

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.

Russia launched its biggest aerial assaults of the year on Ukraine's energy systems, dealing another blow to the country during some of the winter's coldest days.

Russia continued its nightly barrages on Ukraine including strikes on transportation infrastructure. Moscow did appear to refrain for several days from direct assaults on energy targets.

However, strikes resumed on Feb. 3rd. Russian forces attacked eight Ukrainian regions, striking thermal power plants providing heat for residents of the cities of Kyiv, Kharkiv and Dnipro.

The attack left nearly 2,000 apartment buildings without heat in Kyiv and Kharkiv, with the temperatures there dropping to -13°F. The strikes, which injured at least 12 people, left authorities in scrambling to drain water from radiators in buildings to prevent damage to the heating systems.

2.

In pursuit of a path to end Russia's war on its western neighbor, the US, Russia and the Ukraine met on Wednesday and Thursday (Feb. 4th and 5th) in Abu Dhabi, according to Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskiy.

3.

America faces a serious housing shortage, one that Moody's estimates would take more than 2 million new homes to resolve.

However, Goldman Sachs analysts put the number at 3 million. A Zillow estimate tops 4 million, while Brookings and McKinsey project 5 and 8 million respectively. Meanwhile, congressional Republicans insist the shortfall is closer to 20 million.

Then there are the economists who contend there's no shortage at all.

The disparate projections reflect the challenge of quantifying the nation's housing needs, a puzzle that rests on assumptions about how much a home should cost, how many people it should hold, and how big a footprint it should have.

With housing affordability a crucial political issue and increasingly out of reach for many Americans, determining the nation's needs is not merely an academic exercise, but a key to devising policies that will solve the problem.

The U.S. has 146 million homes. Of those, 8.1 million are "doubled up" households, meaning people are sharing space with non-relatives. Zillow's housing estimate assumes most of those people would prefer having their own place. There also are 3.4 million vacant homes available to rent or buy. So Zillow economists subtracted the number of available homes from the number of doubled-up households and concluded that the nation needs 4.7 million more homes.

Several analyses zeroed in on two questions: How many homes should be vacant, and how many consumers have delayed striking out on their own because of the cost.

Though it might seem counterintuitive, a healthy housing market needs vacancies. An empty property could signal a home under contract (for sale), or under renovation. It could also mean the owner is dividing time between properties. According to the National Association of Home Builders, more than 6 million homes, about 1 in 20, are secondary residences.

4.

The U.S. population grew last year at its slowest rate since early in the coronavirus pandemic as net immigration fell by about half, according to census data released Tuesday (Feb. 3rd).



Ernst Alfred Cassirer (July 28, 1874 – April 13, 1945)

The overall population grew by 1.8 million, or 0.5 percent, between July 2024 and June 2025 to reach 341.8 million, the census found. The growth rate was among the lowest recorded in the past 25 years. It peaked in 2024, when the U.S. experienced its highest population growth rate since 2006.

While the number of births and deaths in the U.S. remained relatively steady compared to the previous year, net immigration — calculated by subtracting the number of people who left the United States from the number who entered — declined to about 1.3 million. That's down from a peak of 2.7 million in 2024, but greater than the years before the pandemic.

The census researchers project that net immigration will drop to about 321,000 by July if current trends continue.

5.

Ernst Alfred Cassirer (1874 – 1945) was a German philosopher and historian of philosophy. Trained within the Neo-Kantian Marburg School, he initially followed his mentor Hermann Cohen in attempting to supply an idealistic philosophy of science.

After Cohen's death in 1918, Cassirer developed a theory of symbolism and used it to expand the "logic and psychology of thought" into a more general "logic of the cultural sciences". Cassirer was one of the leading 20th-century advocates of philosophical idealism. His most famous work is the *Philosophy of Symbolic Forms* (1923–1929).

Though his work received a mixed reception shortly after his death, more recent scholarship has remarked upon Cassirer's role as a strident defender of the moral idealism of the Enlightenment era and the cause of liberal democracy at a time when the rise of fascism had made such advocacy unfashionable. Within the international Jewish community, Cassirer's work has additionally been seen as part of a long tradition of thought on ethical philosophy.

Word of the week

exigency

/ˈɛgzəjən(t)sē, ˈɛksəjən(t)sē, ɪgˈzɪjən(t)sē/

noun

noun: **exigency**; plural noun: **exigencies**

1. an urgent need or demand.

Origin: late 16th century: from late Latin *exigentia*, from Latin *exigere* 'enforce'.

"In 1962 Bernard Bailyn (1922 – 2020) argued against the orthodoxy that 'Enlightenment thought — the reforming ideas of advanced thinkers in eighteenth century England and on the Continent — had been the effective lever by which colonial Englishman (American radicals) had turned a dispute on imperial relations into a sweeping reformation of public institutions and thereby laid the foundations for American democracy;' rather, he argued, such ideas harmonized with assumptions that had emerged far earlier, 'created by the mundane **exigencies** of the situation' in the colonies. Bailyn did not dispute that there were such things as 'Enlightenment ideas,' but they did no real work."

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Tim Forward Editor

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. WSJ 2/07/2026 | 2. Bloomberg 2/2/2026 | 3. Bloomberg 01/19/2026 | 4. Washington Post 2/4/2026 | 5. <https://www.uni-wuppertal.de/>