

"All the News That's Fit to Print"

The New York Times

THE WEATHER

Today, intervals of clouds and sunshine, low humidity, high 76. Tonight, partly cloudy, low 64. Tomorrow, partly sunny, turning warmer, high 80. Weather map, Page B8.

VOL. CLXXIII . . . No. 60,182

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TUESDAY, JUNE 11, 2024

Prices in Canada may be higher

\$4.00



A display on the stairs of the Capitol in Helena, Mont., in November paid tribute to relatives and friends who were taken by suicide.

TAILOR IRVINE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

NEWS ANALYSIS

Macron Takes Huge Gamble After Setback

He Calls for Early Vote Amid Rise of Far Right

By ROGER COHEN

PARIS — On the face of it, there is little logic in calling an election from a position of great weakness. But that is what President Emmanuel Macron has done by calling a snap parliamentary election in France on the back of a humiliation by the far right.

After the National Rally of Marine Le Pen and her popular protégé Jordan Bardella handed him a crushing defeat on Sunday in elections for the European Parliament, Mr. Macron might have done nothing. He might also have reshuffled his government, or simply altered course through stricter controls on immigration and by renouncing contested plans to tighten rules on unemployment benefits.

Instead, Mr. Macron, who became president at 39 in 2017 by being a risk taker, chose to gamble that France, having voted one way on Sunday, will vote another in a few weeks.

"I am astonished, like almost everyone else," said Alain Duhamel, the prominent author of "Emmanuel the Bold," a book about Mr. Macron. "It's not madness, it's not despair, but it is a huge risk from an impetuous man who prefers taking the initiative to being subjected to events."

Shock coursed through France on Monday. The stock market plunged. Anne Hidalgo, the mayor of Paris, a city that will host the Olympic Games in just over six weeks, said she was "stunned" by an "unsettling" decision. "A thunderbolt," thundered Le Parisien, a daily newspaper, across its front page.

For Le Monde, it was "a jump in the void." Raphaël Glucksmann, who guided the revived center-left socialists to third place among French parties in the European vote, accused Mr. Macron of "a dangerous game."

France is always a mystery, its perennial discontent and restiveness at odds with its prosperity and beauty, but this was a surprise of unusual proportions. Mr. Macron, after a stinging defeat in which the National Rally won 31.4 percent of the vote to 14.6 percent for the coalition led by his Renaissance party, has in effect called his country's bluff, asking if its apparent readiness for the extreme right in power is real or a mere letting-off of steam.

The risk is that about a month from now Mr. Macron would

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SECURITY COUNCIL ADOPTS U.S. PLAN FOR A CEASE-FIRE

BUT CHALLENGES LOOM

Visiting Mideast, Blinken Pushes Deal Between Israel and Hamas

This article is by Farnaz Fassihi, Michael Crowley, Mike Ives and Thomas Fuller.

The United Nations Security Council on Monday adopted a U.S.-backed cease-fire plan for the Gaza Strip with only Russia abstaining, a sign of the growing frustration among the world's major powers over the war and the desire to bring it to an end.

Linda Thomas-Greenfield, the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, told members of the Security Council that Israel had already agreed to the deal laid out in the resolution — although Israel has so far resisted taking a public position on it — and she urged Hamas "to do the same."

"Hamas can now see that the international community is united, united behind a deal that will save lives and help Palestinian civilians in Gaza start to rebuild and heal," she said.

The 14-0 vote may strengthen the hand of Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken, who returned to the Middle East on Monday to press Hamas and Israel to agree to a cease-fire.

But in a sign of the difficulties



Remnants of a Gaza home on Sunday after an Israeli attack.

Facing Mr. Blinken and other mediators in achieving a final deal, Israel's representative to the U.N., Reut Shapir Ben-Naftaly, did not say Israel had accepted the terms of the cease-fire plan. She said her country's goals in the war had not changed and it would use military operations to free hostages, as it did just two days ago.

"We will continue until all of the hostages are returned and Hamas's military capabilities are dismantled," Ms. Shapir Ben-Naftaly told the Council. She said if Hamas leaders freed all hostages and

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Fighting Soaring Suicide Rate With Gun Locks and Leaflets

By MICHAEL CORKERY

HELENA, Mont. — On a typical day, Ali Mullen races from her job at the county health department in Helena to pick up dinner for her three children, heads home to feed them and then goes back out for a violin lesson or a school play, crisscrossing the small city in her aging S.U.V., with a rainbow bumper sticker that reads "You Are Loved."

A big pack of gummy bears keeps her going, stashed in her handbag next to a different sort of lifesaver: a gun lock that she carries almost everywhere she goes.

In a sparsely populated state where many people own firearms, the small metal contraptions, which fit around a trigger and cost less than \$10 on Amazon, are one way Montanans are trying to reduce the high rate of people who kill themselves.

For the past year, Ali, 46, has been giving gun locks away to

Grim Record Leaving Long Trail of Agony in Montana

anyone who wants one, her piece of trying to solve the puzzle of suicide in Montana.

"It's in the culture," she said one afternoon in Helena. "If you don't know someone, you know of someone who has died."

Murder rates and mass shootings make national headlines, defining the discussion over pervasive gun violence. But most gun deaths in America are self-inflicted. There were about 27,000 gun suicides in 2022. That was a record, and far higher than the 19,500 gun homicides documented that year.

There have been more gun suicides than gun homicides in the

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Democrat Crosses Aisle to Open Campaign Financing Floodgates

By SHANE GOLDMACHER

For more than a decade, America's campaign watchdog agency was a portrait of dysfunction. Divided equally between three Republicans and three Democrats, the Federal Election Commission deadlocked so often it became a political punchline as investigations languished, enforcement slowed and updated guidelines for the internet era stalled.

Now the commission has suddenly come unstuck.

In a series of recent decisions that are remaking the landscape of money in American politics, an ascendant new bloc of three Republicans and one Democrat is voting together to roll back limits on how politicians, political parties and super PACs raise and spend money.

Reform groups are aghast at what they see as the swift coming apart of longstanding restraints. Conservatives who for years have

Ending Agency Logjam and Angering Those Seeking Reform

dreamed of loosening restrictions are delighted, even though many of the rulings were sought by one of the Democratic Party's most prominent lawyers, Marc Elias, who was seeking political advantage and clarity for his clients.

Those on both sides of the ideological divide agree on one thing: The changes amount to some of the most significant regulatory revisions since the campaign finance law, the McCain-Feingold Act, was put in place two decades ago.

"These decisions are a monumental shift in the law at the commission," said Sean Cooksey, the Republican chairman of the Fed-

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PHOTOGRAPHS BY ADRIANA ZEBBRAUSKAS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

From left, Sheila Meade, Vance Blair and Kenson John. All three have stayed at Circle the City, a respite care program in Phoenix. Respite care offers rehabilitation services to homeless people who would otherwise shuttle between hospitals and the street.

Help Is Growing for People Who Are Ailing and Live on the Street

By JASON DePARLE

PHOENIX — Five years on the Phoenix streets battered Vance Blair's body. His vision dimmed, his speech slowed, and his hands began to twitch. A bulging pelvis revealed the need for hernia surgery, and the vacant lot where he slept was no place to keep dressings clean.

Mr. Blair often lingered by a shaded building, and several

women who worked there grew fond of the diffident man who asked permission to escape the sun. They brought him food and discovered his dilemma: Medicaid would cover his operation, but hospitals discharge patients quickly and surgeons would not proceed unless he had a place to heal.

Then they learned that a Phoenix group runs what amounts to a nursing home for the

Respite Care Provides a Place to Recuperate

homeless. Mr. Blair has remained there since his operation six months ago and says the care might have saved his life.

"After a while of being outside, I was having thoughts of not wanting to live anymore," he said. "This

place has been a great help."

Respite care for homeless people is rapidly growing, aimed at people well enough to leave the hospital but too sick for the street. Its rise reflects the aging of the un-housed population and the decade-long expansion of Medicaid, which helps cover the cost. Many programs also get subsidies from hospitals or insurance companies eager to shorten hospital stays or

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Italians Want to Tell Zelensky: Tear Down This Putin Plaque

By LARA JAKES

BARI, Italy — A small copper plaque mounted across the piazza from the Basilica of St. Nicholas in Bari, Italy, pledges "friendship and cooperation" between the city and the Russian people. It is signed by someone who, for the past two years in Europe, has pursued anything but: President Vladimir V. Putin of Russia.

The plaque is a replica of a letter Mr. Putin sent in 2003, nearly two decades before his invasion of Ukraine, and for years it drew little notice from Bari's residents or the tens of thousands of pilgrims who visit the site annually to venerate the saint, whose remains are interred there. But a growing number of people now see it as sign of Mr. Putin's hypocrisy —

particularly among a diaspora of local Ukrainians who want it taken down.

The war will be among the most pressing issues that leaders of the world's largest advanced economies and President Volodymyr Zelensky of Ukraine will discuss this week at an annual meeting of the Group of 7, which is being hosted by Italy and held just an hour down the road. For the many residents of Bari who have wanted the plaque removed since the war began, the gathering nearby is seen as a chance to enlist Mr. Putin's fiercest international critics to their cause.

"Since Putin has been declared an international criminal, to have

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