

NEWS ANALYSIS Two Countries Turn to NATO In Face of War

The Idea of Neutrality In Europe Fades Away

By ROGER COHEN

The decisions by Finland and Sweden to abandon the neutrality they adhered to for decades and apply to join NATO is the strongest indication yet of a profound change in Europe in the face of an aggressive Russian imperial project.

The two Scandinavian states have in effect made clear that they expect the threat from President Vladimir V. Putin's Russia to be enduring, that they will not be cowed by it, and that after the Russian butchery in Bucha, Ukraine, there is no room for bystanders. Theirs is a dec-



FROM REQUEST FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Russia's invasion of Ukraine has ended an era of European illusions about Moscow.

ration of Western resolve.

"Military nonalignment has served Sweden well, but our conclusion is that it can't serve us equally well in the future," Sweden's prime minister, Magdalena Andersson, said on Sunday. "This is not a decision to be taken lightly."

Because the Finnish and Swedish militaries are already well integrated with NATO, one reason the application process may go quickly, the immediate impact of the countries' change of strategic course in light of Russia's invasion of Ukraine will be less practical than political.

This is a new Europe in which there is no more in-between spaces. Countries are either protected by NATO or they are on their own against a Russia ruled by a man determined to use Russia's place on the world stage through force. For Sweden, and especially for Finland, with its 810-mile border with Russia, Mr. Continued on Page A9

Flouting Rules Of Campaigns In Plain Sight

Candidates Steer PACs via Little Red Boxes

By SHANE GOLDMSCHER

Facing a threat from his left flank, Representative Kurt Schrader of Oregon wanted to send an urgent message to allies ahead of his upcoming primary. It was time to go on the attack.

The challenge: Campaign finance rules bar candidates from directly coordinating with the very outside groups that Mr. Schrader, a top moderate in Congress, needed to alert. So instead, he used a little red box.

On April 29, Mr. Schrader issued a not-quite-private directive inside a red-bordered box on an obscure corner of his website, sketching out a three-pronged takeover of what he called his "outside" challenger, Jamie McLeod-Skinner — helpfully including a link to a two-page, opposition-research document about her tenure as a city manager.

The message was received.

On May 3, a super PAC that has received all its money from a secretive-money group with ties to the pharmaceutical industry began running television ads that did little more than copy paste and reword the precise three lines of attack Mr. Schrader had outlined.

From Oregon to Texas, North Carolina to Pennsylvania, Democratic candidates nationwide are using such red boxes to pioneer new frontiers in soliciting and directing money from friendly super PACs financed by multimillionaires, billionaires and special-interest groups.

Campaign watchdogs complain that the practice further blurs the lines meant to keep big-money interests from influencing people running for office, effectively evading the strict donation limits imposed on federal candidates. And while the tactic is not new, 2022, it is becoming so widespread that it is now a New York Times story of strategic course in light of Russia's invasion of Ukraine will be less practical than political.

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GRIEF AND RAGE ROCK BUFFALO AFTER RACISM FUELS MASSACRE



Friends consoling a survivor of Saturday's shooting, right, during services at True Bethel Baptist Church in Buffalo on Sunday.

Creeping Into the Mainstream, A Theory Turns Hate Into Terror

By NICHOLAS CONFESSORE
AND KAREN YOURISH

Inside a Pittsburgh synagogue in 2018, a white man with a history of antisemitic Internet posts gunned down 11 worshippers, blaming Jews for the coronavirus pandemic. The next year, another white man, a white man with a history of antisemitic Internet posts, opened fire on shoppers at an El Paso Walmart leaving 23 people dead, and later telling the police he had sought to kill Mexicans.

And in yet another deadly mass shooting, unfolding in Buffalo on Saturday, a heavily armed white man is accused of killing 10 people after targeting a supermarket on the city's predominantly Black east side, writing in a lengthy screed posted online that the shoppers there came from a culture that sought to "ethnically replace my own people."

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Before Attack, Solitary Teen Caused Alarm

This article is by Ashley Southall,
Olathe Rose Mearns and Andy Newman.

Last spring, as the end of the academic year approached at Susquehanna Valley High School outside Binghamton, N.Y., students were asked for a school project about their plans after graduation.

Payton S. Gendron, a senior, said he wanted to commit a murder-suicide, according to a law enforcement official briefed on the matter.

He claimed to be joking, the official said. But the state police were surprised to investigate and took Mr. Gendron, then 17, into custody on June 8 under a state mental health law, police officials said Sunday.

He had a psychiatric evaluation in a hospital but was released within a couple of days, the officials said. Two weeks later, Mr. Gendron graduated and fell off investigators' radar.

On Saturday, he resurfaced 200 miles away in Buffalo, where the police said he opened fire at a supermarket in a predominantly Black area, killing 10 people and wounding three others in one of the deadliest racist massacres in recent U.S. history.

After his rampage, Mr. Gendron put his gun to his neck. But two officers persuaded him to drop his weapon and surrender.

He was charged Saturday with first-degree murder, and as he awaited his fate in jail, investigators were sifting through his past to piece together how he transformed from a quiet student to an accused killer without drawing more serious scrutiny.

New York State has what is known as a red flag law, under which people found to be a danger can be forced to surrender their guns, but no one tried to invoke it against Mr. Gendron. The state Continued on Page A19

Victims Include Security Guard Hailed as Hero

By JESSE MCKINLEY

BUFFALO — A day after one of the deadliest racist massacres in recent American history, law enforcement officials in New York descended on the home of the accused gunman and probed disturbing hints into his behavior, as Gov. Kathy Hochul promised action on hate speech that she said spread "like a virus."

The suspect, Payton S. Gendron, 18, shot 13 people on Saturday afternoon at a Tops supermarket in east Buffalo, killing 10, officials said. Almost all the victims were Black — shoppers, grocery workers and a security guard bound together by little more than tragic happenstance.

But Mr. Gendron picked his target carefully, the police said, choosing an area known for its large Black population and even visiting the neighborhood the day before the attack in what authorities described as "reconnaissance."

And nearly a year before the mass shooting, his words had already caused alarm elsewhere.

The police said on Sunday that Mr. Gendron had been picked up at his high school last June by state police after making a threatening remark and had been taken to a hospital for a mental health evaluation.

Responding to a question for a class project about his post-graduation plans, Mr. Gendron said he wanted to commit a murder-suicide, according to a law enforcement official familiar with the case said.

But Mr. Gendron described the remark as a joke, the official said.

And after the evaluation, which lasted about a day and a half, he was released, according to Joseph Gramaglia, the Buffalo police commander.

That account was confirmed by Special Agent Steven Belongia of the B.P.A., who said that Mr. Gendron was "not on the radar" of law enforcement.

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Why Australia's Covid Death Rate Is Only One-Tenth of U.S. Level

By DAMIAN CAVE

MELBOURNE, Australia — If the United States had the same Covid death rate as Australia, about 900,000 lives would have been saved. The Texas grand-mother who made the perfect pumpkin pie might still be baking. The Red Sox-loving husband who ran marathons before Covid might still be cheering at Fenway Park.

For many Americans, imagining what might have been will be painful. But especially now, at the milestone of one million deaths in the United States, the nations that did a better job of keeping people alive show what Americans could have done differently and what might still need to change.

Many places provide insight. Japan, Kenya, Norway. But Australia offers perhaps the sharpest comparisons with the American experience. Both countries are English-speaking, have similar demographics and similar demographic profiles. In Australia and the United States, the median age is 38. Roughly 86 percent of Austral-



People showing vaccination certificates before entering the Melbourne Cricket Ground in March.

ians live in urban areas, compared with 81 percent of Americans.

Yet Australia's Covid death rate sits at one-tenth of American rates, putting the nation of 25 million people (with around 7,500 deaths) near the top of global rankings in the protection of life.

Australia's location in the distant Pacific is often cited as the cause of its relative Covid success. That, however, does not fully explain the difference in outcomes between the two countries, since Australia has long been, like the United States, highly connected to the world through trade, tourism

and air travel. Australia has long been, like the United States, highly connected to the world through trade, tourism and air travel. Australia has long been, like the United States, highly connected to the world through trade, tourism and air travel.

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What's News

Business & Finance

Saudi Arabia's national oil company said its net income rose to a record in the first quarter, an 80% surge that shows how some of the biggest state-owned energy producers are benefiting from a price boom accelerated by Russia's invasion of Ukraine. AI

Investors are sitting on their existing market allocations as stocks and bonds decline in tandem, cryptocurrencies implode and other assets turn lower. AI

Options trading by individual investors is fading, the latest sign that the stock market's speculative fever has broken. BI

People who agreed to buy some under construction, but haven't yet closed are facing mortgage-interest rates that could be nearly double what they expected when they paid their deposits. AI

The median pay package for chief executives of the biggest U.S. companies reached \$14.7 million in 2021, setting a fourth straight annual record. BI

Elon Musk's tweet saying his planned Twitter acquisition was on hold put the spotlight on questions about fake accounts which have vexed social media platforms for years. BI

Rising used-car prices are starting to ease, with dealers saying buyers are pushing back on what they are willing to spend. BI

Ford Motor said it unloaded more shares of its stock, further pressuring the electric-truck maker's battered stock price. BI



A survivor, right, of the Buffalo, N.Y., supermarket shooting that left 10 dead is consoled during a church service Sunday.

Suspect in Buffalo Hate Killings Was Evaluated in '21 for Threat

BUFFALO, N.Y. — The teenager accused of killing 10 people in Buffalo, N.Y., in what police called a hate crime had been brought to a hospital by state police last June and released a day and a half later. State and federal law enforcement didn't pick up further intelligence on Mr. Gendron before Saturday's massacre, Mr. Gramaglia said.

Mr. Gendron appears to have been motivated by racist conspiracy theories he discovered on Internet message boards during the pandemic, according to a document posted online that police said they believe he wrote. In the document, the writer describes himself as a fascist, a white supremacist, a racist and an anti-Semite. The document contained details of a planned attack similar to what occurred on Saturday, including the writer's goal to kill as many Black people as possible.

The store where the shooting took place is in a largely Black neighborhood of Buffalo.

Even if the people shot were Black and two were white, according to Mr. Gramaglia, the evidence that we have uncovered so far makes no mistake that this is an absolute racist hate crime," Mr. Gramaglia said. "This is someone who has hate in their heart, soul and mind."

Mr. Gendron was arraigned on murder charges late Saturday, according to court documents. Please turn to page A6

Investors Stay Put, Lacking Choices

By CATHY MCCABE

The worst markets are supposed to have. Some unwary investors are wondering if this one does.

The S&P 500 is down 15%, its worst start to a year since 1929. Bitcoin is down 40%. Market Data. Assets of all kinds are falling. Gold, typically considered a haven, has swung into the red. Bonds are typically another shelter, but this year they are falling alongside stocks, an unusual tandem that reflects investors' uncertainty.

The risk-on cyclical market, picked for years as a counterweight to traditional stocks, is also imploding, with bitcoin losing more than a third of its value in 2022.

This self-everything market is confounding big and small investors after a string of years when markets seemed to go only straight up. Now, instead, assets of all kinds are falling, with bitcoin losing more than a third of its value in 2022.

Many investors are confronting red-hot inflation and the end of any monetary policy. There is also the question of whether the U.S. is headed for a recession, which some investors believe will happen if the Fed raises interest rates too quickly.

Many traders said they are on the prowl for other investment. Please turn to page A2

In East Hampton, Airport Fight Is Supper vs. the Merely Rich

Plan would limit commercial helicopters; private planes could still land

By JAMES FANELLI

The Hampton home has long been an enclave for Wall Streeters and celebrities, with pristine beaches, estates hidden behind tall hedges and, increasingly, the thrum of private jets and helicopters overhead.

So many visitors travel the 100 miles from Manhattan by air that the tiny airport in the wealthy town of East Hampton has become a hotbed of controversy. Locals say the noise disturbs their lives and detracts from the town's charm.

At a town meeting last May, the town's planning board, to limit flights into the East Hampton airport, had led to a voteless, only-in-name York legal battle that divides the town's supporters from the merely rich.

Planes turn to page A20

Aramco Posts Record Quarterly Profit

Saudi oil giant reaps benefits from surging prices after Moscow's invasion of Ukraine

By SUMNER SAIN

DUBAI — Saudi Arabia's national oil company said Sunday that its net income rose more than 80% to record high in the first quarter of the year, a surge that shows how some of the world's biggest state-owned energy producers are benefiting from a price boom accelerated by Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

Saudi Arabian Oil Co., known as Aramco, said its quarterly profit soared to \$39.5 billion in the quarter, a period during which Saudi Arabia, the de facto leader of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries, continued to rebuff U.S. requests to pump more oil to help tame surging crude prices, instead sticking by an agreement with Russia to increase output marginally.

The agreement with Russia allows for production increases of around 400,000 barrels a day each month, but it has done little to stem the rise in oil prices, and the Saudi government has been accused of withholding its share, according to the International Energy Agency.

Western countries including the U.S. have responded to Russia's invasion of Ukraine by sanctioning exports of Russian oil, leading to fears of less oil in the market and higher prices.

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Russian Soldiers Shot Three Brothers. One Survived.

His account is among many war-crimes cases prosecutors are building

By EMMER COLES

upper jaw on the inside of his cheek without causing any major damage.

Surviving execution was just the beginning. About 100 Russian soldiers, many, evading Russian forces along the way.

Mr. Kulchenko's account forms the basis of one of thousands of cases Ukrainian prosecutors are building against Russian forces they accuse of perpetrating war crimes, including summary executions, torture and rape.

The first war-crimes trial began Friday, involving a charge of the execution of a 62-year-old unarmed civilian. Moscow has denied committing war crimes or targeting civilians.

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New-Home Buyers Get Hit Hard by Rate Rise

By NICHOLAS FRIEDMAN

People who agreed to buy homes under construction but haven't yet closed are facing mortgage-interest rates that could be nearly double what they anticipated when they paid their deposits.

Home buyers are confronting multiple obstacles this year, from surging mortgage rates to home construction that is taking longer than usual to supply-chain and labor constraints.

Many home buyers who signed contracts for new homes in 2021 or early this year calculated monthly payments based on near-record-low mortgage rates of around 3% or less. But average mortgage rates have climbed this spring to 3.2%, according to Freddie Mac, as the Federal Reserve started raising short-term interest rates.

The difference can translate into thousands of dollars more in monthly mortgage payments. Buyers of existing homes face much less interest-rate risk because they usually close within a month or two of signing a contract. Home buyers worried about sudden rate increases can lock in their mortgage rate, often for a period of 30 or 60 days.

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