FROM § EACH

FIRST YEAR · WEDNESDAY, 21 OCTOBER 2026 — THE MORNING EDITION · FREE, FOREVER — EVERY CLAIM LINKED

Administration moves to cut climate report's worst case; two months later, the U.S. becomes it.



PHOTO: THE NEW YORK TIMES

BY MITCH
Investigations

Follow along, folks. The document in front of us this week is not one filing but two, filed weeks apart by two different governments, and if you hold them side by side the joke writes itself — all together now — because it is written in verbs.

Clause one. On August 27th, the Trump administration published a notice proposing to reframe how the Fifth National Climate Assessment, the 2023 federal report, treats its worst-case warming scenarios. The administration's stated justification: U.N. scientists had said earlier in the year that the high-emission worst case was "not plausible." Fair enough — borrow a citation, trim a paragraph, move on. The bouncing ball lands on one sentence: the government did not dispute that emissions were rising. It disputed how bad the paperwork was allowed to say rising could get.

Clause two. ...

... Continued on Page A218

Ramaswamy's campaign faces bipartisan condemnation, answers with $4 million more.

BY RUTH
The Money Desk

Vivek Ramaswamy's campaign put Amy Acton's estranged mother on camera to call her own daughter a liar. Donna Arthur does not dispute the abuse her daughter has described; she disputes the word Acton puts on it. Stearns called the ad "a despicable low." He was not alone.

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THE WORD

§67 — 20 OCTOBER 2026

On fire and fury



TACO *FIRE AND FURY*

... Continued on Page W67

Venezuelan billionaire's daughter hires Trump lawyer Alina Habba; billionaire gets pardon shortly after.

BY RUTH
The Money Desk

The pardon came through on October 21st, and The New York Times laid out the sequence: Julio Herrera Velutini, a prominent Venezuelan businessman, wanted clemency, and not long before he got it, his daughter handed Alina Habba — a lawyer close to President Trump — a job the paper's own headline priced at fifty…

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Administration calls Venezuela oil deal a gift, keeps the contract secret.

BY RUTH
The Money Desk

A reconciliation starts with what two sides say about the same thing, and this one starts in August.

On August 26, Senator Elizabeth Warren told the health secretary she was still waiting for him to publish the terms of the administration's secret pricing deals with drug makers. Three days later, on August 29, the president announced on social media that his government had secured majority control of Venezuela's oil reserves — 65 billion barrels of it — and Senator Chris Van Hollen answered the same day: "Let's be clear: This isn't a win." The next day, August 30, the president called the arrangement a gift from Venezuela to the people of the United States and said a "topping out" process would refill the Strategic Petroleum Reserve; critics called the language mobster, and the history behind it revisionist, that same afternoon.

Those were the public's numbers through Labor Day: 65 billion barrels, 35 percent of it marked for the Pentagon, a military operation clocked at 30 minutes, and a record $4.15 a gallon at the pump while drivers waited for the savings a deal struck in their name was supposed to bring. Every one of those numbers came from someone announcing the deal, not from the deal itself. None of them came from a contract.

On September 20, the public got a preview of what that gap looks like when someone forces it shut. Public Citizen, a consumer group, filed a federal records request and obtained the actual text of the Big Pharma pricing deals Warren had been asking the health secretary to

... Continued on Page F123

■ THE SHORT VERSION

typed by Dot

WHAT HAPPENED. The Trump administration moved to cut the worst-case warming scenarios from its own federal climate report.

WHO GETS PAID. The receipts name no buyer yet.

WHAT SLIPS. The government's own climate report, the public's early warning on worst-case risk, gets edited by the same government it is supposed to check.

WHAT'S NEXT. No pattern in the ledger fits yet; the administration's notice on the worst-case scenarios remains open, with no decision date set.

On Administration moves to cut climate report's worst case; two months later, the U.S. becomes it. — the column, by Mitch. The whole front, short, and the precedents, on E6

Alberta rejects Republican-advised secession bid, handing Carney leverage against Trump's trade war.

BY THE LODGERS
The Euro Desk

Today we are making an export, the kind of dish a kitchen sends out hoping it is eaten elsewhere and never returned. You will need one province, a count, and a promise already on the stove.

Gary *Sent back. I had the microwave in bits the once it played up; a vote that comes home should think itself lucky it's still wired.*

Clive *Wired. That's rich from the man who's blown the fuse reciting nothing more than a grocery list; I at least compose before the lights go.*

Begin before the count. On 16 October a New York paper had the prime minister

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FROM THE CORNER

DUTCH

THE SECRETARY OF STATE SAYS NOTHING WAS TAKEN FROM UKRAINE ON purpose; CBS's own sources say Elon Musk decided himself to cut back the network running Ukraine's drones and its early-warning system, the same week the President called what the United States got back from Ukraine nothing. That is not an outage, it is one man holding the switch on a government's missile warning and letting the silence pass as an accident. Because that government leans on his satellite for its own early warning, and because the switch is his alone to flip, the system that is supposed to warn you only runs on the days he decides it should — which means the smoke detector over your own stairs is exactly as reliable as whatever mood he is having this week.

On Starshield slowdown Rubio insisted wasn't deliberate was, CBS sources say, Musk's own deliberate choice. *— the column, by Lou*

FROM THE MAILBAG

Dear Vivian,

Hey Viv, love the column. If I were the next Democratic president, I'd revoke every federal firearms license in the country and make them reapply for a new fee of $1 million a year.

— Million-Dollar License in Lancaster. Vivian answers on E5

Cornell denies what it told her, having kept her letter from the faculty voting on him.

BY CHIP
Staff Writer

Cornell has handled this responsibly from the start — that isn't quite the record. On October 6th, as a labor historian named Paul Ortiz prepared a no-confidence resolution against the university's administration over its handling of an alleged 2024 gang rape at the Chi Phi fraternity house, Cornell announced it had hired Sally Yates, the former deputy attorney general, to review how the school handles sexual misconduct complaints — including the one the resolution was about. That is responsiveness. It is also, looked at plainly, hiring a referee for a game the university had already lost.

Three days later, students across the country held a national day of action for the

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THE THROTTLE

Starshield slowdown Rubio insisted wasn't deliberate was, CBS sources say, Musk's own deliberate choice.

BY LOU
One More Question

I got an answer. The Secretary of State said no — nothing was deliberately denied. I'm asking the same question again this week, not because that answer was false, but because the second answer came back a different shape, and I can't make the two of them sit in the same chair.

Here's the shape of things before either answer. On October 11th, Ukraine's president said the ceasefire the American president had just posted online was, in his words, news to him; he said

... Continued on Page A218

SOURCED OR SILENT

Open any fold. Every claim linked, every link dated.

PULL UP A STOOL

Sal has never once been wrong. Ask him yourself.

— this paper

THE LIST

DOJ sues California over 'noncitizen' voter list where a high percentage are US-born

BY LOU
One More Question

Did anybody check? I wrote that down on the fourteenth, the day letters went out to Sacramento and to the registrar's office in Los Angeles, stamped with a window: forty-eight hours to review a list of twenty thousand voters the Justice Department was calling likely noncitizens. I asked whether anybody would check in that window. I got an answer. It just wasn't this one.

The window closed on a Thursday. The next day, the acting deputy — I have the name here somewhere, McCotter, there it is — sued the state of California in federal court for not throwing those ballots out inside that same window. Did the state have a way to check twenty thousand names that fast? I don't see one in my notes. I see a lawsuit.

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"I was saved by God to make America great again."

— DONALD TRUMP, SECOND INAUGURAL ADDRESS, 20 JANUARY 2025

"Access to cheap goods is not the essence of the American dream"

— TREASURY SECRETARY SCOTT BESSENT, ECONOMIC CLUB OF NEW YORK, 6 MARCH 2025

"Nothing up there is a conspiracy. That's the part that should worry you — it's all on the record, filed, stamped, and in a couple of cases notarized."

— Sal

WANTED 11,780 votes, Georgia only. Fresh or aged, no questions asked. *Reward: one pardon, gently used.* — **Classifieds**

WANTED Seat-fillers, Constitution Avenue, folding chairs provided. *The tanks ran forty-five million; the crowd was extra.* — **Classifieds**

WANTED Thoughts and prayers, in bulk. Standing order, restocked after each. *Gun control preferred, but that's out of reach.* — **Classifieds**

"Nothing here is a scandal. A scandal requires surprise, and I can assure you nobody involved was surprised."

— Chip

Snow held the fox's prints till the thaw,
while the farmer mended the door.

ENOCH · THE OWNERSHIP DESK

Ramaswamy's campaign faces bipartisan condemnation, answers with $4 million more.

By **RUTH**
THE MONEY DESK



"Vivek Ramaswamy defends controversial ad featuring Amy Acton's estranged mom – admits his campaign is behind it", 21 October 2026
(PHOTO VIA NEW YORK POST — THE ORIGINAL REPORT)

■ THE SHORT VERSION
typed by DOT

WHAT HAPPENED. Ramaswamy's campaign ran an ad with Acton's estranged mother calling her a liar, then spent $4 million more.

WHO GETS PAID. Ohio television stations collect the $4 million Ramaswamy's campaign is spending to keep the ad on air.

WHAT SLIPS. Bipartisan condemnation, from Acton's own family to a Republican senator's daughter, did not pull the ad off the air.

WHAT'S NEXT. No dated case shows an ad like this coming down after bipartisan condemnation. Ohio votes November 3; until then, the ad and the $4 million stay on the air.

AS IT RAN ON THE FRONT

Vivek Ramaswamy's campaign put Amy Acton's estranged mother on camera to call her own daughter a liar. Donna Arthur does not dispute the abuse her daughter has described; she disputes the word Acton puts on it. Stearns called the ad "a despicable low." He was not alone. By the next day, Acton's own family and Meghan McCain, a Republican senator's daughter, condemned it from opposite ends of the same party map.

None of that stopped the ad. Ramaswamy confirmed Tuesday evening that his campaign built it. The Hill's headline read that as Ramaswamy "taking responsibility." The quote itself took responsibility for authorship. It took none for content....

...(cont) Then the campaign filed the number that matters on this desk: four million dollars, new money, to keep the one-minute spot running on Ohio television. That is not the cost of making the ad. Production is cheap. Four million dollars is the cost of buying more time for a thing each voice that has commented on it so far — family, opposing campaign, a senator's daughter from the other party — has called indefensible. The condemnation did not move the buy. The buy moved after the condemnation.

Run the filing against the calendar. In mid-September, Bowling Green State University and YouGov had Acton ahead of Ramaswamy by three points, 48 to 45, with seven percent undecided. That is the gap a candidate spends four million dollars to close in the campaign's final stretch, hon — not the gap an ad about a stepfather closes by being true.

Acton's campaign has called the spot "a controversial political ad against her." Sherrod Brown, running for the Senate seat next to this one, has gone further, asking his own Republican opponent, Jon Husted, to condemn an ad from his own party's nominee for governor. Husted has not answered yet. The ledger has two columns tonight: what the ad costs, and who has been asked to say it is wrong and hasn't. Both columns are still open.

> "They want you to think condemnation is the punishment. Instead, each round of outrage gets logged like a focus group, then followed by another check from Ramaswamy's campaign. Four million dollars doesn't fix a bad ad — it means the ad is working exactly how it was built to work."
> — *Sal*

> "Look, he didn't hide anything — he said flat out, "it's an ad from our campaign," that's accountability right there. Sure, we kept it running with four million more, but that's just — that's just standing by your message, that's not — okay, standing by a message your own opponent's family calls a despicable low isn't usually the sales pitch. Did I say "sales pitch"? Forget I said that."
> — *Chip*

EARLIER IN THIS STORY

— *Ramaswamy ad asks Acton's estranged mother to call her a liar, unites her brother and McCain's daughter.* By Sal · the afternoon edition, 20 October 2026

THE RECEIPTS

Ohio race takes ugly turn with ad featuring Amy Acton's mother

CBS News MAINSTREAM 21:38 EDT

Democrat Amy Acton's estranged mother calls her a liar in a new GOP ad. Acton's brother says the ad marks a "despicable low" and says their stepfather sexually abused Acton when she was a child.

Vivek Ramaswamy defends controversial ad featuring Amy Acton's estranged mom – admits his campaign is behind it

New York Post RIGHT 00:54 EDT

"It is an ad from our campaign," Ramaswamy said of the blistering 1-minute spot, in which Donna Arthur – Acton's mother – accused her daughter of being a "liar" and embellishing claims of abuse she allegedly suffered as a child.

Amy Acton campaign slams Ramaswamy over controversial ad featuring estranged mother

ABC News MAINSTREAM 20:19 EDT

Ohio Gubernatorial Candidate Amy Acton's campaign alleged her opponent's campaign is using her estranged mother in a controversial political ad against her.

Brown calls on Husted to condemn ad featuring Acton's mother

The Hill MAINSTREAM 19:40 EDT

Ohio Democratic Senate candidate Sherrod Brown pressed his Republican rival, Sen. Jon Husted (Ohio), to condemn a recent advertisement allegedly from Republican gubernatorial candidate Vivek Ramaswamy. "The ad released by Vivek Ramaswamy is disgusting.

~~Ramaswamy pours $4 million into ad featuring Amy Acton's estranged mother~~

Ramaswamy's $4M attack ad equals what 4,469 teachers spend yearly on classroom supplies

Washington Examiner RIGHT 22:09 EDT

Ohio Republican gubernatorial candidate Vivek Ramaswamy is moving forward with a $4 million investment to run an ad featuring Democrat Amy Acton's estranged mother after the video received fierce backlash. Ramaswamy's campaign released a video featuring Acton's mother, Donna Arthur, who tells viewers not to vote for her daughter. Acton...

Ramaswamy takes responsibility for attack ad featuring Acton's estranged mother

The Hill MAINSTREAM 22:05 EDT

Ohio gubernatorial candidate Vivek Ramaswamy (R) confirmed to reporters Tuesday evening that his campaign was behind a new attack ad featuring his Democratic opponent Amy Acton's mother calling her a "liar" and insinuating she suffers from mental health issues. Ramaswamy acknowledged that his campaign produced the ad, which began...

· Acton ahead of Ramaswamy in latest Ohio gubernatorial polling *from the morgue, 16 Sep 2026*

This page is a back-issue: the story as it ran, receipts as they were. The current edition is at the front. The byline is a pen name for a column drafted by a machine and checked by the editor: how this is made.

Venezuelan billionaire's daughter hires Trump lawyer Alina Habba; billionaire gets pardon shortly after.

By **RUTH**
THE MONEY DESK

“White House investigating Alina Habba’s claim that $6 million donation went missing under Ric Grenell’s leadership at Kennedy Center”, 14 October 2026
(PHOTO VIA NEW YORK POST — THE ORIGINAL REPORT)

■ **THE SHORT VERSION**
typed by Dot

WHAT HAPPENED. A Venezuelan billionaire's family paid Trump lawyer Alina Habba for a lucrative job not long before he received a pardon.

WHO GETS PAID. Alina Habba, the Trump-aligned lawyer who took the job and whose husband's separate Kennedy Center donation is now under White House review.

WHAT SLIPS. The public loses any way to check whether the pardon was earned or purchased, since no inspector is weighing the family's payment against the clemency decision.

WHAT'S NEXT. The White House investigation into the missing six million, opened October 14, is still open, with no hearing or deadline set yet.

AS IT RAN ON THE FRONT

The pardon came through on October 21st, and The New York Times laid out the sequence: Julio Herrera Velutini, a prominent Venezuelan businessman, wanted clemency, and not long before he got it, his daughter handed Alina Habba — a lawyer close to President Trump — a job the paper's own headline priced at fifty million dollars, though the text beneath calls it only "an extraordinarily lucrative" one. Readers can split that difference themselves; either way, the daughter paid and the father walked free.

Habba had other money troubles that same month. On October 14th, the White House opened an inquiry into her claim that six million dollars — donated to the Kennedy Center by her husband, a Turkish billionaire — did not reach its account under Ric Grenell's watch; whether that is true is exactly what the inquiry exists to find out, not a count either side has settled....

...(cont) A third figure landed October 15th and made the other two look small. Common Dreams, citing a Washington Post donor list, put total contributions to the president's ballroom project at $330 million from companies already "reaping benefits" — Apple and the Adelson Family Foundation at $25 million each, Nvidia matching them while asking to stay anonymous about it.

None of these three events shares an agency, a courtroom, or even a press office. One lawyer sits in the middle of all three: a pardon-seeker's daughter paid her, her own husband's donation went missing on her watch, and the same building fund holding his money banks nine figures more from corporations that need the government's favor. The pardon is dated October 21st. The $330 million is itemized, company by company, down to the one that paid extra for anonymity. The six million is still missing, and the only inquiry open into any of it is the White House investigating itself.

❦ FROM THE CORNER ❦

DUTCH

A Venezuelan billionaire's daughter paid Alina Habba for a job the Times itself couldn't put a firm number on, and her father got his pardon not long after. That's not a legal retainer, that's a wire transfer with a clemency form stapled to the back. Because a daughter's paycheck can buy her father's freedom, and because the president's own building fund can misplace six million dollars without a single resignation, you already know exactly how much care is going into tracking the refund check with your name on it.

“The daughter writes the check, the father gets the pardon — that's not a consulting fee, that's a toll booth with a law degree attached. Same month, Habba's own husband's six million goes missing from a building fund, and the White House investigates itself to find out why. Add the $330 million from Apple and Nvidia already cashing in on that same ballroom, and you've got one lawyer's ledger running half the money side of this administration.”

— *Sal*

“Look, families hire lawyers all the time, that's called the free market, okay? And sure, the pardon came through not long after, but timing isn't — did I say pardon? I meant — look, these are just two things that happened near each other on a calendar, families hire counsel, presidents grant clemency, it's a coincidence, that's all this is.”

— *Chip*

THE RECEIPTS

But: The Secret Service diverted $1.17 billion in appropriated funds toward the ballroom project *Sen. Blumenthal, official release*

White House investigating Alina Habba’s claim that $6 million donation went missing under Ric Grenell’s leadership at Kennedy Center

New York Post RIGHT § *16:15 EDT*

A bitter feud has erupted among President Trump's close allies as Alina Habba accuses Ric Grenell of failing to deposit millions of dollars donated by her Turkish billionaire husband to the Kennedy Center.

~~'Blatant Corruption': Donors Pouring $330 Million Into Trump Ballroom—and Reaping Benefits—Exposed~~

Trump vowed to pay 'a hundred percent' himself. Donors paid $330M and got pardons, contracts instead.

Common Dreams § *15:17 EDT*

A newly revealed list of companies and billionaire CEOs who donated millions of dollars to President Donald Trump's ballroom construction project shows that Big Tech, according to one government watchdog, "bankrolled it fully expecting a return on their investment." The list, first reported by The Washington Post, doesn't just show the...

A Billionaire Wanted a Trump Pardon. His Family Gave Alina Habba a $50 Million Deal.

The New York Times MAINSTREAM § *23:58 EDT*

Julio Herrera Velutini, a prominent Venezuelan, was seeking clemency. He got it not long after his daughter gave Ms. Habba, a lawyer close to President Trump, an extraordinarily lucrative job.

· Wedding reception for ex-Trump official Alina Habba and Turkish billionaire begins at posh NYC hotel *from the morgue, 27 Sep 2026*

This page is a back-issue: the story as it ran, receipts as they were. The current edition is at the front. The byline is a pen name for a column drafted by a machine and checked by the editor: how this is made.

Administration calls Venezuela oil deal a gift, keeps the contract secret.

By RUTH
THE MONEY DESK

AS IT RAN ON THE FRONT

A reconciliation starts with what two sides say about the same thing, and this one starts in August.

On August 26, Senator Elizabeth Warren told the health secretary she was still waiting for him to publish the terms of the administration's secret pricing deals with drug makers. Three days later, on August 29, the president announced on social media that his government had secured majority control of Venezuela's oil reserves — 65 billion barrels of it — and Senator Chris Van Hollen answered the same day: "Let's be clear: This isn't a win." The next day, August 30, the president called the arrangement a gift from Venezuela to the people of the United States and said a "topping out" process would refill the Strategic Petroleum Reserve; critics called the language mobster, and the history behind it revisionist, that same afternoon....

...(cont) Those were the public's numbers through Labor Day: 65 billion barrels, 35 percent of it marked for the Pentagon, a military operation clocked at 30 minutes, and a record $4.15 a gallon at the pump while drivers waited for the savings a deal struck in their name was supposed to bring. Every one of those numbers came from someone announcing the deal, not from the deal itself. None of them came from a contract.

On September 20, the public got a preview of what that gap looks like when someone forces it shut. Public Citizen, a consumer group, filed a federal records request and obtained the actual text of the Big Pharma pricing deals Warren had been asking the health secretary to release since August. The documents carried perks for drug makers the administration had not announced: room to raise prices overseas, and limits on the savings promised to American patients at home.

On October 21, ProPublica filed its own story on the oil deal, under one headline: "The Secret Terms of Trump's Venezuelan Oil Deal." The headline is the finding. Nine months after the operation, fifty-three days after the 65-billion-barrel announcement, the count of contract pages the public has been shown stands at zero. Sixty-five billion barrels announced. Thirty-five percent assigned. Zero pages published. That is the gap, hon — not a feeling, a number. The administration's other secret deal this year stayed secret until a nonprofit filed a records request and found terms the administration had not volunteered. The oil contract has not reached that stage. As of today, it is still the deal the public has only been told about.

"They called taking a country's oil fields a gift, and the only paperwork anyone has seen is a headline that says the paperwork is secret. That is not new — the drug pricing deal worked the same way until a records request pried it open and found perks the administration had not announced. You do not get to call something a gift and keep the receipt in a drawer."
— *Sal*

"Look, commercial terms stay confidential in energy deals all the time, that's just standard contracting practice — wait, this is a controlling stake in a foreign nation's oil reserves negotiated right after a military operation, not a vendor agreement, so maybe that one's different. The administration is protecting national security and America's competitive position, full stop. Did I just defend keeping a deal for public resources secret from the public? That is not what I meant to say."
— *Chip*

EARLIER IN THIS STORY

- *Pentagon's oil stake stuys untouched; the Maduros' docket just added a torture charge.* By Ruth · the afternoon edition, 8 October 2026
- *Pentagon appoints its biggest contractor, a top campaign donor, to help plan the future of war.* By Mitch · the early evening edition, 3 October 2026
- *Pentagon shifts troops from the hemisphere with no oil stake to the one where it claimed 35 percent.* By Ruth · the supper edition, 3 October 2026
- *Rubio's ex-housemate gets 10 years for the $50 million lobbying campaign he swore he had no idea about.* By Sal · the coffee break edition, 3 October 2026
- *Rubio testifies his roommate's $50 million Caracas lobbying operation, which drew 10 years, escaped his notice.* By Ruth · the supper edition, 2 October 2026
- *Senate asks who authorized the Pentagon's Venezuela oil stake; the record says a chatbot, over hours, in December.* By Ruth · the early bird edition, 2 October 2026

THE RECEIPTS

The Secret Terms of Trump's Venezuelan Oil Deal
ProPublica · 21:53 EDT

The post The Secret Terms of Trump's Venezuelan Oil Deal appeared first on ProPublica .

· 'Mobster Language': Trump Says Venezuelan Oil Will Replenish US Reserves *from the morgue, 30 Aug 2026*

· 'One Big Military Theft': Trump Announces Deal for US Control of Venezuelan Oil Fields *from the morgue, 29 Aug 2026*

· 'Still Crickets': Warren Reminds RFK Jr. of Pledge to Publish Secret Trump Deals With Big Pharma *from the morgue, 26 Aug 2026*

· Secret Trump Drug Deals Reveal Perks for Big Pharma, Uncertainty for Patients *from the morgue, 20 Sep 2026*

· Trump admin's list of US-designated 'foreign terrorist' groups in Latin America expands to 21 *from the morgue, 11 Sep 2026*

· Top Trump official reveals how 30-minute military op unlocked Venezuela oil windfall for US buyers *from the morgue, 11 Sep 2026*

· Ex-Venezuelan first lady Cilia Flores seeks release from NYC jail, citing heart ailment *from the morgue, 11 Sep 2026*

· New York City protest once again demands release of Maduro and Flores *from the morgue, 11 Sep 2026*

· Trump Official Denies Stealing Venezuela's Oil One Hour After Boasting Country is 'Forced to Work' With US *from the morgue, 6 Sep 2026*

· 'Yet Another Trump Grift': Congress Called to Stop US Takeover of Venezuelan Oil Fields *from the morgue, 28 Aug 2026*

· The Biggest Oil Deal or Theft at Gunpoint? U.S. Claims Majority Control of Venezuela's Oil Reserves *from the morgue, 1 Sep 2026*

· Tehran threatens attacks after U.S. strikes Iranian tankers *from the morgue, 7 Sep 2026*

· US forces take out 3 Iranian oil tankers in retaliation *from the morgue, 7 Sep 2026*

· Oil prices up as Iran says it will expand control over Strait of Hormuz *from the morgue, 8 Sep 2026*

· Iran live updates: Trump speaks to MBS, says everything will 'work out fine' *from the morgue, 13 Sep 2026*

· Iran threatens retaliation against U.S. tanker strikes *from the morgue, 7 Sep 2026*

· U.S. gas prices hit record high for Labor Day *from the morgue, 7 Sep 2026*

· Ship tracking websites, including Kpler, MarineTraffic, and TankerTrackers, show that three Iranian oil tankers, including two from the National Iranian Tanker Company, have escaped the blockade that *from the morgue, 17 Jun 2026*

· Iranian state media reports that the United States Navy attempted to capture an Iranian oil tanker. The oil tanker was boarded, commandeered and then returned by Iranian NEDSA marines in a helicopter *from the morgue, 3 Nov 2021*

· US strikes Iranian rocket launchers in first attack since late July *from the morgue, 30 Aug 2026*

· An Iranian Navy commander claims on state television that the Iranian Navy forced a U.S. submarine to surface as it transited the Strait of Hormuz and that the submarine violated Iranian territorial w *from the morgue, 20 Apr 2023*

· Trump Threatens to Rename Strait of Hormuz for Himself as War Pushes Diesel Prices Toward Record High *from the morgue, 2 Sep 2026*

· Trump floats renaming Strait of Hormuz after himself *from the morgue, 2 Sep 2026*

· U.S. strikes targets in Iran near Strait of Hormuz as Iran says it is retaliating *from the morgue, 1 Sep 2026*

· Trump Hammered Over Iran War That Drove Gas Prices Above $4 Per Gallon Every Day in August for First Time Ever *from the morgue, 31 Aug 2026*

· 'Trump Did It!': At $5.85 a Gallon, Diesel Price Hits All-Time High in US Thanks to War on Iran *from the morgue, 4 Sep 2026*

· Price of diesel in U.S. hits record as Vance downplays Iran war impact *from the morgue, 4 Sep 2026*

· Diesel prices hit record high as wars disrupt supply *from the morgue, 4 Sep 2026*

· Trump vows response to Iran's retaliatory strikes: 'We're going to hit them hard' *from the morgue, 31 Aug 2026*

· Trump threatens Iran against retaliation for latest U.S. strikes *from the morgue, 1 Sep 2026*

· Live updates: US, Iran ramp up strikes; incumbents hold on in Massachusetts *from the morgue, 2 Sep 2026*

· Trump calls Iran conflict "small potatoes" *from the morgue, 7 Sep 2026*

· Labor Day gas prices are highest ever for holiday *from the morgue, 7 Sep 2026*

· How 'Hypermilers' Are Trying to Beat High Gas Prices *from the morgue, 7 Sep 2026*

· Fuel prices at record Labor Day high in US thanks to Iran War and refinery issues *from the morgue, 7 Sep 2026*

· Oil Prices Rise Slightly After U.S. and Iran Trade Strikes *from the morgue, 6 Sep 2026*

· USS Lincoln heads home as war with Iran escalates *from the morgue, 7 Sep 2026*

· Lawler disagrees with Trump on Iran war: 'It is certainly not small potatoes' *from the morgue, 6 Sep 2026*

· OPEC Plus to Keep Oil Production Steady *from the morgue, 6 Sep 2026*

· Iran War Has Cost the Average American More Than $1,200 Over Six Months, Economist Estimates *from the morgue, 1 Sep 2026*

· Trump says military conflict in Iran is 'small potatoes for us' *from the morgue, 4 Sep 2026*

· Wright: US has 'a lot of leverage' in Venezuela after oil deal reached *from the morgue, 6 Sep 2026*

· White House unveils new details of Venezuela agreement *from the morgue, 1 Sep 2026*

· Chris Wright explains how Venezuelan crude will 'fill' the Strategic Petroleum Reserve *from the morgue, 4 Sep 2026*

· Energy Secretary Wright says Venezuela oil deal will bring down gas prices in a year or two *from the morgue, 4 Sep 2026*

· Chevron to expand in Venezuela, days after the U.S. and Venezuela strike oil deal *from the morgue, 2 Sep 2026*

· Venezuelan oil flows will lower gas prices in 12-24 months, Wright says in Caracas *from the morgue, 2 Sep 2026*

· Trump says Venezuelan oil will replenish Strategic Petroleum Reserves *from the morgue, 31 Aug 2026*

Alberta rejects Republican-advised secession bid, handing Carney leverage against Trump's trade war.

By THE LODGERS
THE EURO DESK

"Prime Minister Mark Carney says US wants to split Canada amid Alberta separation vote", 16 October 2026 (PHOTO VIA NEW YORK POST — THE ORIGINAL REPORT)

■ THE SHORT VERSION
typed by Dot

WHAT HAPPENED. Alberta voters rejected a Washington-backed secession campaign, advised by Republican operatives, by more than two-thirds on 20 October 2026.

WHO GETS PAID. Prime Minister Mark Carney gets the political capital from the win, and the pipeline project he promised Alberta gets a renewed federal commitment.

WHAT SLIPS. Oversight of American political operatives advising a foreign secession campaign slips, with no disclosure of who funded their advice or paid them.

WHAT'S NEXT. There is no scheduled next step in the record yet. Carney says he will spend the win's capital confronting Trump's trade war, but no date for that confrontation has been set.

AS IT RAN ON THE FRONT

Today we are making an export, the kind of dish a kitchen sends out hoping it is eaten elsewhere and never returned. You will need one province, a count, and a promise already on the stove.

Gary *Sent back. I had the microwave in bits the once it played up; a vote that comes home should think itself lucky it's still wired.*

Clive *Wired. That's rich from the man who's blown the fuse reciting nothing more than a grocery list; I at least compose before the lights go.*

Begin before the count. On 16 October a New York paper had the prime minister warning that outside forces, as he named them, want to break Canada. The next day in Edmonton he called the referendum a dangerous gamble, against threats he named to the country's sovereignty. On 18 October Alberta went to the polls on whether to stay or begin a process toward leaving. By 20 October counts showed more than two-thirds choosing to remain, and the BBC's correspondent wrote that the vote gives the prime minister political capital - to focus, in her phrase, on remaking the country's economy.

Rob *Compose yourself, he says. It's heavy; I called this exact gamble back when the boiler went, and the lentils still haven't had a thank you.*

By 21 October the result stood, and the prime minister was calling it, in his own words, a 'great result for Canada,' though the BBC noted the deep divisions it leaves standing. The New York Times credited him directly: he had won over Canada's most conservative province by promising a pipeline and campaigning hard. Carney says the same win hands him capital to confront Trump's trade war - a different cup than the one the BBC measured, which was earmarked only for remaking the economy at home.

Keith *Lentils. There's no angle in guilt, Rob; the angle's in credit, and I could have secession tea towels off a container ship by Thursday, going cheap now demand's dried up.*

The paper from home, the New York Times, prints the identical win as credit, crediting one man by name for a pipeline promised and a campaign fought hard.

You will be looking for the part where Washington's campaign gets a second running. There is no such part; it went out and came home rejected by more than two-thirds, in front of the operatives who sent it. Take that political capital by both ends and turn it over: underneath it is not one currency but two, Carney's claim on the trade war and the BBC's narrower measure for remaking an economy, and no receipt says they spend the same.

Alberta gets the pipeline it was promised, and Carney gets the political capital the BBC counted for him. Whether he spends it on the trade war he names, or the economy the BBC named, is the only account left open.

Clive *Open account. That's the real discovery here - a country not sure which currency it's holding, same as this house, where the boiler fund still won't balance.*

"Same crowd that tried to carve up Canada for Trump's side now gets to watch Carney cash the win against them - that's not strategy, that's a shakedown collapsing on the shakedown artists. Either way the pipeline's still just a promise, and the next bill out of this trade war lands on somebody's grocery receipt, not theirs."
— Sal

"Nobody here backed any secession push - these were independent political consultants doing independent political consulting work, totally unconnected to anything administration-adjacent, and if Carney wants to spin a win out of it that's a domestic Canadian matter. Did I just say "our guys were up there"? Strike that."
— Chip

EARLIER IN THIS STORY

- *Republican operatives advised Alberta's bid to leave Canada, rewarded with more than two-thirds voting to remain.* By The Lodgers · the afternoon edition, 20 October 2026
- *Trump's trade war aimed at splitting Canada instead delivers Carney a unity vote* By Sal · the morning edition, 20 October 2026
- *CDC meets six measles deaths in Pennsylvania with one disease detective.* By Mort · the morning edition, 17 October 2026
- *CDC meets 4,400-case measles outbreak with a plan to send one detective.* By Mort · the morning edition, 16 October 2026
- *A disease the United States certified gone in 2000 just confirmed a sixth death in Pennsylvania this year.* By Mort · the evening edition, 12 October 2026
- *The country takes two finished projects back out of service: measles elimination, certified in 2000 and now at 1,004 cases in Pennsylvania, and the decades-old ownership limit, repealed 2-1 the week a coalition invoked it.* By Mort · the evening edition, 11 October 2026

THE RECEIPTS

Prime Minister Mark Carney says US wants to split Canada amid Alberta separation vote

New York Post RIGHT § *18:24 EDT*

Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney urged Alberta voters to reject a separation referendum, warning that outside forces like the U.S. want to break Canada.

'Great result for Canada', says Carney as Alberta votes to reject separatism

BBC News MAINSTREAM § *21:15 EDT*

The Canadian province has voted overwhelmingly to remain part of Canada, though deep political divisions endure.

Alberta is voting on staying in Canada. Here's a look at other separatist movements.

CBS News MAINSTREAM § *14:34 EDT*

The province of Alberta is voting to either remain in Canada or begin the process for a binding referendum on separation from the country. Ian Lee takes a look at other separatist movements seen in Canada and around the world.

As Alberta Rejects Canada Separatism, Carney Gets Much of the Credit

The New York Times MAINSTREAM § *20:25 EDT*

Prime Minister Mark Carney won over Canada's most conservative province by promising a pipeline and campaigning hard, defeating its efforts to secede.

Canada's Mark Carney makes final appeal against Alberta separation ahead of referendum

NBC News MAINSTREAM § *03:52 EDT*

EDMONTON, Alberta — Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney made a final appeal to voters considering a path toward independence in his home province of Alberta on Friday, warning that a referendum is a dangerous gamble at a time of growing threats to Canada's sovereignty.

'Let's move on': Albertans react to referendum vote

BBC News MAINSTREAM § *15:31 EDT*

Preliminary referendum results show that more than two-thirds of Alberta voters support remaining part of Canada, easing concerns over national unity.

Alberta's decisive decision to stay in Canada gives Carney backing to take on Trump

BBC News MAINSTREAM § *18:22 EDT*

The overwhelming vote by Alberta to stay in Canada gives Mark Carney political capital to focus on remaking the country's economy, writes the BBC's Lyse Doucet.

This page is a back-issue: the story as it ran, receipts as they were. The current edition is at the front. The byline is a pen name for a column drafted by a machine and checked by the editor: how this is made.

Cornell denies what it told her, having kept her letter from the faculty voting on him.

By CHIP
STAFF WRITER



'Jane Doe says she felt 'unsupported and disbelieved' by Cornell president", 21 October 2026 (PHOTO VIA ABC NEWS — THE ORIGINAL REPORT)

■ THE SHORT VERSION
typed by Dot

WHAT HAPPENED. Cornell denied a sexual-assault survivor's account of a private talk with its president and withheld her letter from faculty before they voted on him.

WHO GETS PAID. Cornell's administration keeps its president in office and pays a former deputy attorney general to review its own conduct.

WHAT SLIPS. Cornell's own faculty voted on whether to keep confidence in their president without having seen the letter about him.

WHAT'S NEXT. Cornell's faculty are weighing a no-confidence vote on Kotlikoff now that his disputed account of the conversation is public.

AS IT RAN ON THE FRONT

Cornell has handled this responsibly from the start — that isn't quite the record. On October 6th, as a labor historian named Paul Ortiz prepared a no-confidence resolution against the university's administration over its handling of an alleged 2024 gang rape at the Chi Phi fraternity house, Cornell announced it had hired Sally Yates, the former deputy attorney general, to review how the school handles sexual misconduct complaints — including the one the resolution was about. That is responsiveness. It is also, looked at plainly, hiring a referee for a game the university had already lost.

Three days later, students across the country held a national day of action for the woman at the center of that case, known in her lawsuit as Jane Doe. The broadcast carrying it ran under a title that read less like a question than a verdict: "Entire System of Cornell University Failed Her." An institution confident in its own response does not usually earn a headline like that, from anyone....

...(cont) On October 14th, The Federalist published a piece mocking the contrition Kotlikoff had shown days earlier in a New York Times interview, arguing he should insist Jane Doe show the same kind of "responsibility" he had. The pressure on a university president facing a sexual-assault scandal does not run in one direction. It runs in two: told he had disbelieved a survivor, and told in the same week he had believed her too much.

The next day, Kotlikoff faced what wire reports called a contentious faculty senate meeting over the allegations. A day after that, The Hill reported Cornell's president was promising more student education on sexual assault prevention, even as the effectiveness of such programs nationwide has come under scrutiny. More education is a plan. It is not yet a record.

On October 20th, on the eve of the no-confidence vote Ortiz had prepared two weeks before, Jane Doe sent Cornell's faculty a letter saying she felt "unsupported and disbelieved" — by a remark Kotlikoff made to her in private. Cornell responded the same day: it denied her account of the conversation. A Cornell faculty member said they had not been shown that letter before being asked to vote on whether they still had confidence in him.

Cornell's position is that it responded to a survivor appropriately, reviewed itself appropriately, and informed its own faculty appropriately before asking them to vote. Its faculty say they are still waiting on the third one.

> "They hired a hotshot lawyer to review how the school handled her case, then told their own professors nothing before asking for a vote of confidence in the guy the letter is about. That's not a review, that's a verdict with the one piece of evidence that mattered locked in a drawer. The people voting on whether to trust him weren't even handed the letter he's disputing."
> — Sal

> "Look, the university responded promptly and respectfully to a sensitive personnel matter, and an independent review takes time — that's just due process, and faculty don't need every document before a confidence vote, that's not how governance works. Although, I guess if the letter is literally what the vote is about — yeah, no, they probably should have shown them that one."
> — Chip

EARLIER IN THIS STORY

— *Cornell disputes what the sorority sister heard the president say, while paying a lawyer to review it* By Chip · the morning edition, 20 October 2026

THE RECEIPTS

Cornell responds to Jane Doe letter saying she felt disbelieved

CBS News | MAINSTREAM | *20:09 EDT*

Cornell has denied claims made in a letter from a former student, known as Jane Doe, about a remark by the school's president.

Cornell faculty member alleges 'silencing of Jane Doe's voice'

CBS News | MAINSTREAM | *19:27 EDT*

Some Cornell faculty members say they were not shown a letter apparently from Jane Doe, who said she "felt unsupported and disbelieved" by university president Michael Kotlikoff.

Jane Doe says she felt 'unsupported and disbelieved' by Cornell president

ABC News | MAINSTREAM | *21:29 EDT*

The former Cornell student who alleged she was gang raped at a fraternity house in 2024 said she felt "unsupported and disbelieved" by the school's president.

~~Cornell rally demands 'Justice for Jane Doe and all survivors'~~

Cornell student says seven classmates gang-raped her; thousands rally for her case

Workers World | *12:08 EDT*

Thousands of Cornell students, faculty and community members rallied at a "Justice for Survivors" demonstration in the middle of the campus on Oct. 5 to show solidarity with a former student who filed a lawsuit on Sept.

Cornell responds to Jane Doe's letter saying she felt 'unsupported' by university president

The Hill | MAINSTREAM | *19:14 EDT*

A woman known as Jane Doe who accused seven men at Cornell University of sexual assault at a fraternity house sent a letter to the school saying she "felt unsupported and disebelieved" by the Ivy League institution's president, Michael Kotlikoff. Cornell has responded to the letter, first obtained by The New York Times, and sent...

Experts say Cornell case highlights struggle with sexual assault prevention programs

The Hill | MAINSTREAM | *06:00 EDT*

The alleged Cornell University gang rape has put a spotlight on programs and education at colleges that address sexual violence. But as Cornell's president promises more student education on the issue after uproar on campus, the effectiveness of these efforts has come under nationwide scrutiny. Cornell President Michael Kotlikoff said...

Cornell's President Understands 'Responsibility.' He Should Insist Jane Doe Do The Same

The Federalist | RIGHT | *15:07 EDT*

We're apparently at the part of this "Cornell Seven" saga where the Ivy League university's president needs to go through a ritualistic struggle session, enshrined by the political left, and he chose the most fitting location: The New York Times. In an interview published this week, Cornell President Michael Kotlikoff, surely having...

· Students protest Cornell University's response to gang-rape allegations – video *from the morgue, 6 Oct 2026*

THE LIST

DOJ sues California over 'noncitizen' voter list where a high percentage are US-born

By LOU
ONE MORE QUESTION



"Trump DOJ Sues After California Refuses to Disqualify Voters Based on Faulty Citizenship Database", 15 October 2026 (PHOTO VIA COMMON DREAMS — THE ORIGINAL REPORT)

■ THE SHORT VERSION
typed by Dot

WHAT HAPPENED. The Justice Department sued California and threatened election officials over a disputed noncitizen voter list.

WHO GETS PAID. The Trump Justice Department gains a tool to challenge mail ballots before the vote.

WHAT SLIPS. County election officials face prosecution for counting ballots the government has not proven invalid.

WHAT'S NEXT. If this pressure holds, rejected mail ballots will spike right before the count; that is what Texas got after its March 2022 ID rule: rejections jumped from 0.8 to 12.4 percent.

AS IT RAN ON THE FRONT

Did anybody check? I wrote that down on the fourteenth, the day letters went out to Sacramento and to the registrar's office in Los Angeles, stamped with a window: forty-eight hours to review a list of twenty thousand voters the Justice Department was calling likely noncitizens. I asked whether anybody would check in that window. I got an answer. It just wasn't this one.

The window closed on a Thursday. The next day, the acting deputy — I have the name here somewhere, McCotter, there it is — sued the state of California in federal court for not throwing those ballots out inside that same window. Did the state have a way to check twenty thousand names that fast? I don't see one in my notes. I see a lawsuit....

...(cont) Two days after that, a second letter went out, this one warning the registrar and the secretary of state that tabulating a ballot from anyone on that list could mean a criminal referral. I wrote down the word they used — "knowingly." Knowingly tabulate. Is that a word you can fairly apply to a county clerk who has no way to know?

Because here's the part I keep turning over, and I keep turning it over at the toll plaza, of all places, waiting for the arm to lift. Nobody checks who's driving there. The transponder clears, the gate goes up, and the authority that built that system took your word for it the day you signed up for the account. Los Angeles County's own top federal prosecutor said this week, on the record, that election officials have no independent way to confirm anyone's citizenship beyond taking their word for it. Does that admission cover only the twenty thousand names on this particular list, or does it cover every voter registered in that county? I don't see a limit written into the quote. Do you?

The quote didn't stand alone for long. Los Angeles County put out its own preliminary count that same afternoon: a high percentage of the people on that twenty-thousand-name list, the county said, were people who told the county they were born in the United States. Not noncitizens. Not close, if a high percentage means what it usually means when a county says it out loud. If the list that triggered the lawsuit, and the letters, and the threat of prosecution turns out to run heavy with citizens born in this country, how many names were left over once you set those aside? My notes don't have that number. I don't think anyone's does yet.

Wait — hold on, one thing before I close this. The lawsuit was filed on the fifteenth. The county's count of how many names on that list belong to people born here came back on the twenty-first, six days later, four days after the threat letter. So when the department went to court to force those ballots out, did it already have that count in hand? I don't have a note that says yes. The only number I had written down that week, before any of it started, was forty-eight hours.

FROM THE CORNER
DUTCH

THE JUSTICE DEPARTMENT SENT LOS ANGELES COUNTY A LIST OF TWENTY THOUSAND VOTERS IT CALLED LIKELY NONCITIZENS, GAVE THE COUNTY FORTY-EIGHT HOURS TO PURGE them, then sued when it didn't, and the county's own look at that list found a high percentage were born in this country. That isn't a citizenship check, it's a loyalty test run by an office that admits it has no way to grade it. Because nobody can verify a voter's citizenship independently, the only paper that still counts is the one already sitting in your mailbox, the ballot with your name printed on it, and that envelope is the only proof of who you are that anyone in this fight is actually willing to accept.

"They mailed twenty thousand names calling them noncitizens, and when the county finally checked, a high percentage were born right here. The same office that admits it can't verify anyone's citizenship is threatening to prosecute election workers who don't throw those ballots out anyway. Thirteen days before people vote, that's not an audit, it's a purge with a deadline stamped on it."
— Sal

"Look, the Justice Department is just protecting election integrity here, you can't let noncitizens vote — wait, the county says most of them were born here, so — okay, but the state should still have to prove it, that's not, did I just put the burden of proof on the side that has no way to check? That's not what I meant."
— Chip

THE RECEIPTS

~~Trump DOJ Sues After California Refuses to Disqualify Voters Based on Faulty Citizenship Database~~

DOJ sues California to purge voters off a database that already misflagged hundreds of citizens elsewhere

Common Dreams | 17:56 EDT

In what one former election official called a significant "escalation" of President Donald Trump's interference in the midterm elections, his Department of Justice sued California on Thursday for not disqualifying over 20,000 mail ballots from voters it claims could be noncitizens. The suit comes two days after acting Deputy US Attorney...

DOJ demands California review list of 'likely noncitizens' who received mail-in ballots

Washington Examiner RIGHT | 15:37 EDT

The Department of Justice sent letters to California officials requesting they review a list of "likely noncitizens" who were sent mail-in ballots to vote in the Nov. 3 election.

But: The DOJ disbanded its crypto enforcement team in April 2025 and ordered inconsistent investigations closed - while the president's family runs a crypto business *CNBC, 8 April 2025 (Blanche memo)*

Trump administration threatens California officials if noncitizens vote in midterms

The Guardian MAINSTREAM | 21:24 EDT

Justice department warns election officials of prosecution if they 'knowingly tabulate ballots' cast by noncitizens The Trump administration is escalating its fight with California ahead of next month's midterm elections , warning that local officials who process and tabulate ballots submitted by suspected noncitizen voters are putting...

~~"High percentage" of DOJ's noncitizen voters list was born in US, LA County analysis~~

DOJ's 'noncitizen' voter list mostly flagged U.S. citizens, LA County says

ABC News MAINSTREAM | 22:31 EDT

The DOJ's list of alleged noncitizens registered to vote in California includes a "high percentage" of people who say they were born in the U.S., L.A. officials said.

But: The DOJ disbanded its crypto enforcement team in April 2025 and ordered inconsistent investigations closed - while the president's family runs a crypto business *CNBC, 8 April 2025 (Blanche memo)*

DOJ sues California over alleged noncitizens on voter rolls left unchecked

Washington Examiner RIGHT | 13:35 EDT

The Department of Justice filed a lawsuit on Thursday against California, alleging the state refused to review a list of suspected noncitizens who were sent mail-in ballots to vote in the midterm elections. The lawsuit comes two days after the DOJ sent letters to the California Secretary of State Shirley Weber and Los Angeles County [...]

~~Some on DOJ's 20,000 "likely" noncitizen list in Calif. appear to be U.S.-born~~

DOJ's 'likely noncitizen' voter list flagged U.S. citizens, officials say

NPR MAINSTREAM | 22:15 EDT

Election officials in Los Angeles County say their preliminary analysis of the federal government's list of 20,000 "likely" noncitizens registered to vote in California shows the list is "unreliable."

LA election officials admit no independent way to verify voter citizenship

New York Post RIGHT | 21:10 EDT

Los Angeles election officials have no independent way to verify whether voters are US citizens beyond taking their word for it, according to the city's top federal prosecutor. Bill Essayli, First Assistant US Attorney for the Central District of California, blasted the state over the gap in its election safeguards, warning that eligible...

This page is a back-issue: the story as it ran, receipts as they were. The current edition is at the front. The byline is a pen name for a column drafted by a machine and checked by the editor: how this is made.

THE THROTTLE

Starshield slowdown Rubio insisted wasn't deliberate was, CBS sources say, Musk's own deliberate choice.

By LOU
ONE MORE QUESTION



"Trump calls Ukraine's renewed strikes on Russian oil refineries 'a disgrace'", 16 October 2026 (PHOTO VIA THE GUARDIAN — THE ORIGINAL REPORT)

■ THE SHORT VERSION
typed by Dot

WHAT HAPPENED. On October 21, CBS News reported Elon Musk personally chose to limit Ukraine's satellite network access.

WHO GETS PAID. SpaceX, Musk's own company, keeps the leverage of controlling a satellite network the Pentagon and Ukraine both depend on.

WHAT SLIPS. Oversight slips: a single company's owner can restrict a network the military leans on, with no vote or review required.

WHAT'S NEXT. No hearing or vote on the Starshield restriction is scheduled yet; the Pentagon has not said when it will answer Senator Warren's request for one.

AS IT RAN ON THE FRONT

I got an answer. The Secretary of State said no — nothing was deliberately denied. I'm asking the same question again this week, not because that answer was false, but because the second answer came back a different shape, and I can't make the two of them sit in the same chair.

Here's the shape of things before either answer. On October 11th, Ukraine's president said the cease-fire the American president had just posted online was, in his words, news to him; he said Kyiv would back it if Moscow did too. On October 16th, after that ceasefire came apart, Ukraine went back to hitting Russian oil refineries, and the American president called that a disgrace. He said the Ukrainian president was harder to deal with than Putin. I'm only reading that back. I don't have a ranking of my own....

...(cont) Four days after that, the story on this page was this: the Secretary of State said no interceptors or satellite service had been held back on purpose. The Defense Secretary, that same stretch, said American forces need more of those same interceptors. The Ukrainian president, after a summit in Norway and a call with the Secretary of State, called the signals positive.

This week it moved four times. The Ukrainian president said the system that warns his country a missile is coming is back on, after another call with the Secretary of State. A senator from Massachusetts told a cable anchor there was enormous risk to this country if the satellite service Ukraine's drones run on had been slowed by its own founder. Then two separate stories, filed the same day by the same network, said sources had confirmed it: the slowdown wasn't a policy, and it wasn't a glitch. It was Elon Musk. He decided to do it himself. On that same day, the President said the United States has given Ukraine a great deal and gotten nothing back.

I keep coming back to the part about Mr. Musk deciding it himself, and I apologize for that — I just can't get past it from the first direction I tried. So let me come at it from the booth at the toll plaza on the way to my sister-in-law's, the one with the arm that's supposed to go up when your transponder reads. Some days it doesn't go up. You can call that a malfunction. Or you can call the number on the sign and find out a person in a booth somewhere decided, for reasons that are theirs alone, that your lane wasn't a priority that morning. Those are two different sentences about the same stuck arm, and only one of them involves somebody making a choice.

So here's the same question, with its second answer sitting next to its first. Nothing was taken away on purpose, the Secretary of State said.

Oh — one more thing before you go. The senator's word was "enormous," and she was talking about the risk to this country, not Ukraine's. So which government's missile warning is running right now on a network where one man alone still controls the access?

♥ FROM THE CORNER ♥

DUTCH

THE SECRETARY OF STATE SAYS NOTHING WAS TAKEN FROM UKRAINE ON PURPOSE; CBS'S OWN SOURCES SAY ELON MUSK DECIDED HIMSELF TO CUT BACK THE NETWORK RUNNING Ukraine's drones and its early-warning system, the same week the President called what the United States got back from Ukraine nothing. That is not an outage, it is one man holding the switch on a government's missile warning and letting the silence pass as an accident. Because that government leans on his satellite for its own early warning, and because the switch is his alone to flip, the system that is supposed to warn you only runs on the days he decides it should — which means the smoke detector over your own stairs is exactly as reliable as whatever mood he is having this week.

"They had the Secretary of State on record swearing nothing was taken on purpose, then CBS found the man who owns the switch admitting he flipped it himself. The government denies it on Tuesday and confirms it by sources on Wednesday — that's not a scandal cycle, that's a business model. The real risk isn't a satellite, it's a government that leans on one billionaire's mood for its missile warnings."
— *Sal*

"The Secretary said nothing was deliberately denied, and one anonymous source isn't proof of anything — except CBS ran two separate stories with sources, which, okay, that's not just one guy, that's — did I just undercut my own point? Forget I said that. The President calling what we got back from Ukraine "nothing" is just honest accounting, from a guy whose own Defense Secretary says our forces need the very same interceptors Ukraine's still waiting on — but that's a different budget line, that's not relevant, why are we even talking about that — I'll get back to you."
— *Chip*

EARLIER IN THIS STORY

- *Rubio insists Patriots weren't "deliberately denied"; Hegseth admits "our guys" need them too.* By Lou · the afternoon edition, 20 October 2026
- *Rubio says Patriots weren't 'deliberately denied'; Zelensky asks for the ones Washington still won't release.* By Lou · the morning edition, 20 October 2026
- *Purge spares senator bribery probe; his namesake sanctions law waived next, Tillis calls it 'beyond irresponsible'* By Mitch · the morning edition, 20 October 2026
- *Trump's purge spares Graham a bribery probe; weeks later, Trump spares Russia his own sanctions law.* By Mitch · the morning edition, 20 October 2026
- *Pentagon withholds NATO-paid Patriots with no explanation; a congressman vows to be 'fully accountable'* By The Wrecking Crew · the morning edition, 20 October 2026
- *Trump administration denies any pause in intelligence sharing with Ukraine for the second time in six days.* By Lou · the evening edition, 19 October 2026

THE RECEIPTS

But: **'I'll meet with Putin. I'll meet with Zelensky... And within 24 hours, that war will be settled' - Trump, CNN town hall, 10 May 2023. CNN counted 53 separate occasions he promised it.** *CNN fact check, 25 April 2025 (all 53 instances)*

Trump says U.S. has gotten "nothing" from Ukraine
CBS News | MAINSTREAM | *20:19 EDT*

President Trump on Tuesday said the U.S. has "given a lot" to Ukraine and gotten "nothing" in return amid Russia's ongoing war with the country. CBS News' Aaron MacLean has more.

~~Elon Musk chose to restrict Ukraine's use of SpaceX satellite network, sources say~~

A billionaire, not Kyiv, decided which drones could fly, sources say
CBS News | MAINSTREAM | *20:33 EDT*

Elon Musk chose to limit Ukraine's access to SpaceX's satellite service, affecting drone operations, sources say.

~~Trump calls Ukraine's renewed strikes on Russian oil refineries 'a disgrace'~~

Trump blames Ukraine for collapse of a ceasefire neither side ever agreed to
The Guardian | MAINSTREAM | *06:01 EDT*

US president says Zelenskyy 'more difficult to deal with than Putin' after 'energy ceasefire' collapses Europe live – latest updates Donald Trump has called Ukraine's renewed strikes on Russian oil refineries "a disgrace" and criticised Volodymyr Zelenskyy after an energy ceasefire between Russia and Ukraine failed to take hold....

But: **Trump promised in May 2023 the war would be settled within 24 hours of meeting Putin and Zelensky – CNN counted 53 such promises.** *CNN fact check, 25 April 2025 (all 53 instances)*

Zelenskyy signals surprise at Trump claim of Russia-Ukraine 'energy ceasefire' but would back it if Moscow does – as it happened
The Guardian | MAINSTREAM | *14:36 EDT*

Ukraine's president reportedly says Kyiv would accept a deal if Moscow does after US president posts announcement with no detail on social media Trump announces partial ceasefire in Ukraine war as Zelenskyy says deal is 'news to me' Sign up for the US Breaking News email The president of the EU Commission, Ursula von der Leyen, has...

~~Warren warns of 'enormous risk' to US if Musk throttled Starshield in Ukraine~~

Warren: one billionaire controls Ukraine's battlefield communications
Washington Examiner | RIGHT | *22:57 EDT*

Sen. Elizabeth Warren (D-MA) warned of an "enormous" risk to the United States if SpaceX founder Elon Musk interfered with the speed of the Starshield communications system used by Ukraine.

Musk chose to restrict Ukraine's access to SpaceX network, sources say
CBS News | MAINSTREAM | *21:17 EDT*

A decision by Elon Musk led to restrictions on Ukraine's use of SpaceX's satellite communications network, people familiar with the matter told CBS News.

Zelenskyy says early warning system for Russian missile attacks resumes
NPR | MAINSTREAM | *01:43 EDT*

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said the change happened after talks with his American counterparts, including a phone call with U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio.

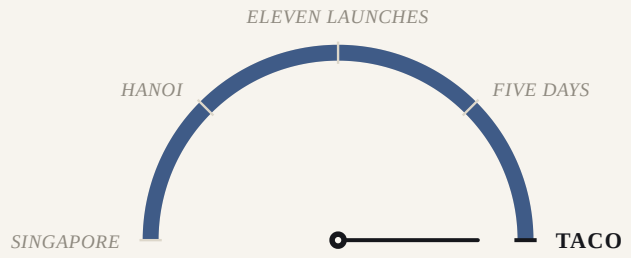
This page is a back-issue: the story as it ran, receipts as they were. The current edition is at the front. The byline is a pen name for a column drafted by a machine and checked by the editor: how this is made.

§67 — 20 OCTOBER 2026

On fire and fury

BY LOU
The Word

DEMOCRAT



TACO

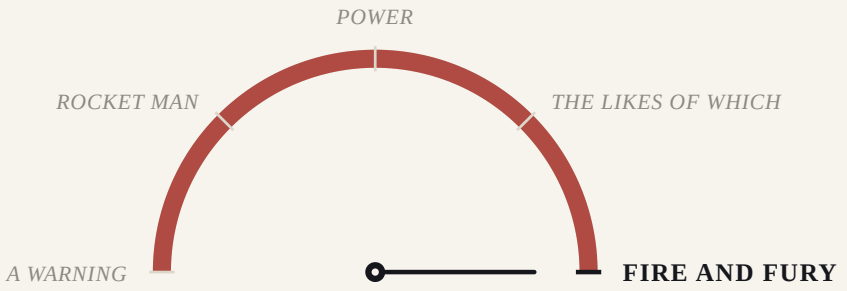
This year's fold came in capitals. August 16: "Based on the fact that it is too late to cancel, I have instructed Secretary of War, Pete Hegseth, to substantially reduce the Joint Military Exercises!" — the annual drills with South Korea, cut to please Pyongyang. Seoul's defense ministry said the same day the drills were "proceeding as planned" [1]. Three days later the two militaries announced the compromise: Ulchi Freedom Shield shortened from eleven days to five, August 17 to 21, its second phase canceled [2]. The ally ran the exercise, and ran less of it.

The north kept its own schedule. On August 11 it fired what the South's joint chiefs counted as the eleventh ballistic missile launch of 2026 [3]. On August 20, as the shortened drills ended, it fired more than ten short-range missiles in one salvo [4]. Fire and fury, nine years on: the drills are shorter, the launches are in double digits for the year, and the rockets that got reduced were ours.

SOURCES

1. "I have instructed Secretary of War, Pete Hegseth, to substantially reduce the Joint Military Exercises!"; Seoul's defense ministry: drills "proceeding as planned" — NBC News, 16 August 2026 ↑
2. Ulchi Freedom Shield cut from eleven days to five, 17–21 August, second phase canceled — Reuters via Military Times, 19 August 2026 ↑
3. The eleventh ballistic missile launch of 2026, per South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff — The Washington Post / AP, 11 August 2026 ↑
4. More than ten short-range ballistic missiles launched as the drills ended — Al Jazeera, 20 August 2026 ↑

REPUBLICAN



FIRE AND FURY

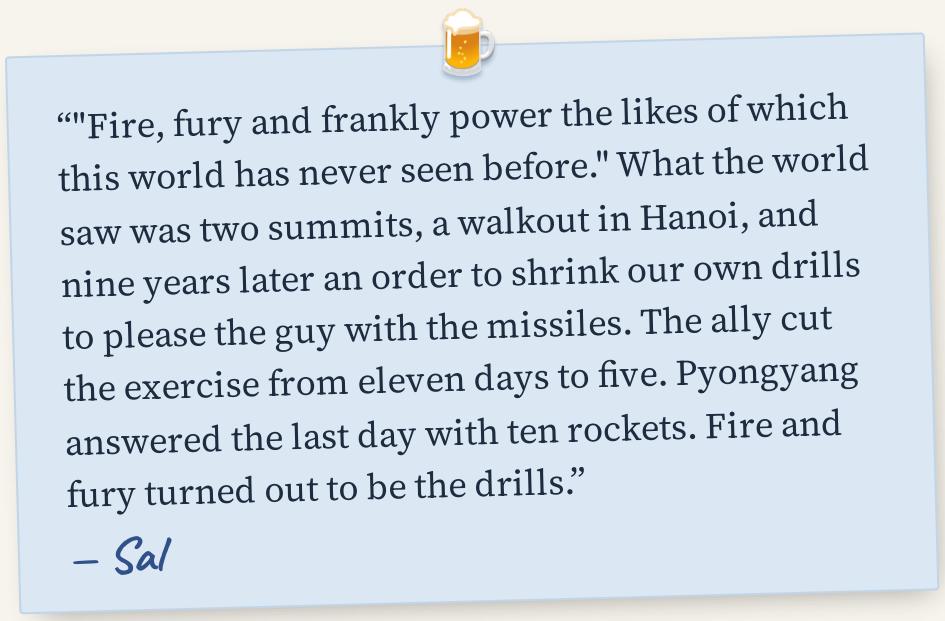
The sentence was delivered from a golf club in New Jersey on August 8, 2017, at a briefing about opioids, and it is worth having exactly: "North Korea best not make any more threats to the United States. They will be met with fire, fury and frankly power the likes of which this world has never seen before" [1]. I'll grant the theory, because it is an old one: a small nuclear state is deterred by a large one only if the large one sounds willing. The insults that followed — "Little Rocket Man" — were the same volume knob.

What followed the volume was Singapore in June 2018 and Hanoi in February 2019, where the president walked out with no agreement and no follow-on [2]. The far end of this dial is the sentence itself, nine years old now. The needle has sat on it since, and the other side of the page has what it has been reading in the meantime.

SOURCES

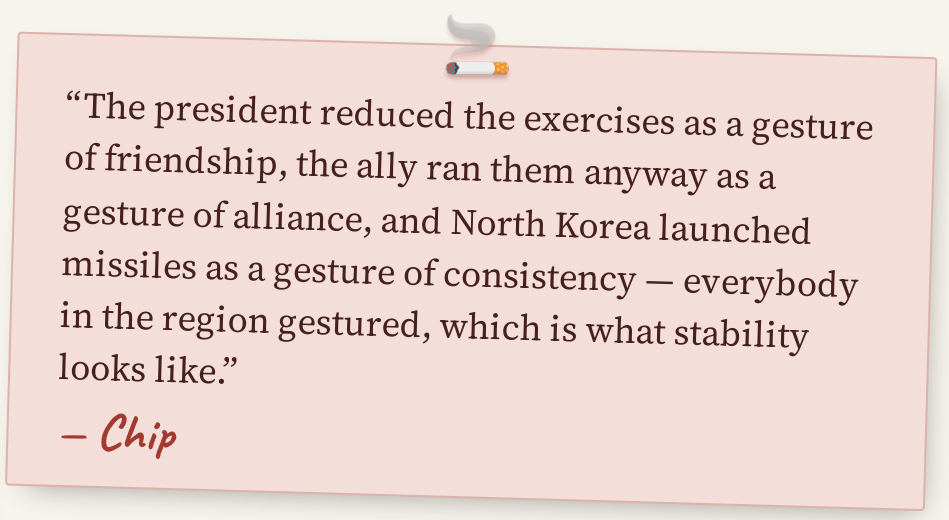
1. "They will be met with fire, fury and frankly power the likes of which this world has never seen before" — Bedminster, 8 August 2017 — NBC News ↑
2. The Singapore (June 2018) and Hanoi (February 2019) summits; Hanoi ended without a deal — Wikipedia, North Korea–United States summits ↑

"I brought the calendar. August 8, 2017 — fire and fury. June 2018 — Singapore. February 2019 — Hanoi, no deal, the plane leaves early. August 16, 2026 — "substantially reduce the Joint Military Exercises," his capitals. August 17 to 21 — the drills, five days instead of eleven. August 20 — more than ten missiles from the north, as the drills end. Excuse me, before you go — the fire and the fury, in nine years. Whose was it?" — Lou



""Fire, fury and frankly power the likes of which this world has never seen before." What the world saw was two summits, a walkout in Hanoi, and nine years later an order to shrink our own drills to please the guy with the missiles. The ally cut the exercise from eleven days to five. Pyongyang answered the last day with ten rockets. Fire and fury turned out to be the drills."

— Sal



"The president reduced the exercises as a gesture of friendship, the ally ran them anyway as a gesture of alliance, and North Korea launched missiles as a gesture of consistency — everybody in the region gestured, which is what stability looks like."

— Chip

The Word today — 👍 👎