

The Economist

AUGUST 19TH-25TH 2017

China's next cultural revolution

Germany's new economic divide

Construction: the least efficient industry

The allure of the eclipse



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This week has shown that Donald Trump has no grasp of what it means to be president: leader, page 7. Mr Trump's failure of character emboldens America's far right, page 28. American business breaks with the president, page 51. Heather Heyer, legal assistant, was killed at the Charlottesville rally: Obituary, page 74

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to take part in "a severe contest between intelligence, which presses forward, and an unworthy, timid ignorance obstructing our progress."

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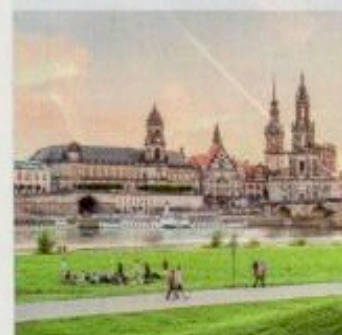
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Germany As its election campaign kicks off, the country's north-south split is ever starker, page 40



Eclipses Where to go for a lack of sun, page 15. The eclipse will show the changing nature of America's electricity grid, page 18

A new wave of nationalism "is not" as heralded by this week's cover. Propagandists are not so much high as mad the north and south of America are not winners. France, Canada



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Politics



One person was killed and 19 injured when a car was deliberately accelerated into a crowd of counter-protesters during a white nationalist rally at Charlottesville, Virginia. The nationalists, carrying Nazi and Confederate flags while chanting "blood and soil" and "Jews will not replace us", were marching against the removal of a statue of Robert E. Lee, a Confederate general. President Donald Trump's ham-fisted response to the death of the counter-protester, in which he blamed "violence on many sides" outraged people across America as well as the rest of the world.

Several CEOs from America's biggest companies resigned from Donald Trump's manufacturing council and the strategy and policy forum, two advisory bodies, after the president's unconvincing response to the violence in Virginia. So many bosses departed that Mr Trump was forced to disband both outfits. He singled out Kenneth Frazier, the first African-American boss of pharmaceuticals giant Merck, for abuse on Twitter after his resignation.

War of the airwaves

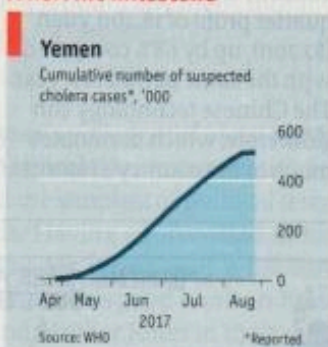
The United States announced that it had expelled two Cuban diplomats from Washington, DC, on May 23rd after several Americans working at their country's embassy in Havana had to be flown to Miami for treatment after experiencing headaches, dizziness and hearing loss. The Cuban government has a long history of harassing American government employees in

Havana. American officials think that the symptoms were caused by the covert use of a sonic-wave machine, a type of acoustic-weapons system.

Donald Trump's claim that America would not rule out a "military option" to quell chaos in Venezuela enraged President Nicolás Maduro, who charged the United States with "Yankee imperialism" and scheduled military drills. Regional leaders and Mr Trump's Republican allies disavowed his remarks, but the diplomatic spat overshadowed Vice-President Mike Pence's visit to Argentina, Chile, Colombia and Panama.

In Argentina, President Mauricio Macri's business-friendly "Let's Change" coalition performed better than expected in a primary legislative election. In Buenos Aires province, a former electoral stronghold for the Peronist party, Cristina Fernández de Kirchner, the populist ex-president, tied with Mr Macri's candidate.

A horrific milestone



The World Health Organisation announced that the number of suspected cholera cases in war-torn Yemen has reached half a million. Some 2,000 people have died from the diarrhoeal disease. The rate of new cases is declining, but the epidemic remains a serious problem in the country.

Iran's president, Hassan Rouhani, said his country could abandon the deal over its nuclear programme that it signed with America, Britain, China, France, Germany and Russia in 2015, "within hours", if Donald Trump imposed new sanctions. Iran's parliament voted to increase military

spending by \$500m, with much of the money going on missiles, although the decision has yet to be implemented.

Gunmen opened fire on a café in Ouagadougou, the capital of Burkina Faso, killing at least 18 people. Jihadists are suspected of carrying out the attack. Other Islamic extremists were responsible for a similar shooting in the same street last year. Hours after the attack, another set of gunmen fired on the United Nations mission in Mali, killing seven.

Grace Mugabe, the wife of Zimbabwe's president Robert Mugabe, was accused of assaulting a 20-year-old South African model with an extension cord at an upmarket hotel in Johannesburg. A leading contender for Zimbabwe's presidency after the retirement of Mr Mugabe, a nonagenarian, a criminal record could stymie her path to the top job.

Lights out

Taiwan suffered a massive power cut affecting 5.9m households, leaving many without air conditioning in the summer heat. Lee Chih-kung, Taiwan's economics minister, took responsibility for the incident and resigned.

Tensions eased slightly between America and North Korea, after the North's official news agency reported that Kim Jong Un, the country's strongman, had decided to put on hold plans to fire missiles close to the American territory of Guam. Mr Trump called the decision "very wise and well reasoned".

Three prominent leaders of Hong Kong's pro-democracy movement were sentenced to jail for participating in largely peaceful protests in 2014. By law, the prison sentences make them ineligible for public office for five years.

Barnaby Joyce, Australia's deputy prime minister, discovered that he held dual New Zealand citizenship. That would render him ineligible to serve in parliament, according

to Australia's constitution. Mr Joyce, who was born in Australia to a father from New Zealand, is waiting for the High Court, which is also scrutinising several senators, to rule on his case. Australia's government is vulnerable as it only has a single-seat majority.

Ode to Joy

A report by Eurostat, the European statistics agency, confirmed economic recovery of the euro zone. Exceeding estimates, the economy of the 19 countries sharing the single currency grew by an annualised rate of 2.2% in the three months to the end of June.

Turkey has requested the extradition of a theology lecturer from Germany: Adil Oksuz is suspected of having played a major role in last year's failed coup. Meanwhile Turkish police have launched new operations to hunt down more coup suspects, as part of the government's security crackdown, which has strained relations between Germany and Turkey.

Several NGOs stopped rescuing migrants in the Mediterranean Sea after the Libyan government barred foreign ships from an area off its coast. It accuses the NGOs of encouraging smugglers and facilitating the flow of migrants. Italy, where most end up, has praised the Libyan government's actions.



A heatwave nicknamed "Lucifer" continued to affect southern Europe. Temperatures reached record highs across the region and forest fires broke out in southern France, Corsica and Croatia, as well as on the Greek island of Zakynthos.