OTHER VOICES

DOONESBURY BY GARRY TRUDEAU

TODAY'S TV NEWS SHOWS

WASHINGTON — Guest lineups for today's TV news shows:

ABC's "This Week" — Sen. Marco Rubio, R-Fla.; Rep. Adam Schiff, D-Calif.; former CIA Director Michael Hayden.

NBC's "Meet the Press" — Sen. Jeff Flake, R-Ariz.

CBS' "Face the Nation" — Rubio; Rep. Mark Meadows, R-N.C.; James Clapper, former director of national intelligence.

CNN's "State of the Union" — Clapper; Rudy Giuliani, President Donald Trump's personal lawyer.

"Fox News Sunday" — Sens. Roy Blunt, R-Mo., and Chris Coons, D-Del.
— Associated Press

Monarch Academy shows public-private partnership

GUEST COLUMN
Andrew L. Ross

As the Kirwan Commission on Innovation and Excellence in Education, a statewide government-appointed advisory panel, deliberates on the future of education in Maryland and works on ways to provide equity in public school funding, I wanted to share with your readers that Anne Arundel County, under the leadership of County Executive Steve Schuh and Anne Arundel County Public Schools Superintendent George Arlotto, has gotten it right.

When the need to alleviate overcrowding in Annapolis public schools became apparent, everyone knew another school was needed, but no one had the money to build one. That's when the strength of public-private partnerships became a solution to be explored.

When the stakeholders reached out to The Children's Guild, a nonprofit organization that already ran two other successful Monarch Academy charter-contract schools in the county, the idea for a new school came closer to becoming a reality. The Children's Guild was able to provide not just any school, but a Monarch Academy school that would reflect the diversity of ideas and cultures represented in Annapolis neighborhoods.

It was soon recognized that the vacant building Capital-Gazette Newspapers had occupied for many years was the right size and in the right location for a new school.

As a nonprofit, The Children's Guild has the flexibility to renovate or build new structures at a lower cost, saving on capital funding from the county. But neither Anne Arundel County nor The Children's Guild alone had enough money to renovate this building into a state-of-the-art school. Here is where reaching out to the private sector and engaging developer Steve Shaw in our project made the seemingly impossible possible.

With Mr. Shaw's financial support and the vision of County Executive Schuh, the Anne Arundel County Council, Anne Arundel County Public Schools and the county's state legislators, today we have a beautiful 800-student school building at 2000 Capital Drive.

Monarch Academy Annapolis, which is completing its first year in operation, is adorned with powerful artwork that celebrates the spiritual heritage and different cultures of our students and aligns with our instructional components of arts integration and the International Baccalaureate program. The school, which opened in fall 2017 with 585 students in kindergarten through fifth grade, has helped alleviate overcrowding in Annapolis public schools and is the only open-enrollment elementary school in Annapolis, giving parents a choice in the education of their children.

Monarch Academy has also become a vibrant community partner with the temporary Annapolis branch of the Anne Arundel County Public Library now housed in the school building as renovations are being done on the library's West Street branch. Here again, community partnerships at Monarch Academy continue even as the school completes its first year.

Our Annapolis school met the needs of the community at the right time, in the right place and in the right way. Truly a team effort, Monarch Academy represents an alliance of businesses and political leaders, the school system, the teachers' union, private educators and other stakeholders in a model public-private partnership.

This is the way forward. This is how we're going to provide the absolute best education for our children.

Our thanks to County Executive Schuh and Superintendent Arlotto for spearheading this collaborative education effort to better support the children of Annapolis and serve as a model for the Kirwan Commission to advance educational excellence and innovation and improve resources through private-public partnerships in Maryland.

Andrew L. Ross is president and CEO of The Children's Guild.

U.S. and Latin America's sanctions alone will not topple Venezuelan dictator

GUEST COLUMN
Andres Oppenheimer

The latest U.S. and Latin American measures to repudiate Venezuelan dictator Nicolas Maduro's fraudulent May 20 re-election deserve applause. But let's not kid ourselves: They are largely symbolic moves that won't suffice to topple the Venezuelan regime.

The international community will have to impose much tougher measures to force Maduro to allow free and fair elections. And the window of opportunity for doing that is narrowing fast.

President Donald Trump signed an order on Monday prohibiting the purchase of Venezuelan debts or accepting an equity stake in Venezuelan government properties. Earlier this year, the Trump administration had slapped personal financial and visa sanctions on dozens of high-ranking Venezuelan officials.

Likewise, the 14 Latin American countries that make up the so-called "Lima Group" — including Mexico, Brazil, Argentina, Colombia, Chile and Peru — announced Monday that they were temporarily recalling their ambassadors to Venezuela.

In addition, several Latin American countries said they will consider individual financial and travel sanctions against top Venezuelan officials.

But the fact is that the Trump administration has not yet taken major steps to curb U.S. oil imports from Venezuela, which account for the Maduro regime's biggest — if not only — legal source of income.

Venezuela relies on oil exports for 90 percent of its foreign income, and most of Venezuela's oil exports go to the United States.

If Trump doesn't stop buying oil from Venezuela, why should we take economic measures against Maduro? one Latin American president asked me that not too long ago.

Trump administration officials are known to be considering curbing Venezuelan oil imports, but so far the idea has been discarded for fears it would further raise U.S. gas prices. That's something that Trump doesn't want to happen before the November midterm elections, Washington insiders say.

But there are other things Trump could do short of ordering an oil embargo, such as cutting U.S. exports of diluents to Venezuela. The South American country uses mostly U.S. diluents to reduce the viscosity of its heavy oils, and would have to pay much more to get them elsewhere.

Latin American and European countries should move fast to impose individual financial and visa sanctions on top Venezuelan officials, their relatives and straw men. So far, the European Union has slapped sanctions on only seven Venezuelan regime members, and most Latin American countries have yet to do it.

Time is of the essence, because there are three powerful factors that start with the letter "M" that will benefit Venezuela's dictatorship as times goes by.

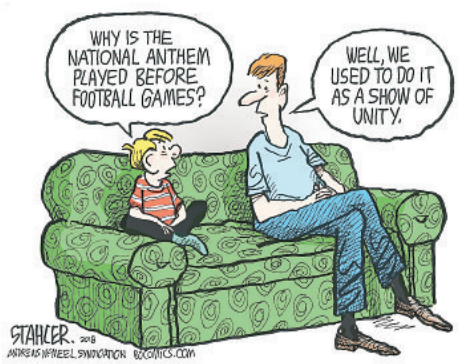
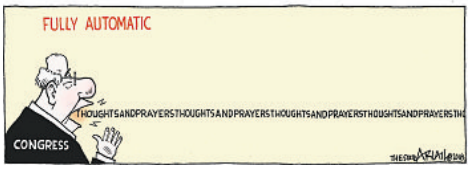
The first one is migration. More than 2 million Venezuelans have fled the country in recent years, and their numbers may grow, as the country's inflation rate is expected to hit 13,000 percent this year, the highest in the world.

Mass migration will benefit Maduro, because — as in Cuba before — it will leave him with fewer mouths to feed and result in a huge influx of dollars in family remittances. Venezuela's minimum wage at the black market rate has plunged to $3.60 a month, and growing numbers of Venezuelans are living off the money sent by their relatives in Miami, Colombia or Panama.

The second factor that will benefit the Maduro regime is misery. Most Venezuelans depend on government food subsidies, which allows Maduro to exert political controls through food-for-vote programs. Also, misery begets physical exhaustion and political apathy.

The third factor that may work in Maduro's favor is Mexico's July 1 elections, which according to current polls may be won by leftist candidate Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador. If he wins and pulls out from the Lima Group, as many anticipate, the group would lose one of its biggest and most active members.

For international pressures to work, they should be stepped up, taken in unison and be accompanied by greater unity of Venezuela's opposition parties and escalating protests on the streets. As exiled opposition leader Carlos Vecchio told me, "International support is essential, but not sufficient."

I agree. Western democracies and Venezuela's domestic opposition should act fast, because — despite Venezuela's economic collapse — time may be running in Maduro's favor.

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