

# The Washington Post

Photos may vary in areas outside metropolitan Washington.

SU V1 V2 V3 V4



A P.M. t-storm 82/60 • Tomorrow: Mostly sunny; breezy 80/55

Democracy Dies in Darkness

MONDAY, MAY 16, 2022 • B2

## Sweden, Finland to apply for NATO

In historic shift, leaders end decades of neutrality amid war in Ukraine

BY JOHN HUDSON, LOVEDAY MORRIS, VICTORIA BISSETT AND MIRIAM BERGER

BERLIN — Sweden's ruling party dropped the country's historic military nonalignment on Sunday and agreed to join NATO, shortly after Finland's leaders officially announced they would do the same.

The moves were major steps in ending decades of military neutrality for the two Nordic nations, as Russia's invasion of Ukraine continued to dramatically shift security considerations in Europe.

NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg said their accession would be a "turning point for security" in Europe. "Their membership in NATO would increase our shared security, demonstrate that NATO's door is open, and that aggression does not pay."

"We're now facing a fundamentally changed security environment in Europe," Swedish Prime Minister Magdalena Andersson said. "And when we navigate in this new environment, the fundamental question for us is: How do we best protect Sweden? And the Kremlin has shown that they are prepared to use violence to achieve their political objectives and that they don't hesitate to take enormous risks."

"Russia's unprovoked invasion of Ukraine is not only illegal and indefensible, it also undermines

[SEE NATO ON A3](#)

Empty villages: A stalemate in ghost towns on the front lines. [A22](#)

## Suspect was investigated for earlier threat



LIBBY MARCH FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

Pezsant Davis, 22, is comforted by her friend Tasha Dixon, 35, on Sunday at a memorial honoring the victims of Saturday's shooting at a Tops Friendly Markets store in Buffalo. The memorial is across the street from the supermarket.

### Suspect was allegedly inspired by racist theory fueling global carnage

BY ISAAC STANLEY-BECKER AND DREW HARWELL

Before embarking on a racist rampage in Buffalo on Saturday, the alleged gunman left behind a document denying membership in "any organization or group."

"I am the sole perpetrator of this attack," he wrote.

But the 180-page screed, which authorities are scrutinizing in connection with the massacre, leaves little doubt that the suspect,

18-year-old Payton Gendron, belongs to a global fraternity fused by the Internet and fixated on the idea that White people are being intentionally replaced.

That idea, once relegated to the fringe, has gained currency on popular right-wing television programs and in the halls of Congress. The theory, known as the "great

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Media: Fox, others have embraced a once-fringe racist theory. [A3](#)

### Investigators tracing online behavior and a long trail to terror

BY CASSANDRA MILLER, DEVLIN BARRETT, AARON GREGG AND MARK BERMAN

CONKLIN, N.Y. — By his own account, the suspected Buffalo supermarket gunman became a racist killer while bored online. According to a lengthy screed authorities believe Payton Gendron posted before allegedly killing 10 people on Saturday, the 18-year-old was drawn to hateful rhetoric

from a mass murderer on the other side of the world.

As investigators unpack the disturbing details of Gendron's alleged crimes, current and former law enforcement officials said he apparently hoped his shocking violence would draw attention from well beyond this small town in Upstate New York.

[SEE SUSPECT ON A3](#)

Tracing the weapon: Details about the semiautomatic rifle. [A9](#)

### HE SPURRED FEARS OF SCHOOL ATTACK

In Buffalo, community mourns 10 slain at store

BY JACOB BOGAGE, ANNIE GOWEN AND DEVLIN BARRETT

BUFFALO — As Buffalo mourned the 10 people slaughtered in a mass shooting, authorities confirmed Sunday that the 18-year-old suspect, Payton Gendron, was investigated less than a year ago for making a threat at his high school.

New York State Police spokesman Beau Duffy said that on June 8, 2021, investigators responded to Susquehanna High School in Conklin, N.Y., to investigate a report that a 17-year-old student had made a threatening statement. The student was taken into custody under a provision of the state's mental health law "and transported to the hospital for a mental health evaluation," the spokesman said.

"The information we have is he was there for a day and a half, was evaluated and then released at that point," Buffalo Police Commissioner Joseph Gramaglia said. Gendron was not charged.

The teen, police were told, had made comments that spurred concerns he might be planning to shoot people around the time of his high school graduation, according to law enforcement officials. Gramaglia, asked about the threat Sunday, offered this account: "From what I have, it was a generalized threat; not a specific threat ... at a specific place or person."

Gendron allegedly drove from his home in Conklin to Buffalo on Saturday, donned full tactical gear and opened fire at a busy Tops Friendly Markets store in a predominantly Black neighborhood, shooting 13 in all, including a retired Buffalo police officer working as a security guard who tried to stop him. Gendron surrendered at the scene and was charged Saturday evening with

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## For some Pa. candidates, Jan. 6 is a point of pride

BY COLBY ITKOWITZ AND ROSALIND S. HELDERMAN

WARMINSTER, PA. — A top candidate for the Republican nomination for governor in Tuesday's Pennsylvania primary — endorsed Saturday by former president Donald Trump — participated in the "Stop the Steal" rally in Washington on Jan. 6, 2021, the day the U.S. Capitol was attacked.

So, too, did a surging candidate for the GOP nomination for the U.S. Senate in Pennsylvania.

And so did one of the Republican contenders to be the state's lieutenant governor.

The trio are part of a phalanx of Republican candidates nationwide who so strongly embraced Trump's false claims that the 2020 election was stolen from him that they traveled to Washington to participate in the rally that preceded the violent attack on the Capitol, temporarily disrupting congressional certification of Joe

Biden's victory.

Most of the candidates, including the Pennsylvanians, have said they did not enter the Capitol building that day. But they have made their commitment to Trump's baseless claims key to their campaigns, and their rise shows the extent to which many in the party's grass roots have embraced participation in Jan. 6 as a badge of honor.

Should the candidates win their elections, some would be in position to play a critical role in the administration of the presidential vote in 2024. In Pennsylvania, for instance, the governor appoints the secretary of state, who serves as the state's chief elections officer. Leading GOP gubernatorial candidate Doug Mastriano, a state senator, has said he would appoint a secretary of state who would require all voters to re-register before casting their ballots, a move that could dramat-

[SEE REPUBLICANS ON A9](#)

### INVISIBLE

## Massive emissions, with no one on the hook

Responsibility for pollution from fires, thaws and more is clouded under Paris accords

BY AMANDA COLETTA, CHRIS MOONEY, BRADY DENNIS, NAEMA AHMED AND JOHN MUYSKENS



ALANA PATTERSON FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

Damage from the 2017 Elephant Hill fire in Canada is seen in 2021. Canada and some other nations do not count greenhouse gas emissions from "natural disturbances" against Paris climate targets.

CACHE CREEK, B.C. — There's no question the Elephant Hill fire happened.

From the first spark near a large rock outcrop in July 2017, it exploded into a beast of unceasing ferocity, forcing thousands from their homes as it devoured acre after acre of the British Columbia interior.

Over nearly three months, it crossed a river, hopped scorching containment lines and climbed sagebrush-covered hills, churning into the atmosphere an estimated 38 million tons of greenhouse gases — roughly a year's worth of pollution from more than 8 million cars.

But while Canada dutifully

[SEE EMISSIONS ON A16](#)