea applies to politics. It's the seemingly little things that come back to hit you in the side of the head, hard. They create political chaos.

When President Trump told Russian Ambassador Sergey Kislyak and Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov that we had intelligence that could help both countries fight the Islamic State, he may have felt he was simply making a small offering.

It may have been part of an attempt to open the door to greater cooperation in the fight against Islamic fundamentalist terrorism. It was classified information that he thought could be used to gain some trust from the Russians and show the sincerity of his desire to cooperate.

Maybe he gave it little serious thought. It may have been a spur of the moment add-on to the discussion, since it appears his aides did not know he was going to disclose it.

To the extent that he had thought about it all, he may have viewed it as a small item in a bigger move to get better participation from the Russians.

It was not. The implications of his disclosure have grown and have led in many directions, none of which is good for him or his administration.

In short, the chaos theory has struck.

When the president sent his letter firing FBI Director James Comey, it included a sentence claiming Comey had stated "three times" that Trump was not a target of the Russia investigation.

The sentence most likely came directly from the president. It was a classic example of personal hubris. Perhaps he saw it as a simple, but necessary, statement of fact — a passing line meant to make the point that he was not in the crosshairs.

It did not play out that way. Numerous avenues of conspiracy have been spun off it. The national media and many Democrats have made it one of the lynchpins of their case that there is much more here than meets the eye.

The chaos theory strikes again.

Now there is thrown into the mix the possibility that Comey took extensive notes of his meetings with the president, including at a private dinner.

It is alleged — it seems by fairly strong sources — that there is a memo describing how the president asked Comey to give the former national security advisor, retired Gen. Michael Flynn, a break, and possibly drop the investigation of him.

"He is a good guy," is the reasoning ascribed to the president.

If this occurred, it is serious. But did the president even consider the implications of such a request at the time? Or was it a simple hope for a friend, stated at a quiet dinner?

It really doesn't matter if it occurred.

The number of mushrooming theories about this alleged exchange — all of them damaging for the administration — is growing by the day.

The chaos theory strikes a third time.

The thing about the chaos theory is that once the first events occur, it is difficult to stop the domino effect. The result, at least in politics, is, often extremely damaging.

Trump has created chaos in his government. He should blame no one else. If he does not significantly adjust, his presidency may well become uncontrollable.

He is a president who disdains the so-called establishment, and those who have experience in the

byzantine, cannibalistic dance which is Washington and the national media.

Yes, this attitude and approach played a large part in his winning the White House.

But the much-disparaged counselors who have been "around the Ellipse" understand that the small stuff — the off-handed comment, the unnoticed event that turns out to have "legs" — can be your undoing in Washington.

As much as Trump's self-assurance tells him these folks are unnecessary, he may want to consider the results of his actions and statements up to this point.

The damage he has brought on himself is already considerable. He needs to draw in some of these folks, listen to them and get the support he needs to correct the course of his presidency.

The present trajectory is untenable.

Judd Gregg (R) is a former governor and three-term senator from New Hampshire who served as chairman and ranking member of the Senate Budget Committee, and as ranking member of the Senate Appropriations Foreign Operations subcommittee.

The views expressed by contributors are their own and are not the views of The Hill.

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

Van Dyk : Anti-Trump Democrats Invite Chaos

Ted Van Dyk

4-5 minutes

May 21, 2017 5:44 p.m. ET

"A jackass can kick down a barn," said the legendary Speaker Sam Rayburn. "But it takes a carpenter to build one."

Democrats should reflect on that wisdom as they consider the special counsel now appointed to investigate President Trump's alleged ties to Russia. In the short term, the inquiry will probably hurt Mr. Trump and feed attempts to drive him from office. But in the end the president's attackers will pay a price.

The political and media hysteria surrounding the Trump

administration lies somewhere on the repulsiveness scale between the Jacobin excesses of the French Revolution and the McCarthy era. Thus far the public knows of no presidential action that would justify impeachment. Never mind, the crowd cries, let us have the verdict now. We can do the trial later.

What about discussions between Trump campaign advisers and Russian or other foreign leaders? Don't they count as high crimes and misdemeanors? No, such conversations take place all the time in national campaigns.

What about the firing of FBI Director James Comey? Wasn't that suspicious? No, Mr. Comey disregarded the Justice Department chain of command and the normal proprieties of his office. He made public statements about ongoing

investigations. He allowed it to leak that the president had suggested leniency for Mike Flynn, the former White House adviser now under investigation. A presidential suggestion of that nature would be neither illegal nor unprecedented.

What about Mr. Trump's disclosure of classified information during a meeting with Russian leaders? It's a tempest in a teapot. The president has the authority to classify or declassify information as he wishes. I have witnessed other presidents doing it.

What about Mr. Trump's executive order declaring a short-term pause on immigration from countries with active terrorist movements? It may have been poorly handled, but other presidents have done similar things.

What about all Mr. Trump's flip-flopping? Shouldn't a president be trustworthy and reliable? Yes, but when Mr. Trump has reversed his campaign pledges it has been mostly for the good.

If Mr. Trump were a conventional president, these missteps would be shrugged off as growing pains or considered worthy of only mild reproof. President Trump, it is true, lacks the knowledge, experience and temperament for the office. His crude narcissism is grating. He has carelessly contributed to his problems with heedless public statements. He nonetheless was duly elected and should be given the leeway that new presidents are traditionally afforded.

Critics, moreover, misread the temper of the American people.

Most voters don't much like Mr. Trump. But they like chaos less.

I spoke recently to a Democratic group consisting mainly of Bernie Sanders supporters. Many were searching for a constructive response to the Trump presidency. They were people, as the saying goes, seeking to light a candle rather than curse the darkness.

I suggested that they concentrate on developing alternatives to Mr.

**The
Washington
Post**

E. J. Dionne Jr. : Can the pope save Trump?

<http://www.facebook.com/ejdionne>

5-7 minutes

If anyone ever needed a conversion experience — and fast — it is President Trump. The issue here is not switching religions. What he could use is an honest examination of his conscience, his attitude toward himself and others, and his approach to what it means to be a leader.

Even to suggest such a possibility seems absurd, more an inspiration for a "Saturday Night Live" sketch than a serious prospect. Moving an incorrigible narcissist toward self-criticism is as likely as changing the course of a river or the trajectory of the Earth's rotation around the sun.

But some people believe in miracles. One of them is Pope Francis, with whom Trump will be meeting on Wednesday. Might this compassionate Jesuit who preaches a God of mercy and the power of humility abandon his diplomatic role to engage in a pastoral intervention with a man whose soul (like all of our souls) could use some saving?

Opinions newsletter

Thought-provoking opinions and

**THE WALL
STREET
JOURNAL**

Much-Maligned U.S. Infrastructure Shows Signs of Improvement

David Harrison
6-7 minutes

Updated May 21, 2017 7:03 a.m. ET

The Trump administration and congressional Democrats frequently bemoan America's aging infrastructure and have promised to spend money aggressively to fix it. Less noisily discussed: The nation is already making substantial progress in some key areas of decaying infrastructure.

Trump's proposals—on health care, taxes, the budget. "You mean we should help Trump?" someone asked. "No," I answered, "you should help your country." I was surprised by the outburst of applause that followed.

Democrats, in their all-out opposition to Mr. Trump, are missing real opportunities to influence policy. The tax-reform debate is a prime example. If Democrats were shrewd, they

commentary, in your inbox daily.

We're unlikely to know if the pope even tries. Communiqués on papal meetings with heads of state are usually opaque. At worst, the encounter may be blandly described as "a full and frank exchange." The Vatican knows that a lot of American Catholics voted for Trump, and the Catholic Church hasn't survived all these centuries by ignoring realpolitik.

Those of us who are critics of the president are hoping for something more: a stern talking-to from a religious leader who stands passionately on the opposite side of Trump on so many questions.

Francis, after all, has explicitly condemned "trickle-down" economics as a system that "has never been confirmed by the facts" and "expresses a crude and naive trust in the goodness of those wielding economic power." Capitalism, as he sees it, "tends to devour everything which stands in the way of increased profits." He added that "whatever is fragile, like the environment, is defenseless before the interests of a deified market."

The pope wrote an encyclical stating emphatically that a "very solid scientific consensus indicates that we are presently witnessing a disturbing warming of the climatic system," that "things are now

would try to negotiate a grand compromise, in which loopholes are scrubbed from the code and Social Security and Medicare put on sounder long-term footing. But to get there, purposeful polarization must give way to constructive engagement.

Trump haters disregard an old rule of politics and history: In the end, voters always choose order over disorder. Kicking Mr. Trump to the curb wouldn't return the country to

reaching a breaking point" and that greenhouse gases are "released mainly as a result of human activity." To protect the planet, Francis called for "changes of lifestyle, production and consumption."

The president and the pope have already tangled on immigration. During the 2016 campaign, the pope labeled Trump's Mexican wall "not Christian," comments Trump called "disgraceful." The contrast between the two men on immigrants and refugees could not be starker. "We must make our immigrant brothers and sisters feel that they are citizens, that they are like us, children of God," Francis has said, pleading for compassion toward "the stranger in our midst."

It's hard to imagine Francis remaining silent on these questions when he talks with Trump. But the pope also believes in our capacity to transform ourselves and in an Almighty willing to forgive our sins. So he might well take on one of the toughest counseling jobs of his life by urging Trump to consider the value of thinking beyond the self.

Was the pope preparing for this moment in a surprise talk he filmed for the TED2017 conference late last month? "Please, allow me to say it loud and clear," he declared. "The more powerful you are, the more your actions will have an impact on people, the more

the pre-Trump status quo. It would likely bring forth new law-and-order leadership more disciplined and conservative than Mr. Trump's.

Mr. Van Dyk was active for more than 40 years in Democratic administrations and campaigns, including as Vice President Humphrey's assistant in the White House.

responsible you are to act humbly. If you don't, your power will ruin you, and you will ruin the other.

"There is a saying in Argentina," Francis continued. "Power is like drinking gin on an empty stomach. You feel dizzy, you get drunk, you lose your balance, and you will end up hurting yourself and those around you." I hope Francis conveys something like that to our president. Trump could profit from it right now.

Trump enjoys mocking "losers," so he might pay heed to Francis's injunction that when the fortunate encounter those who are not, they should ask themselves, "Why them and not me?" Francis's answer was different from the one Trump would likely give. "I could have very well ended up among today's 'discarded' people," the pope said.

Trump has recently been portrayed as being in a dark and sour mood, and the disclosures over the past few days could hardly have improved his disposition. This just might make him open to a pastor who teaches: "We must regain the conviction that we need one another, that we have a shared responsibility for others and the world, and that being good and decent are worth it."

Mr. President, what do you have to lose?

have lanes that are too narrow or weight restrictions that prevent heavier trucks from crossing them.

The reason for the improvements: State and local transportation officials nationwide have been targeting aging bridges for upgrades and safety enhancements. A 2012 federal transportation law also required states to set up a plan for improving or preserving their infrastructure assets and penalized states that let bridges deteriorate too much.

Federal spending on bridges has stayed relatively flat at around \$6.8 billion a year since 2013, according to a 2016 report from the Government Accountability Office. But state and local funding has more than doubled from about \$5.4 billion in 2006 to \$11.5 billion in 2012.

The steady decline in the number of troubled bridges around the country is at odds with frequent references by public officials to worsening bridges dotting the nation's landscape, and the broader narrative of America in decline.

"Our bridges are unsafe," said President Donald Trump in a February speech. That same month, Oregon Rep. Peter DeFazio, a Democrat, called for action in Congress, saying: "We need to fix the 140,000 bridges that are falling down."

The story of American infrastructure is in fact more complex than often portrayed. Interstate highway conditions have also steadily improved over the past few years. Only about 2% of rural interstates and freeways and 6% of urban highways are in poor condition, according to Transportation Department data. That's an improvement from 1994, when 6.5% of rural interstates and 15% of urban interstates were in poor condition.

On the other hand, smaller roads, pocked with potholes, have seen their conditions worsen.

Missouri is a case study among states where the bridge outlook is improving. It recently completed a \$685 million project repairing or replacing 802 bridges. The share of the state's bridges that were

deficient dropped from 27.5% in 2000 to 13% in 2016.

In Pennsylvania, where officials are replacing 558 bridges statewide through a public-private partnership, the share of deficient bridges fell from around 25% in 2000 to 20% last year.

Transportation experts say the 2007 collapse of a 40-year-old bridge along Interstate 35W in Minneapolis galvanized state and local officials. The collapse killed 13 people.

"The industry as a whole understood the consequences of not taking care of your assets," said Barton Newton, manager of complex bridges for the global engineering consulting firm WSP and California's former state bridge engineer.

But the cause of the Minneapolis bridge's fall wasn't disrepair. The collapse was later found to have been caused by a design flaw.

Despite the progress, state transportation officials say they can't afford to let up on the effort to repair infrastructure and they can't afford to lose funding. As bridges age, more of them need upgrading.

Many American bridges date from the postwar infrastructure push of the 1950s to the 1970s. At the time, they weren't meant to last more than about 50 years. Today, four out of 10 bridges are at least 50 years old and more than half are over 40 years old.

That will force officials to struggle to keep up, and it could mean unpleasant trade-offs. In some cases, bridge improvements come at a cost of more potholes on other roads, officials say.

The Transportation Department estimates that as of 2012, the backlog for bridge rehabilitation stood at \$123.1 billion, roughly 10% more than its 2010 estimates.

"The work never really ends," said Bryan Kendro, a vice president at Star America Infrastructure Partners who helped design Pennsylvania's bridge replacement project while working as a top official in the state's transportation department.

"Folks within the [state transportation departments] and the industry understand we've been able to make some progress but that progress will be pretty short-

lived if the funding doesn't come about."

In Pennsylvania, state officials estimate between 200 and 250 bridges become structurally deficient every year. Last year, the state repaired more than 500 bridges, thanks in part to its rapid replacement program.

That's made a difference in places like Meadville, a town of about 13,000 not far from Erie. Last year, the town cut the ribbon on a new bridge over French Creek that had been closed for nine years. Nearby businesses had suffered from a decline in traffic, said Patricia Mattocks, who helps manage four family-run garden supply stores, including one that sits a few hundred feet from the bridge.

Another bridge is also undergoing renovation, as are two more bridges in Saegertown, a few miles to the north.

"We've got bridge work going on all over here," Ms. Mattocks said. "It's good to see them being fixed."

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Paletta

11-14 minutes

President Trump's first major budget proposal on Tuesday will include massive cuts to Medicaid and call for changes to anti-poverty programs that would give states new power to limit a range of benefits, people familiar with the planning said, despite growing unease in Congress about cutting the safety net.

For Medicaid, the state-federal program that provides health care to low-income Americans, Trump's budget plan would follow through on a bill passed by House Republicans to cut more than \$800 billion over 10 years. The Congressional Budget Office has estimated that this could cut off Medicaid benefits for about 10 million people over the next decade.

The White House also will call for giving states more flexibility to impose work requirements for people in different kinds of anti-poverty programs, people familiar with the budget plan said, potentially leading to a flood of changes in states led by conservative governors. Many anti-

Trump to propose big cuts to safety-net in new budget, slashing Medicaid and opening door to other limits (UNE)

By Damian

poverty programs have elements that are run by both the states and federal government, and a federal order allowing states to stiffen work requirements "for able-bodied Americans" could have a broad impact in terms of limiting who can access anti-poverty payments — and for how long.

Numerous social-welfare programs grew after the financial crisis, leading to complaints from many Republicans that more should be done to shift people out of these programs and back into the workforce. Shortly after he was sworn in, Trump said, "We want to get our people off welfare and back to work. . . . It's out of control."

Trump's decision to include the Medicaid cuts is significant because it shows he is rejecting calls from a number of Senate Republicans not to reverse the expansion of Medicaid that President Barack Obama achieved as part of the Affordable Care Act. The House has voted to cut the Medicaid funding, but Senate Republicans have signaled they are likely to start from scratch.

President Trump promised over and over to 'save' Medicare and Social Security. Will he? President Trump repeatedly promised to preserve Medicare and Social Security

benefits in campaign speeches and debates. Will he stick to his campaign promises? (Peter Stevenson/The Washington Post)

(Peter Stevenson/The Washington Post)

[Senate hard-liners outline health-care demands with Medicaid in the crosshairs]

The proposed changes will be a central feature of Trump's first comprehensive budget plan, which will be the most detailed look at how he aims to change government spending and taxes over his presidency. Although Trump and his aides have discussed their vision in broad brushes, this will be the first time they attempt to put specific numbers on many aspects of those plans, shedding light on which proposals they see making the biggest difference in reshaping government. Congress must approve of most changes in the plan before it is enacted into law.

Trump offered a streamlined version of the budget plan in March, but it dealt only with the 30 percent of government spending that is appropriated each year. In that budget, he sought a big increase in military and border spending combined with major cuts to housing, environmental protection,

foreign aid, research and development.

But Tuesday's budget will be more significant, because it will seek changes to entitlements — programs that are essentially on autopilot and don't need annual authorization from Congress. The people describing the proposals spoke on the condition of anonymity because the budget had not been released publicly and the White House is closely guarding details.

The proposed changes include the big cuts to Medicaid. The White House also is expected to propose changes to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, though precise details couldn't be learned. SNAP is the modern version of food stamps, and it swelled following the financial crisis as the Obama administration eased policies to make it easier for people to qualify for benefits. As the economy has improved, enrollment in the program hasn't changed as much as many had forecast.

The Post's Damian Paletta explains why tax reform is harder than it looks. President Trump finally unveiled his tax plan, after months of pledging to make drastic changes to the tax code. The Post's Damian Paletta explains why tax reform is

so complicated. (Jenny Starrs/The Washington Post)

(Jenny Starrs/The Washington Post)

An average of 44 million people received SNAP benefits in 2016, down from a peak of 47 million in 2013. Just 28 million people received the benefits in 2008.

SNAP could be one of numerous programs impacted by changes in work requirements.

Josh Archambault, a senior fellow at the Foundation for Government Accountability, a conservative think tank, said that giving states the flexibility to impose work requirements could lead to a raft of changes to programs ranging from Medicaid to public housing assistance.

"One of the encouraging things about putting this in the budget is that states will see if it works," he said. "States will try it."

SNAP already has a work requirement, which typically cuts benefits for most able-bodied adults who don't have children. But states were given more flexibility during the recent economic downturn to extend the benefits for a longer period, something that split conservatives at the time.

Michael Tanner, a welfare expert at the libertarian Cato Institute, said the U.S. government spends between \$680 billion and \$800 billion a year on anti-poverty programs, and considering wholesale changes to many of these initiatives is worthwhile, given questions about the effectiveness of how the money is spent.

"We're not seeing the type of gains we should be seeing for all that spending, and that would suggest its time to reform the system," he said.

Many critics have said work requirements can include blanket ultimatums that don't take into account someone's age, physical or cognitive ability, or limitations put in place by the local economy. Benefits from these programs are often low, and hardly replace the income someone would earn from a job. And critics of stricter work requirements also believe it could

pave the way for states to pursue even stricter restrictions, such as drug tests, that courts have often rejected.

After The Washington Post reported some of the cuts Sunday evening, Senate Minority Leader Charles E. Schumer (D-N.Y.) said Trump was pulling "the rug out from so many who need help."

"This budget continues to reveal President Trump's true colors: His populist campaign rhetoric was just a Trojan horse to execute long-held, hard-right policies that benefit the ultra wealthy at the expense of the middle class," he said.

The proposed changes to Medicaid and SNAP will be just some of several anti-poverty programs that the White House will look to change. In March, the White House signaled that it wanted to eliminate money for a range of other programs that are funded each year by Congress. This included federal funding for Habitat for Humanity, subsidized school lunches and the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness, which coordinates the federal response to homelessness across 19 federal agencies.

[Graphic: What Trump cut in his budget]

Leaked budget documents, obtained by the think tank Third Way, suggested other ways the White House plans to change anti-poverty funding. These documents show a change in the funding for Social Security's Supplemental Security Income program, which provide cash benefits for the poor and disabled. It's unclear, though, what those changes might look like. A White House official said the Third Way document was out-of-date and would not comment on specifics in their files.

Medicaid, SNAP and the SSI program are now classified as "mandatory" spending because they are funded each year without congressional approval.

Trump has instructed his budget director, former South Carolina congressman Mick Mulvaney, that he does not want cuts to Medicare and Social Security's retirement program in this budget, Mulvaney

recently said, but the plan may call for changes to Social Security Disability Insurance, seeking ideas for ways to move people who are able out of this program and back into the workforce.

A key element of the budget plan will be the assumption that huge tax cuts will result in an unprecedented level of economic growth. Trump recently unveiled the broad principles of what he has said will be the biggest in U.S. history, and Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin told a Senate panel last week that these tax cuts would end up creating trillions of dollars in new revenue, something budget experts from both parties have disputed.

The tax cuts would particularly benefit the wealthiest Americans, as Trump has proposing cutting the estate tax, capital gains and business tax rates.

"The indications are strong this budget will feature Robin-Hood-in-reverse policies in an unprecedented scale," said Robert Greenstein, president of the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, a left-leaning think tank.

The White House will use its presumed new revenue from the tax cuts combined with broad spending cuts to claim that its changes would eliminate the budget deficit over 10 years. The budget deficit is the gap between government spending and tax revenue, and there has been a deficit in the United States every year since the end of the Clinton administration.

But the Trump administration on Tuesday will say its plan to cut spending, roll back regulations and cut taxes will bring the United States back to economic growth levels that represent about 3 percent of gross domestic product.

Mulvaney told the Federalist Society last week that the economic growth is needed to balance the budget, because spending cuts alone would be seen as too draconian.

"I think we've trained people to be immune to the true costs of government," Mulvaney said. "People think government is cheaper than it is because we've allowed ourselves to borrow money

for a long period of time and not worry about paying it back."

Combined, the tax cuts and spending cuts on anti-poverty programs would signal a sharp reversal of Obama's legacy by pursuing big tax cuts for the wealthiest Americans, a large increase in military spending and major changes to anti-poverty programs.

Its premise is that the creation of more wealth will help all Americans succeed, and the Trump administration believes that some anti-poverty programs have created a culture of dependency that prevents people from re-entering the workforce.

White House budget proposals are a way for an administration to spell out its priorities and goals, setting benchmarks for Congress to work with as they decide how much spending to authorize. Trump has an advantage working with two chambers of Congress controlled by his own party, but even many Republicans have said they won't back the severity of some of the cuts he has proposed, particularly in the areas of foreign aid.

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Ron Haskins, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, who played a lead role in drafting the 1997 welfare changes in Congress, said Trump will need to find new support from Republicans in Congress if he is going to achieve the welfare-related overhauls he's seeking.

"I don't think the Republicans on the Hill are going to feel a strong compulsion to follow the president," Haskins said. "They are not afraid of him."

In addition to the myriad cuts, the budget will include some new spending.

Beyond an increase in the military budget and new money for border security, the White House is expected to call for \$200 billion for infrastructure projects and an additional \$25 billion over 10 years for a new program designed by Ivanka Trump that would create six weeks of parental leave benefits.

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

Taxes, Budget Are Focus for Trump Despite Probes

Peter Nicholas and Byron Tau

6-8 minutes

WASHINGTON—President Donald Trump is thousands of miles away, but his policy agenda faces tests back home this week as he looks to shift the focus from Russia investigations to his plans for boosting American military power and revamping the tax code.

The White House on Tuesday will roll out a budget proposal crystallizing the president's priorities in a blueprint that calls for large cuts to social safety-net programs such as Medicaid and food assistance while increasing Pentagon and border-security spending.

While Mr. Trump visits Pope Francis in Rome on Wednesday, Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin in Washington will testify about Mr. Trump's 2018 budget plan before the House Ways and Means Committee. The same congressional panel will hold a

May 21, 2017 8:55 p.m. ET

separate hearing devoted to a tax overhaul aimed at reducing rates and speeding job growth—a centerpiece of Mr. Trump's campaign message.

Following a drumbeat of revelations about Mr. Trump and Russia over the past two weeks, the White House and congressional Republican leaders are eager to show that they can deliver on policy promises.

"People in the country need to know that we are busy at work trying to solve their problems," House Speaker Paul Ryan said. "So I realize that there's a lot in the media these days. That doesn't seize up Congress. That doesn't stop us from doing our jobs, to work on people's problems."

A potential land mine for the Trump administration is a report coming out this week from the Congressional Budget Office. The nonpartisan CBO will release its evaluation of the health-care bill that narrowly passed the House on May 4 following an intensive lobbying push by the White House.

The analysis could influence the bill's fate in the Senate by giving lawmakers a fuller picture of how much the measure will cost and how many people might lose insurance coverage.

Meantime, the congressional machinery devoted to the Russia probe continues.

A high-profile witness will appear before the House Intelligence

Committee this week as part of the panel's investigation into alleged Russian interference in the 2016 election, including questions about whether anyone from Mr. Trump's campaign colluded with the Kremlin.

John Brennan, the former Central Intelligence Agency director under President Barack Obama, will testify publicly on Tuesday—a hearing that is expected to shed new light on how the Obama administration's intelligence agencies came to the determination that Russia interfered in the 2016 election.

The Senate Intelligence Committee is also preparing for a hearing with former Federal Bureau of Investigation Director James Comey after Memorial Day. A final date hasn't been set. But the hearing is expected to be a moment of high-drama, with Mr. Comey facing questions about a memo he wrote saying that Mr. Trump asked him to back off an investigation into former national security adviser Michael Flynn.

Asked whether he had said any such thing to Mr. Comey, Mr. Trump told reporters at a news conference last week: "No. No."

Many presidents in modern times have endured distracting investigations that threatened to derail their agendas. Former Republican President Ronald Reagan faced the Iran-Contra scandal, while Democrat Bill Clinton dealt with long-running inquiries into the real-estate deal known as

Whitewater and the probe into his affair with Monica Lewinsky.

Last week, the Justice Department named former FBI Director Robert Mueller as a special counsel to head the investigation arising from allegations that Russia interfered in the presidential race. Some allies of Mr. Trump believe this is a welcome development that will enable the White House to concentrate on its priorities and defer to Mr. Mueller while the investigation plays out.

Anthony Scaramucci, who served on Mr. Trump's transition team, said in an interview Sunday that a stock answer from the White House when it faces questions about the Russia probe should be: "We have a special counsel. Why don't we just allow them to do their work."

Inside the White House, Trump aides say they have been discussing ways to compartmentalize tasks so that the probe doesn't consume the building and doom various policy goals. Some veterans of past administrations believe such concerns are justified.

"There's reason to be concerned that all of the turbulence surrounding stuff like the Comey firing will distract from and delay what should otherwise be a very robust and positive economic policy agenda," said Joshua Bolten, a former White House chief of staff under George W. Bush and chairman of the Business Roundtable, a trade group representing some of the biggest

U.S. firms. "We don't have a lot of weeks to spare if serious [tax] reform is going to get through."

Staying disciplined amid the Russia probe depends to some extent on Mr. Trump and the restraint he is able to show. In the past, the president has seen fit to tweet about various matters in the news that upset him, giving the issues new life.

Since leaving for his trip last week to the Middle East and Europe, Mr. Trump hasn't addressed the Russia controversy in his twitter feed. Nor has he gone off script in any of his public remarks.

Ken Duberstein, a former chief of staff to Mr. Reagan who dealt with the fallout from Iran-Contra, said that the Reagan White House set up a system in which the counsel's office focused on the scandal, leaving others to focus on their jobs. He said the Trump White House should consider a similar arrangement.

"A lot of these lessons apply to any president, because every president invariably goes into the ditch on something," Mr. Duberstein said.

—Nick Timiraos and Jacob M. Schlesinger contributed to this article.

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THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

Trump Budget Would Convert Many Overseas Military Grants to Loans

Felicia Schwartz
5-6 minutes

sum includes \$3.1 billion for Israel, about \$350 million for Jordan and about \$1.3 billion for Egypt. Those grants will be preserved in the 2018 budget, officials said.

Pakistan, which usually receives about \$265 million in grant assistance, will see that number go down to about \$100 million under the new budget, officials said.

Most other countries will see their assistance converted from grants to loans.

The grants have allowed countries to buy U.S. equipment such as ammunition, vehicles, protective equipment and naval vessels.

Mr. Trump's administration is set to release his full budget proposal on Tuesday. The administration is considering cuts of up to 31% to the State Department and the U.S. Agency for International Development, The Journal has reported.

Congressional officials, along with current and former U.S. officials, said a key concern is that eliminating the military-grant program would cause countries to look to U.S. rivals, such as Russia and China. The internal State Department memo outlines what officials see as the likely effects of cuts.

"Without such assistance, partners will likely either not develop/sustain those capabilities, or may turn to other countries (e.g., Russia, China) to assist them in developing them," the memo says.

The internal memo says most countries offered loans are unlikely to take them.

"Converting FMF grants to a loan support mechanism will not assist the vast majority of countries that receive this support, since they would not desire to take out, or would not qualify for an international loan," the memo says.

Officials with the White House's Office of Management and Budget didn't respond to questions about the cuts, and have deferred comment until the full budget is released. Officials from most potentially affected countries didn't address the comments.

Pakistan's Ambassador to the U.S., Aizaz Chaudhry, said: "Pakistan believes that our relations with the U.S. are a high priority. The two countries need to further strengthen mutually beneficial economic, trade and investment relations."

Mr. Trump has spoken frequently about what he sees as the need for U.S. partners abroad to pay for more of their own defense needs and for Washington to focus on U.S. priorities. But a congressional aide said the shift from grants to loans was unlikely to "play very well" among lawmakers.

"There's real concerns among authorizers over this," he said. "If you care about U.S. influence with

Updated May 21, 2017 11:13 a.m. ET

WASHINGTON—President Donald Trump's budget proposal this week will include provisions to end many foreign military grants administered by the State Department and replace them with loans, a move that could affect up to \$1 billion in aid to dozens of countries if Congress approves, U.S. officials said.

An internal State Department memo reviewed by The Wall Street Journal names Pakistan, Tunisia, Lebanon, Ukraine, Colombia, Philippines and Vietnam as among countries that could be affected.

Typically, the State Department's Office of Security Assistance receives about \$6 billion to dispense as military aid grants. That

these countries for counterterrorism and national security purposes, this will go a long way to kill it.”

The memo cites Lebanon, which it said “may lack the ammunition and vehicles necessary to maintain operations against ISIS” without the U.S. grant program.

Cameroon, Chad and Niger, “may be unable to maintain their airlift, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance and protected mobility capabilities necessary to defeat Boko Haram,” the memo says.

For Pakistan, its “maritime forces may have a reduced ability to patrol the maritime border,” the memo says. “Pakistan’s ability to continue participating in USNAVCENT-led maritime coalitions will come into doubt, as the Pakistan Navy is in the process of decommissioning its British-class frigates and needs additional surface vessels.”

The cuts could affect Ukraine’s ability to deploy countermortar radars, an important issue in its struggle with pro-Russia separatists backed by Moscow, the memo says.

In Colombia, where the U.S. is supporting efforts to move beyond a 50-year civil war, the cuts could affect the country’s ability to maintain its helicopter fleet, needed to fight organized crime in remote areas, the memo says.

Andrew Shapiro, a former Obama administration official who headed the State Department’s bureau of Political Military Affairs, said the grant program benefits U.S. diplomats and U.S. companies.

“The program helped ambassadors, defense attachés and visiting

officials develop relationships,” he said. “This could also hurt U.S. companies who could sell these products. Countries will now look elsewhere because our stuff is more expensive than anyone else’s. It’s the best but you pay for the best.”

Write to Felicia Schwartz at Felicia.Schwartz@wsj.com

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Kushner keeps most of his real estate but offers few clues about potential White House conflicts (UNE)

By Amy Brittain and Jonathan O’Connell

12-15 minutes

As chief executive of his family’s real estate empire, Jared Kushner planned two apartment projects across the street from each other in Jersey City.

Both would be luxury skyscrapers, complete with retail space and sweeping views of the Manhattan skyline. A new crosswalk would connect them, intended to link the two Kushner Cos. developments practically and visually.

But when Kushner prepared an ethics plan ahead of joining the White House as a top adviser to his father-in-law, President Trump, he drew a curious distinction between the two projects. He sold his stake in one while keeping his share of up to \$5 million in the other.

Kushner, 36, who is emerging as a singularly powerful figure in the Trump White House, is keeping nearly 90 percent of his vast real estate holdings even after resigning from the family business and pledging a clear divide between his private interests and public duties.

The value of his retained real estate interests is between \$132 million and \$407 million and could leave him in a position to financially benefit from his family’s business.

What Jared Kushner still owns

The documents reflect the opaque decisions that Kushner and his attorneys made to allow him to keep much of his outside investments while seeking to remain within the boundaries that government ethics officials would find acceptable.

Kushner’s form lists hundreds of private companies. Some of the investments he kept are held by shell companies that are virtually

impossible to track, and Kushner has declined to make public more information on those entities.

The 124 real estate assets that Kushner has kept include residential real estate in suburban Maryland, a Times Square retail complex, and apartments across the Midwest, from Toledo to the small town of Speedway, Ind. Kushner also kept his stake in a New Jersey mobile-home park.

His decision to divest from one of the Jersey City projects, One Journal Square, gained attention this month after his sister appeared at a conference in China promoting the use of a special U.S. visa program to lure investors for the development and publicly noting her brother’s connection to the president.

The White House said Kushner had recused himself from discussions of the EB-5 visa program.

It is not clear from Kushner’s financial filings whether any of his holdings might intersect with his broad and evolving responsibilities in the White House. This week, Kushner has been close by the president during the administration’s first international trip, with stops in Saudi Arabia, Israel, the Vatican, Belgium and Italy.

Kushner rejected a request by The Washington Post to review his ethics agreement with the White House, which would lay out the topics that he has pledged to avoid because of concerns about conflicts of interest. White House officials have said that it is a long-standing policy for the agreements to remain confidential.

As a result, ethics experts say, Kushner is asking Americans to take his word for it.

“Right now, the only thing that the public has is the assurances from the White House that everybody is

complying with ethics rules,” said Don Fox, a former general counsel of the Office of Government Ethics.

Kushner declined to comment for this article. One of his attorneys, former Clinton administration Justice Department official Jamie Gorelick, said that they were “striving for simplicity” in choosing which assets to sell and which ones to keep to minimize potential areas of conflict.

For instance, Kushner sold his interests in 666 Fifth Avenue, the company’s landmark building in Manhattan, because it may be refinanced and posed many uncertainties.

He also sold his interests in a venture capital firm because of its investments in broad sectors of the economy, including a health-care company. Had he kept his interests, Kushner might have needed to recuse himself from discussions related to health care or risk violating a conflicts of interest statute.

“Jared takes the ethics rules very seriously and would never compromise himself or the administration,” said Joshua Raffel, his White House spokesman.

Kushner sold some assets to a trust controlled by his mother. But his attorneys have declined to provide details about other buyers, except to say that they include other family members and third-party buyers.

Kushner’s team has said that he might sell more of his holdings. Additionally, they are filing an updated disclosure form to correct several omissions related to positions and stakes in assets that he did not previously list on his form.

Trump has cited a presidential exemption from federal ethics laws in his decision to retain ownership of his own global real estate

holdings and properties such as the luxury Trump International Hotel near the White House.

Even so, Trump has been accused by Democrats and ethics experts of leveraging his presidency for personal profit. And although Trump has denied doing business in Russia, Democrats have called on federal investigators to examine his financial dealings as part of their probe into alleged collusion between the Trump campaign and the Kremlin. Trump has also refused to release his tax returns, which could shed more light on his holdings.

But Kushner is bound by the ethics guidelines that govern members of the executive staff — including restrictions on participating in actions that could affect an official’s personal financial interest or appear to show favoritism to a close associate or family member.

In Jersey City, the dual apartment projects illustrate the complexity of Kushner’s divestiture strategy.

On one side of Sip Avenue is One Journal Square, the Kushner Cos.’ proposed two-tower apartment development that became embroiled in the EB-5 visa controversy.

On the other side, a proposed 72-story tower known as 30 Journal Square is also planned for development. Kushner held on to his individual stake — valued at between \$1 million and \$5 million — in the project, his disclosures show.

When asked why Kushner sold his investment in One Journal Square but kept 30 Journal Square, his attorneys issued a statement to The Post: “30 Journal Square is a separate project that did not pose the same complexities, including EB-5 financing, as One Journal Square.”

Many of the real estate properties that Kushner still owns rely on the support of financial institutions, investors and local officials — and often fall under the purview of regulatory agencies — over which he might now enjoy considerable influence.

In Maryland, Kushner has retained his stake in several Baltimore-area apartment complexes that rely on federal housing assistance. In New Jersey, Kushner has kept his multi-million dollar interests in a suburban mall complex in Monmouth County that is slated to be redeveloped in partnership with an affiliate of a Canadian firm. In Brooklyn, Kushner still owns upscale housing developments on industrial properties financed by private investors and banks.

In joining his father-in-law's administration, Kushner exited a family business that he led for more than a decade.

He was a 24-year-old graduate student when his father, Charles, went to federal prison for witness tampering, tax evasion and making illegal campaign contributions. As the eldest son, Jared Kushner took over his family's real estate firm, Kushner Cos. He changed the company's focus from modest apartment buildings largely in New Jersey to luxury commercial and residential properties in Manhattan and Brooklyn.

In 2009, Kushner married Ivanka Trump, and he formed a bond with her father that now has him in a unique position of trust and power in the White House.

The president has charged Kushner with managing foreign relations including with the Middle East and Mexico, as well as policies affecting the opioid-addiction crisis and veterans affairs.

**THE WALL
STREET
JOURNAL**

Blinder : The Trump-GOP Bargain May Be Unraveling

Alan S. Blinder
5-6 minutes

May 21, 2017 5:46 p.m. ET

Republicans in Congress appear to have struck a Faustian bargain with President Trump : They turn a blind eye to his antics, ethical lapses, possible Russian ties and sheer incompetence. In return, he supports their hard-right agenda to shred the social safety net and cut taxes on the rich.

But now—after the clumsy firing of FBI Director James Comey, the alleged obstruction of justice, the unconscionable revelation of

Kushner also heads the newly formed Office of American Innovation, designed to deal with agencies to fix problems in the federal government.

Over the years, many wealthy White House appointees have wrestled with similar questions. President Barack Obama's chief of staff, Bill Daley, for example, was a former JPMorgan Chase executive who reported individual assets that could exceed \$35 million.

"Anything that could possibly give an appearance of an impropriety, I sold," Daley said in a recent telephone interview with The Post.

Daley said his financial interests were more transparent than Kushner's because most of his investments were in publicly traded companies.

By contrast, Kushner owns stakes in limited liability companies that often have no employees, offices or websites. Some are owned through generic registered-agent offices in Dover, Del., and function as holding companies for other assets.

His initial disclosure, made public on March 31, also had omissions. Although he listed his position on the board of a real estate trading platform founded with his brother, Joshua, he did not disclose his financial stake in the company, which is known as Cadre. The omission was originally reported by the Wall Street Journal.

The form also did not disclose Kushner's position with another limited liability company in Delaware — "JCK Cadre." When asked about the omission of the Delaware company by Post reporters, Kushner's attorneys said the position would be added in an upcoming revision to his form. Officials from the White House and the Office of Government Ethics

sensitive intelligence to Russia, assorted other Trump misdeeds and gaffes, and the appointment of Robert Mueller as special counsel—the bargain may be unraveling. Thank heaven.

The pact's last best hope may be the American Health Care Act, a truly cruel piece of legislation already passed by the House. Getting the bill or something similar through the Senate would fulfill Republicans' pledge to "repeal and replace ObamaCare"—though not with "something great," as President Trump promised.

Rather, the AHCA would be something horrible for tens of millions of Americans who would

lose their health insurance or have their Medicaid coverage eviscerated. Only the richest would get "something great": hundreds of billions in tax cuts.

Fortunately, the AHCA now looks like a long shot. Republican senators say they will not accept the House bill but will write their own from scratch, and several major provisions of the House version are anathema to GOP moderates. Further, the Senate has notoriously narrow bandwidth and relatively few legislative days to deal with what's already, or soon will be, on its plate.

Such as the budget. In March the White House released its "skinny budget," so named because it

have said that revisions to the forms are common.

Larry Noble, a former general counsel at the Federal Election Commission, said Kushner should go beyond what the law requires because of his close relationship with the president and the breadth of his holdings.

"We have an unprecedented situation here," Noble said. "I think it is up to them to disclose as much as they possibly can."

666 Fifth Avenue, from which Kushner divested, was purchased by the family company in 2007 for \$1.8 billion. Kushner Cos. recently discussed an investment deal with Chinese insurance giant Anbang, according to real estate executives familiar with the deliberations. Anbang pulled out of the negotiations.

"We knew that it had the potential to be undergoing a major redevelopment, which would involve significant transactions with parties that had not yet been identified," said another Kushner attorney, Blake Roberts. "It seemed to pose so many complications that the prudent thing to do would be for him to divest from it."

The lawyers also thought that Kushner's investment in Thrive Capital, a venture capital fund, could be problematic. Through Thrive, Kushner owned a stake in Oscar, a health-care company founded by his brother. Kushner has since divested from his Thrive ownership.

A review of the ethics form shows the ambiguity surrounding some of Kushner's biggest investments.

Kushner's most valuable asset, BFPS Ventures, is described as "real estate in New York" with a value of at least \$50 million. A

footnote states that "conflicting assets" within the company have been sold.

But there is no simple way to determine what BFPS actually owns. The "real estate in New York" is not specified, and city property-record searches do not show any results under the name BFPS.

Kushner's attorneys said BFPS is an investment vehicle that includes bank accounts, stakes of Cadre and other assets.

Initially, Kushner planned to sell his entire stake in BFPS, but he later reversed course and decided to sell off only individual assets within the company that might pose a conflict.

Politics newsletter

The big stories and commentary shaping the day.

Documents show that Kushner sold his interest in an oil and gas company in Oklahoma, known as Circle 9, to avoid conflicts concerning oil and gas issues. Kushner's attorneys have declined to reveal what other assets were sold within BFPS. A Circle 9 representative told The Post that BFPS sold off its small interest — approximately one-quarter of 1 percent — in an affiliated passive investment company that Circle 9 manages.

"It ended up being more practical to sell the underlying investments that created the conflicts we were trying to eliminate, like Circle 9, than to sell BFPS as a whole," said Roberts, Kushner's attorney.

Kushner's representatives have declined to reveal what the initialism BFPS stands for.

Michael Kranish contributed to this report.

covers only appropriated funds (a minority of spending) and is extremely light on details. For example, it calls for slashing State Department funding by 28% but doesn't say how. Presumably the answers will come in the real budget, due out Tuesday.

Will the president's budget, or any budget, pass? Bet against it. Remember, for years Congress has been too tied up in knots to pass a budget. Besides, another foolish confrontation over the debt ceiling looms this fall. Lawmakers will somehow have to squeeze these and other matters into schedules crowded with investigations, maybe even impeachment proceedings.

The debate over the president's budget will be highly partisan. The proposal is expected to include sharp cuts in social spending, just as a succession of budgets suggested by now-Speaker Paul Ryan have done for years. Why? Well, there's plain mean-spiritedness. But Republicans also want the cuts to pay a fraction of the cost for what Mr. Trump has called "the biggest tax cut in the history of our country"—though it would also be the most regressive tax cut in our history.

The one-page tax reform "plan" the administration released last month was mostly empty space. If you omit the hortatory language at the top and bottom of the page, it included exactly 107 substantive words about tax reform. (I counted!) Example: Under

"Business Reform," the administration says it will "eliminate tax breaks for special interests." Oh? Which ones?

Experts cannot estimate the effects, such as how much tax revenue would fall, since the plan is mostly blank space. But heroic guesstimates based on Mr. Trump's campaign proposals suggest tax revenue would fall by \$5 trillion to \$6 trillion over 10 years—and a lot more thereafter. Republicans will doubtless try to cover up this huge cost with trumped-up growth forecasts and legislative chicanery.

Then there's the crowded congressional calendar again. Big tax proposals are hugely contentious and require enormous congressional time and energy. How, amid the Trumpian chaos, the health-care debate and more, will

the House and especially the Senate find time to agree on a tax bill? A month ago, I was convinced Republicans would find a way to pass tax cuts, though not tax reform. Now, even that is in doubt.

Finally, the parts of the GOP's ambitious deregulatory agenda that require legislation may also fall by the wayside. One important victim, I hope, is the 591-page Choice Act, the "repeal and replace" of the Dodd-Frank financial reforms. The legislation passed the House Financial Services Committee on a straight party-line vote May 4, but that may be as far as it gets.

The big "choice" the bill makes is to allow Wall Street to return to the Wild West atmosphere that existed before the financial crisis. It would exempt big banks from many regulations if they hold 10% capital;

it imagines that a bankruptcy court could handle a gigantic financial failure like Lehman Brothers; it would cripple the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau; and it would push the Federal Reserve to follow a mechanical rule for monetary policy. And more.

The Choice Act never would be missed. Neither would the rest of the Faustian bargain.

Mr. Blinder is a professor of economics and public affairs at Princeton University and a visiting fellow at the Brookings Institution. He was formerly vice chairman of the Federal Reserve.

**The
New York
Times**

Krugman : The Unfreeing of American Workers

Paul Krugman

4-5 minutes

And you can make a strong case that we're getting less free as time goes by.

Let's talk first about those noncompete agreements, which were recently the subject of a stunning article in *The Times* (the latest in a series), plus a report from the Obama administration pushing for limits to the practice.

Noncompete agreements were originally supposed to be about protecting trade secrets, and therefore helping to promote innovation and investment in job training. Suppose that a company trying to build a better mousetrap hires a new mousetrap engineer. Her employment contract might very well include a clause preventing her from leaving a few months later for a job with a rival pest-control firm, since she could be taking crucial in-house information with her. And that's perfectly reasonable.

At this point, however, almost one in five American employees is subject to some kind of noncompete clause. There can't be that many workers in possession of valuable trade secrets, especially when many of these workers are in relatively low-paying jobs. For example, one prominent case involved Jimmy John's, a sandwich chain, basically trying to ban its former franchisees from working for other sandwich makers.

Furthermore, the terms of the clauses are often defined ridiculously widely. It's as if our hypothetical mousetrap engineer were prohibited from seeking employment with any other manufacturing firm, or in any occupation that makes use of her engineering skills.

At this point, in other words, noncompete clauses are in many cases less about protecting trade secrets than they are about tying workers to their current employers, unable to bargain for better wages or quit to take better jobs.

This shouldn't be happening in America, and to be fair some

politicians in both parties have been speaking up about the need for change (although few expect the Trump administration to follow up on the Obama administration's reform push). But there's another aspect of declining worker freedom that is very much a partisan issue: health care.

Until 2014, there was basically only one way Americans under 65 with pre-existing conditions could get health insurance: by finding an employer willing to offer coverage. Some employers were in fact willing to do so. Why? Because there were major tax advantages — premiums aren't counted as taxable income — but to get those advantages employer plans must offer the same coverage to every employee, regardless of medical history.

But what if you wanted to change jobs, or start your own business? Too bad: you were basically stuck (and I knew quite a few people in that position).

Then Obamacare went into effect, guaranteeing affordable care even to those with pre-existing medical conditions. This was a hugely

liberating change for millions. Even if you didn't immediately take advantage of the new program to strike out on your own, the fact was that now you could.

But maybe not for much longer. Trumpcare — the American Health Care Act — would drastically reduce protections for Americans with pre-existing conditions. And even if that bill never becomes law, the Trump administration is effectively sabotaging individual insurance markets, so that in many cases Americans who lose employer coverage will have no place to turn — which will in turn tie those who do have such coverage to their current employers.

You might say, with only a bit of hyperbole, that workers in America, supposedly the land of the free, are actually creeping along the road to serfdom, yoked to corporate employers the way Russian peasants were once tied to their masters' land. And the people pushing them down that road are the very people who cry "freedom" the loudest.

**The
New York
Times**

Editorial : Lurching Backward on Justice Reform

The Editorial

Board

4-5 minutes

Attorney General Jeff Sessions at the Justice Department last week. Michael Reynolds/European Pressphoto Agency

When it comes to criminal justice, Attorney General Jeff Sessions is a man out of time — stuck defiantly in the 1980s, when crime in America

was high and politicians scrambled to out-tough one another by passing breathtakingly severe sentencing laws. This mind-set was bad enough when Mr. Sessions was a senator from Alabama working to thwart sentencing reforms in Congress. Now that he is the nation's top law enforcement officer, he's trying to drag the country backward with him, even as most states are moving toward more enlightened policies.

On May 12, Mr. Sessions announced a drastic policy ordering federal prosecutors to pursue the toughest possible charges against crime suspects in all cases, rescinding an Obama administration directive that focused on reducing punishments for low-level, nonviolent offenders, mostly in drug cases, and steering more law-enforcement resources toward the bigger fish. That approach was working: The federal prison population started to drop for the

first time in years, even as crime has remained at historic lows.

Instead of acknowledging these gains, Mr. Sessions has clung to the familiar myth that longer, harsher sentences reduce crime and increase public safety. The evidence shows the opposite: To bring down recidivism, a punishment's swiftness and certainty matter far more than its length. Longer sentences may even lead to more reoffending.

Mr. Sessions's outdated ideas have been rebuked across the political spectrum. Eric Holder, the attorney general who issued the Obama-era policy, called the new approach "dumb on crime." Senator Rand Paul, Republican of Kentucky, pointed out that people of color suffer disproportionately from mandatory-minimum sentences for drug crimes, and said Mr. Sessions's charging policy "will accentuate the injustice." A group of 31 current and former state and local prosecutors — not people

The New York Times

Blow : Blood in the Water

Charles M. Blow

4-5 minutes

But that has not stopped Trump from whining in a tweet, "This is the single greatest witch hunt of a politician in American history!" and saying during a commencement address:

"Look at the way I've been treated lately, especially by the media. No politician in history — and I say this with great surety — has been treated worse or more unfairly."

President Trump, with Vice President Mike Pence and First Lady Melania Trump, before departing on his first foreign trip in office on Friday. Al Drago/The New York Times

Not only is this a laughable assertion that could only be uttered by someone who isn't a student of history or a reader of books, but it also resurfaces one of Trump's most vexatious qualities: perpetual wallowing in self-victimization and the shedding of his own tears for a spurious suffering that only exists in the muddle of his mind.

Grow up! Just correction is not jaundiced crucifixion. Any hell you're in is a hell you made. You are the author of

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

Lipsky : The U.S. Can Get Julian Assange

Seth Lipsky

4-5 minutes

May 21, 2017 5:45 p.m. ET

Julian Assange is all smiles after Sweden dropped its rape charge against him. He may be hoping to make it to Ecuador, which is unlikely to extradite him to America. Then again, we could always seize him and spirit him here to face justice. We wouldn't have to resort to the extradition process. The Supreme Court might even prefer it that way.

ordinarily associated with going soft on crime — signed an open letter calling the directive an "unnecessary and unfortunate return" to harmful and discredited practices. Mr. Sessions has taken a sledgehammer to this rare and fragile bipartisanship, at least on the federal level. And while it's too soon to know how the new policy will affect sentences, prison populations, or recidivism rates, Mr. Sessions's assertion that the justice system is not harsh enough — however isolated that view — could

your own demise. You are not being unfairly targeted; instead your above-the-rules, beyond-the-law sense of privilege is being tested and found insufficient. It will not immunize you against truth and justice.

There are very serious questions here, ones that include but are not limited to collusion. They also now include the possibility of treason, obstruction of justice and making false statements.

It is increasingly clear that there is more to know than we now know.

There is more to know about former National Security Adviser Michael T. Flynn's activities, and who knew what about those activities and when. There is more to know about the president's interactions with James Comey and the reason for Comey's firing. There is more to know about the true extent of contact between Trump associates and the Russians.

Did the president have inappropriate conversations with Comey, then director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, in an effort to exculpate himself and mitigate inquiries about Flynn?

Trump's and Comey's accounts, at least as they are being reported,

Take it from the late Chief Justice William Rehnquist, who wrote the opinion in *U.S. v. Alvarez-Machain* (1992). It suggests that if America has a hand in kidnapping a culprit from foreign shores to bring him to justice here, the Supreme Court is not going to be too particular.

I've written about this over the years, including in 2009, when Scotland freed Abdelbaset Ali al-Megrahi to go home to Libya. He'd been convicted for his role in bringing down Pan Am 103 in 1988. It struck me that America ought to capture Megrahi and bring him before an American court. President Obama could have acted under the

trickle down and affect justice reform in the states.

Fortunately, states have been moving in the other direction, as budget-conscious lawmakers saw what Mr. Sessions has not — that locking up more people for longer periods is hugely expensive with no real public-safety payoff. The states should continue with their effective, evidence-based approaches, and Congress should find a way at last to pass meaningful sentencing reform. Reducing or eliminating many mandatory minimums would

conflict on these counts. One of these men is lying. And while I am no fan of Comey — his buzzer-beating hijinks with Hillary's email just before the election helped hand this country over to Trump and his cabal of corruption — I am more prone to believe him than Trump, a proven, pathological liar.

The crisis isn't limited only to Trump.

Did Vice President Mike Pence not know that Flynn was under investigation by the F.B.I. for lobbying on behalf of Turkey until "March, upon first hearing the news"? How can that be when, as The New York Times reported last week, Flynn "told President Trump's transition team weeks before the inauguration that he was under federal investigation for secretly working as a paid lobbyist for Turkey during the campaign, according to two people familiar with the case." Pence led the transition team.

How can Pence claim ignorance when Representative Elijah E. Cummings, ranking member of the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, sent Pence a letter on Nov. 18, explicitly spelling out:

precedent in the case of Humberto Alvarez-Machain, a Mexican physician.

The doctor was indicted for his alleged role in the murder of a Drug Enforcement Administration agent, Enrique Camarena Salazar. He was accused, as Rehnquist put it, of "prolonging agent Camarena's life so that others could further torture and interrogate him." On April 2, 1990, the doctor was, as Rehnquist put it, "forcibly kidnapped from his medical office in Guadalajara, Mexico, to be flown by private plane to El Paso, Texas, where he was arrested by DEA officials."

be optimal, but at this point most anything would be an improvement.

A bipartisan group of senators recently reintroduced the Justice Safety Valve Act, which would give judges more flexibility to impose lighter sentences in certain cases. They were achingly close to passing a similar bill last year, until a small clot of senators blocked it. One of those senators was Jeff Sessions.

"Lt. Gen. Flynn's General Counsel and Principal, Robert Kelley, confirmed that they were hired by a foreign company to lobby for Turkish interests, stating: 'They want to keep posted on what we all want to be informed of: the present situation, the transition between President Obama and President-Elect Trump.' When asked whether the firm had been hired because of Lt. Gen. Flynn's close ties to President-elect Trump, Mr. Kelley responded, 'I hope so.'"

It isn't possible Pence knew nothing. I believe Pence is a liar like his boss.

We knew that Pence was a liar when during the vice-presidential debate he repeatedly claimed that Trump had not in fact said things that he was recorded on television saying.

The only difference between the two is delivery. Trump is bombastic and abrasive with his lies. Pence cleverly delivers his with earnestness and solemnity. But a lie is a lie.

The whole White House crew must be fully investigated and held to account. It is time for justice to be served and honor restored. The dishonest must be dislodged.

A U.S. district court concluded that the DEA was responsible, even though its agents were not personally involved. Dr. Alvarez claimed his abduction, in Rehnquist's paraphrase, "constituted outrageous governmental conduct." A dainty district court and the Ninth Circuit appeals bench were prepared to free Dr. Alvarez.

The Supreme Court was made of sterner stuff. It did cite a precedent, *U.S. v. Rauscher*, which blocked the prosecution of a defendant brought to America from England for a crime not covered in the extradition treaty between the two

countries. The court took the view that once the U.S. proceeded under an extradition treaty, it was bound by its terms.

But the court also cited *Ker v. Illinois* (1886), which involved a thief, Frederick Ker, who'd been convicted in Illinois but fled to Peru, only to be brought back to court by a Pinkerton agent. Rehnquist wrote that Ker's "presence before the court was procured by means of forcible abduction from Peru." But because he

wasn't brought back via extradition, the court rejected his claims to rights under extradition law.

Which brings us to Mr. Assange. If his plan is to slink to Ecuador and if the U.S. really wants him, it might do better by avoiding extradition and turning to our secret services to airlift him to stand trial in America.

Even if America kidnaps him, that might not be the end of the story. Witness the denouement of the saga of Dr. Alvarez-Machain, who

was put on trial in the same district court that shrank from trying him originally. The judge acquitted him before the case went to the jury. Dr. Alvarez-Machain then sued America and the Mexicans who'd kidnapped him in league with the DEA. That case, too, went to the Supreme Court, where in 2004 Dr. Alvarez-Machain lost unanimously.

It's not clear the U.S. wants to put Mr. Assange on trial. If it does, though, the moral of *Alvarez-Machain* is that it doesn't have to be

squeamish about how it gets him here, even if he's hiding south of the border.

Mr. Lipsky is editor of the New York Sun.



California Democrats Choose Eric Bauman as State Party Chairman

Alejandro Lazo

5-6 minutes

Updated May 21, 2017 6:17 p.m. ET

The California Democratic Party elected Eric Bauman to its top leadership post Saturday, narrowly defeating an insurgent candidate whom supporters of Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders had rallied around.

Delegates to the state Democratic Party convention in Sacramento chose Mr. Bauman as a successor to departing Chairman John Burton, who has been credited with helping solidify the party's control of the state, even at a time when much of the rest of country has been awash in a sea of red.

Supporters of Mr. Sanders had backed Kimberly Ellis, who had promised to reorder the party establishment and redefine what it means to be a Democrat in this deeply blue state. Mr. Bauman received 1,493 votes while Ms. Ellis got 1,431. A third candidate, Lenore Albert-Sheridan, received seven.

Considered more of a traditional candidate, Mr. Bauman has said that he hopes to build on the party's considerable success, which includes holding every statewide elected position, a two-thirds control of both houses of the state legislature and a sizable congressional

delegation.

"California must remain the bastion of resistance against Donald Trump, and the shining beacon of hope, leading the way, pushing the envelope on progressive policy for the rest of the nation to follow," Mr. Bauman said. "My fellow officers and I are committed to working with you to make our party representative of our grass-roots base and ensure we stand up for those most in need."

Ms. Ellis told supporters, who chanted "Eric lies" and "recount" that she would potentially contest the election results and not concede.

"In the spirit of not being afraid to facilitate difficult conversations, and tell hard truths, I want you to know that we have some serious concerns about the vote count," Ms. Ellis told supporters late Saturday night, according to video posted on Facebook. "So I want you all to know that we have been in communication with counsel, legal counsel, and I want you to know that this race is not over."

In a statement Sunday morning, Ms. Ellis said that the election "will come down to a handful of votes at the end of the day" and she would be meeting Sunday with state party chair Mr. Burton about "concerns about the way some of those votes were cast." Mr. Bauman said Sunday that the race was indeed "over," and said "we are all united

together to move the California party forward."

Since the election of President Donald Trump, California has emerged as an important state for Sanders supporters and a battleground that could point to the future of the Democratic Party. A win for Ms. Ellis could have proved a significant victory for their movement after Mr. Sanders's choice to head the national party, Rep. Keith Ellison (D., Minn.), was defeated in February by former Labor Secretary Tom Perez, who is also viewed as a more establishment figure.

The California race itself proved to be less about ideology. The candidates—Ms. Ellis, an African-American woman from the San Francisco area, and Mr. Bauman, the current vice chairman of the state's Democratic Party—agree on most issues and the state's platform is already progressive when compared with other states.

But the election broke down along some of the same fault lines that have divided the party since Mr. Sanders mounted his own unlikely challenge for the Democratic presidential nomination, with Mr. Bauman openly admitting he was a party insider, though he supported Mr. Ellison during the race for Democratic National Committee chair.

Ms. Ellis, meanwhile, had promised to give grass-roots activists more

power in party leadership, and push a more liberal agenda. In April, Ms. Ellis won the endorsement of progressive organization Our Revolution, a movement inspired by the Sanders campaign that has organized heavily in California since the presidential election and has made the race for state party chair an important goal.

Earlier this year, Our Revolution supporters packed party meetings to choose delegates to the state Democratic convention, picking up more than half the slots available.

California proved to be a key battleground in the 2016 Democratic primary contest, with supporters of Mr. Sanders forcing a pitched battle in the Golden State with Hillary Clinton. Mrs. Clinton won the primary, helping her secure the Democratic nomination before losing to Mr. Trump.

Ms. Ellis supported Mrs. Clinton in the primary but gained momentum as the outsider candidate, saying that she would bring groups such as Our Revolution or Swing Left, which works to rally progressive voters in swing congressional districts, into the party fold and place less emphasis on paid consultants and more on community organizing.

Write to Alejandro Lazo at alejandro.lazo@wsj.com



Biden fuels 2020 speculation

Lisa Hagen

8-10

minutes

Joe Biden has been out of office for four months, but the former vice president hasn't left the public eye.

Instead, Biden has kept a robust schedule that fuels speculation about 2020 presidential run.

Some Democrats looking to bounce back from 2016 defeats are still

looking to Biden to reorient their messaging in a way that could win back the working class voters who fled the party to vote for President Trump.

Biden, who passed on running for president last year after a lengthy period of indecision, has promised to remain involved in rebuilding the party.

When it comes to a White House bid in 2020, though, he has sent mixed signals, noting that he

currently has no plans to mount a campaign. And Biden's age — he'll be 78 by Inauguration Day in 2021 — would make him by far the oldest president ever.

Still, Biden's busy recent schedule of events and appearances suggests he hasn't entirely ruled out another bid.

Biden has attended a hedge fund conference in Las Vegas and a fundraiser for New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo (D). His jam-packed

calendar also includes upcoming speeches at the Florida Democratic Party and at a few college commencements. Biden will also receive an award at the Democratic National Committee's (DNC) LGBT Gala next month.

But the appearance that drew the loudest buzz was Biden's speech last month at a state party dinner in New Hampshire — a critical early state in the presidential primary circuit. During his speech, Biden

sought to tamp down the 2020 rumors.

"When I got asked to speak, I knew it was going to cause speculation," Biden said to applause, only to add, "Guys, I'm not running."

That wasn't the first time Biden has shot down the possibility of a presidential bid. Right before he left office, Biden said he doesn't intend to run.

"I have no intention of running for president but I do have the intention to stay deeply involved in everything I've done my whole life," Biden said on *The View* in January.

Still, his most recent reference to any lingering presidential ambitions showed that he still appears open to it and won't rule anything out.

"I may very well do it," Biden said about a run at the SALT hedge fund conference in Las Vegas on Friday. "At this point, no one in my family or I have made the judgment to run."

As Biden's schedule resembles the itinerary of someone looking to test the presidential waters, voters so far appear enthusiastic about a Biden comeback.

A survey from Democratic firm Public Policy Polling released this month found Biden as the leading Democratic contender in a hypothetical matchup against Trump. The recent poll found Biden defeating Trump in a head-to-head race by 14 points, 54 to 40 percent — a margin one point larger than Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.), who polled 13 percentage points ahead of Trump.

Democratic strategists close to Biden, who has been affectionately

nicknamed "Uncle Joe" by supporters for his avuncular demeanor and tendency to make gaffes, say it's in his nature to stay active in politics, especially after holding elected office for more than four decades.

"I don't have any idea what he's going to do other than what he says publicly, which is he's not inclined to do it at this point. I don't think he knows what he's going to do honestly," said Steve Schale, a former Obama campaign aide in Florida who worked on the Draft Biden movement in 2016. He noted that he hasn't spoken to Biden since Christmas.

"The idea that Joe Biden would continue to do what he's done for 40 years ... shouldn't come to anybody's surprise, nor do I think anybody should read into it that he's definitely made a decision. He's keeping his word that he was going to remain active in the public space and work on the issues he cares about."

Biden has been a dominant force in national Democratic politics since he was first elected to the Senate in 1973 at just 29 years old. He's run for president twice: in 1988, and then 20 years later, in 2008.

After serving two terms as former President Obama's second in command, Biden opted out of running for president in 2016 after his eldest son, Beau, died from brain cancer. Biden will spend some of his post-White House time on a cancer research initiative in his home state at the University of Pennsylvania.

"This is who he is, this is what he's done his whole life," Schale said. "I

think you're going to see Joe Biden remain a pretty prominent fixture in American politics."

During the 2016 general election, Biden was active on the campaign trail for Democratic nominee Hillary Clinton giving emotional speeches in many of the Rust Belt states that she ultimately lost.

Now that the dust has started to settle since the election, Biden has been critical of both Clinton and Democrats' messaging and conceded that he regretted not running last year.

At an event in late March, he lamented that Democrats neglected to reach out to the middle class and focus on pocketbook issues that impact all Americans. Many voters in the Midwest and Rust Belt gravitated to Trump, with a number of those states going red for the first time in decades.

"I never thought [Clinton] was a great candidate. I thought I was a great candidate," Biden said at the Friday conference in Las Vegas, though he added, "Hillary would have been a really good president."

Even with the constant 2020 speculation buzzing around him, Biden is making good on his promise to help Democrats get elected to public office at all levels of government.

Earlier this year, Biden campaigned in a state Senate race in Delaware, where he served as a U.S. senator. The Democratic candidate won, preserving the party's control of the chamber. Now, Biden plans to stump with a Democratic candidate in New Jersey's governor's race, which will be held in November.

As the party searches for its next leader, many Democrats believe they must look beyond older politicians like Biden, Clinton and Obama and at the new generation of politicians, party leaders and activists.

Biden was notably missing from a recent 2020 cattle call in Washington, D.C., when the Center for American Progress, a liberal think tank, hosted a conference earlier this week that featured a lineup of potential 2020 contenders. The list included Sens.

Sanders who also didn't attend CAP's conference, also won't rule out another run in 2020. Since running in a surprisingly close 2016 primary with Clinton, the Vermont senator has worked closely with the DNC to unite the Sanders and Clinton factions of the Democratic Party.

Now, some Democrats see Biden's role in national politics becoming more about being an elder statesman who promotes the next generation of Democratic leaders. By the time 2020 rolls around, some strategists believe that voters will want a fresh face to pick up the party's mantle and lead the resistance to Trump's administration.

"He has a very valuable role to play, but I don't think he's in the same league with the Sanders and Warrens of the world," said Democratic strategist Brad Bannon. "They have bigger microphones and platforms to speak from."

"I think Democrats are going to want a new face, somebody fresh."

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

Democrats Enlist Veterans Ahead of 2018 House Elections

Reid J. Epstein
6-7 minutes

national service, the veterans allow the Democratic Party to appeal to segments of the electorate that have fled the party in recent elections. It recalls their strategy in 2006, when they took control of the House by fielding candidates who could appeal to voters in more conservative districts.

"It is time that Democrats genuinely show that we can have a bigger tent and not just be entirely defined by the old liberal left," said Massachusetts Rep. Seth Moulton, a Marine combat veteran of the Iraq War who is leading the party's recruiting effort among veterans.

Democrats must win at least 24 seats in 2018 to take a majority in the House. With GOP President Donald Trump less popular at this point in his term than any president in modern history, Democratic officials now believe between 75

and 100 House districts will be in play in 2018, dozens more than previous estimates.

The Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee has spoken with 300 potential 2018 candidates, an official said, though dozens will compete against each other in primary contests.

For the first time this year, the DCCC is working with VoteVets, a liberal political-action committee with which the party's House campaign arm has often been at odds. VoteVets, which in the past has backed Democratic veterans in primary challenges, is now targeting competitive general election races.

"Veterans have a chance to carry districts that other Democrats won't be competitive in," said Jon Soltz, the VoteVets founder and chairman. "They're less political and they're

not career politicians and they're not Washington."

Last month, Illinois Sen. Tammy Duckworth convened a meeting with Mr. Moulton, VoteVets and the DCCC to coordinate recruiting and financial efforts.

"Ever since I first ran, people were saying, 'We didn't know there were Democrats in the military,' " said Ms. Duckworth, who lost both of her legs in Iraq and who was first elected to the House in 2012. "They acted like I was some sort of unicorn, and I knew that I wasn't."

Of the 80 military veterans serving in the House, just 19 are Democrats, according to Seth Lynn, executive director of Veterans Campaign, a nonpartisan group that trains veterans to run for office.

Updated May 21, 2017 4:20 p.m. ET

WASHINGTON—The last time Democrats won a House majority it was in part because the Iraq War was so unpopular. The next time may be with candidates who fought in America's post-9/11 conflicts.

The party is running military veterans in competitive congressional districts across the country: Fifteen veterans have already launched 2018 House campaigns, and 10 more may enter races by this summer, Democratic officials say.

In addition to framing their campaigns as a continuation of their

"There's a real fiction in our national narrative that the Republican Party has the corner on the market on patriotism," said Chrissy Houlahan, a former Air Force captain who is challenging GOP Rep. Ryan Costello in a suburban Philadelphia district that Hillary Clinton carried in November.

While the DCCC has remained neutral in primaries that don't involve incumbents, VoteVets is set this week to endorse Ms. Houlahan, along with Jason Crow against GOP Rep. Mike Coffman in Colorado and Doug Applegate and Josh Butner against GOP Reps. Darrell Issa and Duncan Hunter in Southern California.

In upstate New York, former Army intelligence officer Pat Ryan is preparing to challenge GOP Rep. John Faso. Mr. Ryan, 35 years old, said his military background would be an asset in a district that voted for Barack Obama in 2012 and Mr. Trump last year.

"It's a slightly Republican district, so people are going to have to feel that the candidate is doing this for something beyond just party for a greater purpose," Mr. Ryan said.

It is by no means guaranteed that the veterans would emerge from Democratic primary contests that are expected to be crowded, which could force candidates to the left. Ms. Houlahan, like each of the four VoteVets-backed candidates, already has Democratic primary opposition.

"There's a renewed emphasis on ideological purity in an age when everybody gets a primary," said Ian Russell, a former DCCC political director. "With veterans, there's a decent chance they wind up being nonideological."

For all the energy on the political left, Republicans won a House special election in Kansas and remain favored to win coming contests in Montana on Thursday and in Georgia and South Carolina

in June. Told Democrats believe 75 to 100 districts will be in play, Matt Gorman, the National Republican Congressional Committee communications director, laughed.

"They are undefeated in moral victories," Mr. Gorman said.

Veterans face an array of challenges politically. Their military service takes them far from home. They don't come with the political base like previously elected officials. Very few can tap a network of wealthy friends.

"If they've been on active duty, they may not have lived in their hometowns for 15 to 20 years," Ms. Duckworth said.

Dan Feehan, a 34-year-old Army veteran who served as a Defense Department official in the Obama administration, is preparing to run in the Minnesota district where he grew up—even though he hasn't lived there since he was 14. Mr. Feehan, his wife and two children

still live in Washington and are house-hunting in Mankato, Minn.

Though the sprawling 21-county district is held by a Democrat, Rep. Tim Walz, Mr. Trump won it by 15 percentage points in November. Mr. Walz is vacating the seat to run for governor.

"I'm on a very steep learning curve," Mr. Feehan said, "to learn everything that goes into this and to maintain every aspect of authenticity that I have."

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Corrections & Amplifications Darrell Issa is a Republican representative from California. An earlier version of this article misspelled his first name as Darrel. (May 21, 2017)

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POLITICO Paging Rahm: House Dems revive 2006 playbook for 2018

Edward-Isaac
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9-11 minutes

An unpopular president, the scent of corruption in Washington, a riled-up liberal base — to House Democrats, 2018 is already looking like 2006 on overdrive.

Now Democrats see the same ugly storm forming for Republicans that delivered them the majority 11 years ago, and they're digging out the blueprint.

Story Continued Below

The party is vastly expanding the number of districts it plans to contest, recruiting veterans and business owners to compete in conservative terrain as it did back then. Three senior House Democrats are soon heading to Chicago to seek advice from Rahm Emanuel, the party's 2006 master strategist. Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) has been tutoring members on the party's campaign efforts that year.

And outside groups have gotten in on the revival spirit, too, with large organizations, including MoveOn.org, diving into their email archives and seeking out lessons from people on the front lines in 2006.

"In 2006, there was a similar landscape, where Republican-controlled majorities in the House and Senate refused to do anything to hold George W. Bush

accountable," said Rep. Hakeem Jeffries of New York, one of the three Democrats planning the Chicago trip. "The 2006 blueprint will have to be updated and reloaded to reflect the environment of today, but there are some lessons that can be learned."

Still, a lot has changed for Democrats since 2006, mostly for the worse, and just re-adopting the campaign tactics from that year probably won't cut it. For starters, Democrats need 24 seats to take back the majority vs. 28 seats to make up in 2006. The 2010 redistricting tilted the House landscape toward Republicans, putting more seats even further out of Democrats' grasp. And there's a year and a half to go in the most unpredictable environment in modern political history.

"The only place I could see today there are parallels is if the Democratic base is ginned up to give them some candidates, but other than that the jury is out," said former New York Rep. Thomas Reynolds, the National Republican Congressional Committee chairman in 2006.

"In '06, there are probably more swing seats than there are now," he added. "They're kidding themselves."

Nonetheless, parallels abound in House Democrats' minds.

The environment then was defined by the Iraq War, the botched federal response to Hurricane Katrina and the aftertaste of President George

W. Bush's attempt to privatize Social Security. Now, it's Russia, the firing of FBI Director James Comey, Obamacare repeal and a tempestuous, mistake-prone president. Democrats believe President Donald Trump has already given them enough to make the "cronism, corruption and incompetence" argument they employed in 2006 — when Pelosi and Harry Reid first implored voters to "drain the swamp" of D.C.

This cycle, the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee is investing early in research into Republican incumbents, diving deep into their records and histories for possible corruption and other liabilities, in the hopes of promoting a narrative they'll then tie to the suspicions circulating about Trump's self-dealing.

"Ethics," said DCCC executive director Dan Sena, "will play a significant role."

The person who had Sena's job in 2006 said what's most striking is how early in Trump's term the environment has soured for Republicans.

"There is an undercurrent of a real concern for the direction of our country," said John Lapp, the DCCC's executive director in 2006 and currently a Democratic strategist. "What's so strange is right now, in Donald Trump we have a guy who has broken that trust months into his presidency. And you have a Republican Congress that refuses to hold him in check."

Lapp's advice to those in charge now: Don't sit back and assume Trump's problems will automatically mean a Democratic wave election. "You don't know it's happening until it's happening. You can't sit by and let it happen to you, you've got to make it happen."

To that end, Democrats are investing heavily in opposition research even on safe incumbent Republicans, not just those in targeted districts, hoping to turn up material they can use to push the corruption message. Democrats are also busy sorting through potential candidates, which in some cases number more than a dozen interested prospects for a single district. The DCCC has been succeeding much earlier than usual in landing strong recruits.

It all loosely follows the blueprint that Emanuel drew up in 2006.

"The future, in a presidential election, a statewide election, or a congressional, is in the suburbs, where more moderate voters exist," Emanuel said in last week's episode of POLITICO's Off Message podcast. "I purposely recruited candidates who reflected the temperament, tenor and culture of their district. I didn't try to elect somebody that fit my image. I tried to help elect somebody that fit the image and the profile of the district."

Leading the DCCC that year, Emanuel put an early focus on raising money, decrying that Republicans consistently outtrailed House Democrats. Emanuel that cycle emphasized recruiting

centrists — who may have broken with Democratic Party orthodoxy on abortion — in conservative districts where his party usually didn't compete.

And when it came time to hammer incumbent GOP members of Congress, Emanuel directed his committee to focus on Republicans' ethical problems and their close ties to Bush. One tactic was to name Republicans the "rubber stamp of the week," a move yoking them to their unpopular president. That's now being emulated by Organizing For Action — the political group spawned by Barack Obama's campaigns — as it targets Republican lawmakers as "Rubber Stamp Reps" for their votes in line with Trump.

Emanuel has been in regular touch with Democratic leaders in Washington, holding frequent strategy phone calls with Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer of New York.

Outside allies have been thinking 2006 for months. At the progressive gathering RootsCamp in November, Blue State Digital CEO and founder Joe Rospars put together a panel of digital operatives to coach Democrats on

how they handled the 2006 cycle. It featured Lauren Miller and Macon Phillips, who were key strategists then.

Pelosi likes to talk about the strategy as inspired by Tylenol and Advil commercials, which tend to start by trashing the competition, only to mention later what their pills do by comparison. For now, Democrats are still in the trashing phase. But Pelosi, Schumer and other top congressional Democrats have accelerated planning for a release on what issues they would prioritize if they controlled Congress, according to leadership aides. (They haven't yet figured out what that agenda would be, other than not repealing Obamacare and not going along with the Trump tax plan.)

Pelosi has also turned back to several of the private-sector branding experts she brought in ahead of the 2006 elections, including software entrepreneur John Cullinane, who has met on Capitol Hill with Pelosi and other members.

Democrats credit Trump for their bullishness about 2018, and the overwhelming response from potential candidates. At a closed-

door meeting with top party operatives organized by the AFL-CIO last month, Sena said he had already spoken with over 300 candidates in 75 districts, and that he was directing his committee to invest in Montana's ongoing special election as a way to signal to recruits in rural or "stretch" districts that the group would have their back. Sena said House Democrats targeted 45 districts in 2016 and are looking to triple that number next year.

In 2006, the DCCC scoured John Kerry's 2004 presidential map to see how many districts in which he had earned 40 to 49 percent of the vote they could put in play; for 2018, they're looking at how many Democrats actually won to guide their ambitions.

"One of the biggest lessons we learned from 2006: We need to build the largest battlefield in the last decade and build as much of a map as we can possibly build," Sena said. He is working to put over 130 districts in play, he told a gathering of top party operatives in Washington last month — a competitive map that would be three times the size of their 2016 efforts.

"Candidates are coming forward in a rush. Every time [Trump] does something egregious, more come forward," said Rep. Denny Heck (D-Wash.), the DCCC's recruitment chair.

Democrats have also been getting deep into the 2010 cycle, when Republicans took back the majority with a much bigger wave.

"The route to unroot an incumbent," Sena said, "comes more from 2010 than 2006."

They're starting with the 23 districts Hillary Clinton won in 2016, the 10 where she lost by fewer than 4 points and the nine where she lost by less than 4 points but Obama won twice. Add in what Heck calls Republican incumbents "who have vulnerabilities of a self-inflicted nature," and that's their update on the 2006 play.

"The shorthand term here is 'targets of opportunity,'" Heck said, but added that the battlefield will likely expand. "The other way to become a target of opportunity — here's the technical term for it: 'Stupid votes.'"

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The Washington Post

6-7 minutes

The United States may have escaped most digital damage from this month's unleashing of a global "ransomware" virus, though cyber-experts fear more attacks. One possible explanation is that the malicious software ("malware") harms older versions of Microsoft's Windows operating system, which most Americans have replaced. Perhaps many users in other countries haven't. Whatever the explanation, this is not the end of Internet threats.

The unmistakable lesson of recent years is that the Internet is a double-edged sword. Despite enormous benefits — instant access to huge quantities of information, the proliferation of new forms of businesses, communications and entertainment — it also encourages crime, global conflict and economic disruption. The drift seems ominous.

The Russians, it is widely agreed, hacked into the computers of the Democratic National Committee, raising fears that the U.S. presidential election was compromised. In Dallas, hackers

Samuelson : America's dangerous Internet delusion

By Robert J. Samuelson

turned on the city's emergency sirens for more than an hour. Cyberthieves stole \$81 million from Bangladesh's central bank, though some of the money has apparently been recovered.

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We are dangerously dependent on Internet-based systems. All these incidents threatened the social fabric of the victimized societies. If the Russians hacked the Democrats, who might be next? Could whoever triggered Dallas's sirens turn off the traffic lights or the local power grid? How safe are electronic financial transfers?

Ransomware validates these fears. What was stunning is how quickly the recent outbreak spread. One estimate had it quickly migrating to 150 countries and affecting 200,000 computers. Despite the rapid response — the discovery of a so-called "kill switch" in the malware that deactivated the virus — the basic message remains: Much health care, transportation and ordinary business might close if deprived of Internet access, whether by hostile governments (North Korea?) or cybercriminals.

This makes the Internet a weapon that can be used against us — or by us. In a presentation to the Senate Intelligence Committee, Daniel Coats, the director of national intelligence, put it this way: "Our adversaries are becoming more adept at using cyberspace to threaten our interests and advance their own, and despite improving cyber defenses, nearly all information, communication networks and systems will be at risk for years."

The trouble is that we are aiding and abetting our adversaries. We are addicted to the Internet and refuse to recognize how our addiction subtracts from our security. The more we connect our devices and instruments to the Internet, the more we create paths for others to use against us, either by shutting down websites or by controlling what they do. Put differently, we are — incredibly — inviting trouble. Our commercial interests and our national security diverge.

The latest example of this tension is the "Internet of things" or the "smart home." It involves connecting various devices and gadgets (thermostats, lights, cameras, locks, ovens) to the Internet so they can be operated or monitored remotely.

This would be a major Internet expansion and moneymaker.

One consulting firm, Ovum, forecasts that from 2016 to 2021, the number of smart homes worldwide will rise from 90 million to 463 million, with the largest concentrations in the United States and China. Ovum anticipates that each smart home will have nearly nine separate devices attached to the Internet and that the global total will hit 4 billion by 2021.

All this increases the vulnerability of Americans and others to cyberattacks. To be sure, the "Internet of things" will be fitted with security protections. But as we've seen, mistakes and gaps occur. Or hackers circumvent security firewalls. The growth of the "Internet of things" creates more avenues and opportunities for hostile nations or rogue hackers to penetrate various cyberdefenses.

The Coats presentation makes this explicit: "In the future, state and nonstate actors will likely use [Internet of things] devices to support intelligence operations ... or attack targeted computer networks."

Just how we can or should regulate the tension between our commercial interests and our strategic security

isn't clear. But we can't even start a conversation if we don't admit that the tension is real and is getting worse all the time.

Instead of candor, we compartmentalize. We lavish praise

on our cybercapitalists — Mark Zuckerberg, Jeff Bezos and others — for their accomplishments while conveniently forgetting that the same technologies also make us less safe. (Disclosure: Bezos owns The Post.) If there are deficiencies

with cybersecurity, we consider them separately. We embrace the “Internet of things” without admitting that it's also the “Internet of hazards.”

The technologies to promote the Internet and protect it are one and the same. We need to consider our addiction in all its aspects, even the disagreeable. But we are in denial.