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REVIEW

A German General  
Prepares for War

# WSJ

## THE WALL STREET JOURNAL WEEKEND

Counting  
Euros on a  
Trip to Paris  
OFF DUTY

NORA HAUBER/OLGA VINS ET FROMAGES

DOW JONES | News Corp \*\*\*\*\* SATURDAY/SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 14 - 15, 2026 ~ VOL. CCLXXXVII NO. 37 [WSJ.com](https://www.wsj.com) ★★★★★ \$6.00

What's  
News

Business & Finance

◆ **Annual inflation slowed** to 2.4% in January, easing more than economists expected, helped by declining prices for gasoline and used vehicles. **A1**

◆ **Major U.S. stock indexes** finished Friday's session mixed, and in the red for the week, with the S&P 500 chalking up its biggest weekly loss since Nov. 21. **B10**

◆ **Wendy's same-restaurant** sales fell 10.1% in the fourth quarter, a worse result than analysts expected, as weakness in its U.S. business persisted. **B9**

◆ **Moderna reported** lower fourth-quarter sales as Covid-19 vaccine demand continued to wane, but maintained its 10% revenue-growth target for 2026. **B9**

◆ **The EU approved** Universal Music Group's \$775 million acquisition of Downtown Music after the companies offered concessions. **B9**

◆ **Three healthcare** venture-capital firms—Santé, Epidarex and Yosemite—are making headway in a tough market to attract new investment. **B10**

◆ **NatWest forecast** continued income growth and higher profitability this year and beyond, as the U.K. lender bets on its expansion in wealth management. **B10**

Worldwide

◆ **The Justice Department** sued Harvard, saying the Ivy League university failed to comply with a federal investigation related to race and its admissions practices. **A3**

◆ **The Justice Department** is investigating whether two immigration officers lied under oath about a shooting last month in Minneapolis. **A3**

◆ **Anthropic's AI tool** Claude was used in the special forces operation to capture and bring to the U.S. former Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro in January. **A8**

◆ **Anthropic struck** a deal to help redesign the computer-coding curricula taught in hundreds of community and state colleges. **B9**

◆ **Sultan Ahmed Bin Sulayem**, the leader of ports operator DP World, resigned after documents released by the Justice Department revealed his close ties to Epstein. **A8**

## Skating's 'Quad God' Is Mortal, After All: 'I Blew It'



**COLD AND MISERABLE:** Ilia Malinin, the heavily favored American figure skater known for his quadruple jump, crashed out of medal contention Friday at the Winter Olympics in Italy, falling twice to finish eighth. 'I blew it,' he told NBC. **A14**

## White House Has to Work Harder To Keep GOP Lawmakers In Line

BY OLIVIA BEAVERS  
AND ANNIE LINSKEY

WASHINGTON—In September, Rep. Don Bacon of Nebraska struggled over whether to back the White House on tariffs in a key House vote and, after an intense lobbying campaign from party leaders, supported President Trump. This

past week the congressman flipped, one of six House Republicans to vote to rein in the president's tariffs on Canada. Bacon's switch came despite party leaders' calling companies in his state and promising exemptions if he would get on board. Instead, the lawmaker said he stood on principle after rereading Adam Smith's "The

Wealth of Nations," the philosopher's seminal 1776 treatise championing free trade. It is just one example of how the Republican president and the White House are finding they need to spend more and more effort on a task that used to come easily: keeping the GOP rank-and-file in line. After facing little resistance

from Republicans for the first year of his second term, Trump is now contending with push-back from the GOP on multiple fronts including on issues that are most closely associated with his agenda, like trade and even immigration. The nascent independence, particularly in Congress, shows how rank-and-  
*Please turn to page A4*

EXCHANGE

**HOT WHEELS**  
Detroit wants to bring back the sedan. **D1**

## AI Tools Begin to Bully Humans, Raising Red Flags in Silicon Valley

BY SAM SCHECHNER  
AND GEORGIA WELLS

Scott Shambaugh woke up early Wednesday morning to learn that an artificial intelligence bot had written a blog post accusing him of hypocrisy and prejudice. The 1,100-word screed called the Denver-based engineer insecure and biased against AI—all because he had rejected a few lines of code

that the apparently autonomous bot had submitted to a popular open-source project Shambaugh helps maintain. The unexpected AI aggression is part of a rising wave of warnings that fast-accelerating AI capabilities can create real-world harms. The risks are now rattling even some AI company staffers. OpenAI and rival Anthropic are leading a brutal commercial race, shipping or advancing

a drumbeat of AI models and features in recent weeks. Some tools can run teams of autonomous coding assistants, or quickly analyze millions of legal documents. Other updates will bring advertisements or erotic role-play to ChatGPT. AI companies said the tempo is rising in part because they are using their own tools to code. Releases of new tools have led to wild stock-  
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Olympic  
Couples Put  
Love on Ice

\* \* \*

Things get  
awkward for pairs  
on rival teams

BY GEORGI KANTCHEV

MILAN—For most couples, the ultimate relationship stress tests involve household temperatures, airport arrival times and trips to IKEA. For engaged hockey stars Anna Kjellbin and Ronja Savolainen, there is another source of domestic strife: smashing each other into the boards. Kjellbin is Swedish. Savolainen is Finnish. And before the Games are over, they could  
*Please turn to page A10*

◆ **The hidden funding of China's U.S.-born star...** **A14**  
◆ **U.S. women's hockey team looks unstoppable...** **A14**

## Trump Ally's Gamble To Unlock Venezuela

Energy mogul Harry Sargeant III has long eyed the country's oil reserves

In the early hours of Jan. 3, energy magnate Harry Sargeant III was in bed at his waterfront Florida mansion. He was startled when text messages and news began flooding in of a surprise U.S. military raid in Venezuela.

By Scott Patterson,  
Kejal Vyas  
and Alex Leary

Following the action in real time, the 68-year-old former Top Gun pilot—and sometime golfing partner of Donald Trump—alternated between feeling hopeful and fearful. As perhaps the only U.S. businessman who could shuttle between Mar-a-Lago and the Miraflores presidential palace

in Caracas, few Americans had worked harder and longer than Sargeant to pry open the Venezuela market. And with stakes in companies that could potentially produce hundreds of thousands of barrels of crude a day, as well as refurbish the country's largest refinery, arguably no one had more at stake financially than Sargeant. Sargeant was close enough to Nicolás Maduro that the strongman called him abuelo, Spanish for grandfather. But  
*Please turn to page A10*

◆ **Pentagon used Anthropic's AI tool in Maduro raid...** **A8**  
◆ **U.S. licenses oil investments in Venezuela...** **A8**

## Inflation Cooled To 2.4% Last Month

Consumers saw lower gasoline prices, but higher costs for hospital care, services

BY MATT GROSSMAN  
AND PAUL KIERNAN

Annual inflation slowed to 2.4% in January, falling more than economists expected, helped by declining prices for gasoline and used vehicles. Cooler price increases overall are positive news for the economy, easing concerns that the Trump administration's steep tariffs will lead to broader ongoing inflation. Yet price increases in January for items like computers and washing machines suggest inflation is continuing to weigh on U.S. consumers exhausted by price hikes. Consumer prices rose 2.4% in January from a year earlier, cooler than 2.7% in December and below the 2.5% economists surveyed by The Wall Street Journal had expected. Core prices, which exclude volatile food and energy items, rose 2.5% from a year earlier, in line with expectations. Friday's Labor Department reading follows a better-than-expected January jobs report two days earlier, both positive signs for the economy that inject some optimism into the start of the year. With unemployment low, a somewhat muted rise in prices likely isn't enough on its own to get the Federal Reserve to resume interest-rate cuts because officials might want several more months of evidence that price pressures are moderating and that businesses aren't passing along higher costs from tariffs. The latest annual number had some help, since a high inflation reading from January  
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◆ **Overhaul of steel, aluminum tariffs weighed...** **A2**

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