

Trump Bullish About A.I. Despite Pervasive Unease

Waving Off Voters' Worries About Potential Job Losses and New Data Centers

By TONY ROMM

WASHINGTON — The rapid rise of artificial intelligence has started to rattle voters around the country, raising fears that they could be thrust from their jobs if the technology succeeds, or lose their retirement savings if the industry falters.

But for all of the emerging doubt and political blowback, there has been no sign of concern at the White House, where President Trump has generally maintained a much more sanguine view about the coming digital revolution.

To the administration, A.I. can do little wrong.

In recent weeks, Mr. Trump and his top aides have dismissed the suggestion that widespread automation could carry negative consequences for families, businesses and the broader U.S. economy. Even as the electorate grows uneasy about the technology — and the data centers that power it — the president has only hardened in his view that A.I. will supercharge everything from medical research to military action.

The political chasm between the president and the public has been most evident surrounding the red-hot issue of data centers, which Mr. Trump has defended as “Money Machines” even as opposition widens nationally over the facilities.

A small group of demonstrators interrupted one of Mr. Trump’s rallies in Michigan last month to demand an end to data center construction. That incident came on the heels of similar protests around the country, in a campaign organized by conservatives who otherwise support Mr. Trump’s politics.

“I think they are bullish about this technology,” Michael Strain, the director of economic policy studies at the conservative American Enterprise Institute, said of the administration’s approach.

Mr. Strain said he generally agreed with much of the president’s “general approach” in seeking to foster A.I., and that he believed the technology would benefit the economy and national security.

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Cameras to Track Any U.S. Car Are Spreading. So Is Defiance.

By FERNANDO ALFONSO III and KASHMIR HILL

CARROLLTON, Texas — Driving down a road lined with strip malls outside Dallas, Philip, a 27-year-old cellphone tower repairman, was describing the exquisite piquancy of his homegrown hot peppers when he stopped mid-sentence.

“Flock!” he said, pointing to a traffic light pole at an intersection.

Attached to it was a small black box with a camera that takes photos as cars drive by. It was a license plate reader made by Flock Safety, based in Atlanta, that alerts law enforcement when it spots wanted cars and allows officers to see where cars of interest have been.

Philip pulled into a strip mall, parked outside a dentist’s office and opened an app on his phone. The app, DeFlock, invites people to “view and contribute to an open map of public mass surveillance devices.” He zoomed in on the intersection on the digital map and plotted the location of the camera. Philip asked that his full name be withheld, because Flock’s chief executive, Garrett Langley, once called DeFlock “terroristic.”

To Philip, DeFlock is about pushing against the proliferation of cameras that capture the ordinary moments of ordinary people.

“And what is my way of pushing back? Education. Data,” Philip said. “Am I just being paranoid? No, they’re actually everywhere.”

Flock’s 120,000 cameras can be used to track license plates.

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Trump ‘Takeover’ Altered D.C., But Is the City Any Better Off?

By CAMPBELL ROBERTSON

WASHINGTON — A year ago, President Trump pronounced Washington violent and slum-ridden and announced that he was going to “take back our capital.”

Many residents watched in dismay as the president declared that he was sending thousands of National Guard troops and federal law enforcement agents into the streets and that the Metropolitan Police Department was “under direct federal control.”

Courts blocked some of the Trump administration’s most aggressive actions, but the incursion — which local activists call “the occupation” — has been the most serious encroachment on Washington’s limited self-government in half a century.

Armed troops have become fixtures in Metro stations, on downtown streets and around newly refurbished federal parks. Federal agents in flak jackets patrol residential streets alongside city police officers. The administration loosened restrictions on car chases by the federal police (though there have been several crashes, two of them fatal).

With arrests and prosecutions soaring, the jail population has grown by nearly 20 percent over the past year, and courts are at what the city’s chief judges describe as a “breaking point.”

None of this appears likely to go away soon. The National Guard deployment, now 4,636 troops from 23 states and territories, has been extended until Mr. Trump’s last day in office. A \$292 million federal contract was recently awarded to a company that will build a new data center in the city.

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Rescue workers and local residents pitched in to find survivors in Cali, Colombia, after a 7.4-magnitude temblor struck on Monday.

Scores Dead After Strong Quake Shakes Colombia

This article is by Julie Turkewitz, Genevieve Glatzky and Michael Levenson.

BOGOTÁ, Colombia — A powerful earthquake rocked western Colombia on Monday, rattling much of the country and setting off a desperate search for survivors in the rubble of collapsed buildings in several major cities.

At least 111 people were killed and 87 others were injured, according to Colombia’s president, Abelardo De La Espriella, who said that at least 1,575 homes, 18 health centers and 52 schools had been damaged. The death toll was likely to rise as rescue crews and residents continued to dig through flattened buildings.

The 7.4-magnitude earthquake, which struck at 7:34 a.m., was the strongest recorded in Colombia in the last decade, according to the Colombian Geological Survey. The agency said that two aftershocks with magnitudes of 2.8 and 4.8 had been recorded and that the quake was felt in neighboring countries, including Panama, Ecuador and Venezuela, which is still recovering from devastating twin quakes just weeks ago that killed more than 6,000 people.

The epicenter, according to the U.S. Geological Survey, was about three miles east of San José del Palmar, a town of about 5,000 people in the Chocó region, one of the poorest parts of Colombia.

Videos showed partially collapsed buildings in Cali, Colombia’s third-largest city, with about two million residents, as well as in Pereira and Manizales, two cities that are hubs of Colombia’s coffee-growing region.

Rescuers Scour Rubble After the Region Is Convulsed Again

In the town of Calima El Darién, three children were killed when a wall collapsed, according to the region’s governor, Dilian Francisca Toro. Ms. Toro said that one hospital had also collapsed, another had been overwhelmed with victims and that patients had been evacuated from a third hospital.

The city of Pereira, which is home to about 500,000 people and lies just 35 miles from the epicenter, was also hard hit. The mayor, Mauricio Salazar, told a national radio station that at least 18 people were killed.

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Heat Overwhelms Pakistan’s Chile Capital
Farmers are struggling to adapt to soaring temperatures that can wreck their prized crops. Page A8.

A Man-Bites-Dog Story: A Paper Is Doing Well

By ERIK WEMPLE

Those who say print is dead should make the delivery rounds on Thursday mornings with Mark Frost, founder of The Chronicle of Glens Falls, N.Y.

As Mr. Frost drives around in a Subaru Forester packed with bundled newspapers, the faithful stand waiting at drop-off points. One of those spots is a Hannaford grocery store where William Norton, 74, waits in his maroon Chevy Silverado, ready to grab 40 copies of the free weekly for his neighbors in Stony Creek, a twisty and tenebrous ride from Glens Falls.

“That’s all they got to read over there,” said Mr. Norton, by way of explanation.

People running off with stacks of Chronicles is common enough that Mr. Frost has taken to quizzing them on their intentions. Printing is expensive, after all, and he wants each copy to reach a reader. “Had a guy actually tell me the other day, ‘I’m packing some glass,’” Mr. Frost recalled. He took the papers back.

Mr. Frost’s travails are common to a plucky category of publications sprinkled across the country. Though nearly 3,500 newspapers have ceased publication since the mid-2000s, about 2,250 publications like The Chronicle — independent, sometimes family-owned weeklies — have been “relatively resilient,” said Zach Metzger, director of the state of local journalism.

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Farideh, 25, works in the tourism industry on Qeshm and said in a telephone interview from the island that everyone in the tourism sector had been affected and that the war never abated for the people of the south, unlike elsewhere in Iran, because of near-constant airstrikes. She said they lived in a perpetual state of alert.

“Many people owned boats and transported passengers, ran guesthouses, rented motorbikes to tourists or operated cafes. Almost all the cafes gradually closed, sometimes one or two a day. Some people simply packed up and left the island,” said Farideh, who, like everyone interviewed for this article, spoke on condition of anonymity.

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Ken Kesey’s psychedelic bus is preparing for one more run. And to its owners, America could sure use it. Page A11

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AIPAC has more than doubled what it spends on political campaigns, while rarely mentioning Israel. Page A14

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After being a star player on the Celtics, Don Nelson led several teams over a 31-year career. He was 86. Page A20



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