

The Forward Eagle

Compiled Weekly
for
The Riverdale Senior Services Center
Bronx, NY

“Let us endeavor mutually to enlighten one another.”

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Current events

1.

In the Bosnian capital of Sarajevo, the cantonal government took action after air quality reached extremely hazardous levels following several days of fog and smog that blanketed the city of 350,000 people.

Experts say the main source of the pollution was the burning of firewood and coal for heating and cooking in 40,000 households in the city.

Nestled in a valley surrounded by mountains and hills, Sarajevo has long suffered from a phenomenon known as a “temperature inversion” which traps colder air and pollutants from burning fossil fuels close to the ground. Mixed with fog, it can remain stationary for days.

2.

The Trump administration said it will be dismantling the National Center for Atmospheric Research (NCAR) in Colorado, one of the world’s leading Earth science research institutions.

The center, founded in 1960, is responsible for many significant scientific advances in the understanding of weather and climate. Its research aircraft and sophisticated computer models of the Earth’s atmosphere and oceans are used in forecasting weather events and disasters around the country, and its scientists study a range of topics, including air pollution, ocean currents and global warming.

On Tuesday in a social media post announcing the move, Russel Vought, the director of the Office of Management and Budget, called the center “one of the largest sources of climate alarmism in the country” and said the federal government would be “breaking up” the institution.

3.

Data centers consumed more than 4% of the nation’s electricity in 2023. Consumption is anticipated to increase to as much as 12% in 2026.

Data centers that train AI systems consume much more electricity than those used for services like Netflix or Instagram.

The four “tech giants” driving the expansion of data centers are Microsoft, Meta, Google and Amazon. CoreWeave, Digital Reality and Equinix provide data centers for other businesses.

To meet the demand, energy companies have rushed to build more power plants and power lines. Although tech companies are shouldering many of those costs, they are not paying for all of them. Some of the expenses are ultimately borne by other businesses and individuals through higher electricity rates.

4.

Last week Nvidia received permission to sell its most advanced semiconductor chips to China. The catch: The federal government will take 25% of the revenue from those sales. The new arrangement says something important about the relationship between private business and the federal government.

The new form of state capitalism has taken the form of government stakes in private companies. These are sometimes referred to as “revenue slices” or “golden shares”. The state doesn’t necessarily own companies, but holds a financial position within them using taxpayer dollars. Government agencies then use their leverage to steer behavior in the private sector.

State capitalism is a two-way street. Many businesses align themselves with the federal government to elicit better treatment. Companies may gain approvals to sell to foreign countries, pay lower tariffs, avoid unwanted regulations, and receive favorable anti-trust decisions. State



The National Center for Atmospheric Research (NCAR) was completed in 1967 and designed by the architects I.M. Pei and Partners

The 214,500-square-foot center is formed by clusters of towers. It was built atop a 28-acre mesa with views across the 530-acre public preserve. Within the center are research laboratories for 500 scientists.

capitalism doesn’t just serve the interests of the state, but also the interests of favored capitalists.

5.

CoreWeave, the data center company mentioned above, has a business model that uses high-interest debt to buy thousands of advanced AI chips from the manufacturer Nvidia. CoreWeave installs the chips in data center servers that it leases from third-party landlords, and then rents digital access to the chips to AI companies.

6.

... China is an ethno-nationalist state in which people who are not Han Chinese struggle to be accepted. America was founded on universal values that speak to every race and creed. These values have long made America a magnet for talent, and have enhanced its economy and global influence.

It is now evident that all three branches of the federal government scorn universal values. Oppression does not shock. An iron-fisted administration sets the tenor of the times. A recently published National Security Strategy document describes ethnic and religious diversity as a threat, not a source of strength. If the United States becomes an ethno-nationalist project (such as Russia, China, India, Israel, Afghanistan and the Arab petrol states), will the U.S. squander its greatest advantage?

7.

Norman Podhoretz, the long-time editor of Commentary magazine and a champion of neoconservatism, has died in Manhattan at the age of 95.

Mr. Podhoretz’s intellectual odyssey took him from an early and ardent embrace of liberalism to a flinty condemnation of the post Cold War world order in his later years. In his eyes, the U.S. had become spineless in the face of Soviet expansionism and Islamist militancy.

Although there were twists and turns to his philosophical journey, Podhoretz (pronounced pod-

HOR-etz) always relished being the provocateur, brandishing any number of political and societal opinions that ran against the popular grain. He became the talk of the erudite circles on Manhattan’s Upper West Side and beyond.

8.

The comedian Geoffrey Mark knew Rob Reiner for about 30 years, seeing him at group dinners and other events. He said his friend had never been explicit about the challenges he was facing at home, but he noticed that Mr. Reiner would sometimes use a joking, but pointed, expression when asked how he was doing, “Go have children.”

“It was a humorous way of sharing with someone that there are troubles that they don’t really want to go into,” Mark said, “but that they’re there.”

Words of the week

Critical Zone

/ˈkrɪtɪkəl/ /zoon/

noun term

The Critical Zone is Earth's outer skin, often defined from bedrock to treetop. This is an environment where rock, soil, water, air, and living organisms interact and shape the Earth's surface.
<https://criticalzone.org>

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This paper is offered as a review of recent topics taken up by the current events discussion group at The Riverdale Senior Services Center.

Please join us at the Center for Ageless Living, 2600 Netherland Avenue, Bronx, NY each Monday at 1:00 o'clock in the afternoon for Current Events & Discussion.

Items in this week’s *Eagle* were collected and edited from:

1. Reuters 12/17/2025 | 2. NYT 12/18/2025 | 3. NYT 12/17/2025 | 4. WSJ 12/17/2025 | 5. The Economist 12/18/2025 | 6. WSJ 12/17/2025 | 7. NYT 12/18/2025 | 8. NYT 12/17/2025