

Time for Ukraine Talks



Destruction near the village of Robotyne, in the Zaporizhzhia region of Ukraine, late last month. Viacheslav Ratynskyi/Reuters

To the Editor:

Re “Ukraine’s Forces Try to Punch Second Hole in Russian Lines” (news article, Sept. 6):

When will the U.S. stop fueling its proxy war with Russia? As your article suggests, Ukraine’s ongoing counteroffensive will likely require “several more months” and “heavy casualties on both sides.”

Vladimir Putin’s apparent recourse to North Korea suggests that he needs more weapons. President Biden may have already achieved his stated goal of degrading the Russian military.

With Ukraine also running low on ammunition, now is the time for international mediators to begin shuttle diplomacy. The objective should be to secure first a cease-fire and then a long-term peace agreement. Continuing arms shipments to Ukraine can only delay that process and cost more lives.

L. Michael Hager
Eastham, Mass.

The writer is a co-founder and former director general of the International Development Law Organization in Rome.

Censorship in Prisons



David Guttenfelder for The New York Times

To the Editor:

"Finding Clarity and Inspiration in Writing, While Incarcerated" (news article, Sept. 7) details the enormous benefits that incarcerated people gain from writing programs of this kind. It's important to note, though, how rare such programs are inside U.S. prisons and jails.

In fact, prisons and jails actively prevent people from reading and writing much more than they encourage it. Thousands of books are banned in individual states; New York alone has banned 5,356 separate titles.

I've tried to start reading discussion groups in prisons and have been met with red tape and bureaucratic stalling. In my work, I've found that reading and writing are not largely understood by prison authorities to be beneficial but rather are met with suspicion. This is true despite the fact that both reading and writing are demonstrated to reduce recidivism.

On Sept. 14, the exhibit "Return to Sender: Prison as Censorship" opens at the EFA Project Space in Manhattan. There, visitors can see the ways that prisons and jails prevent people from the learning, self-expression and creativity that reading and writing offer.

Moira Marquis

New York

The writer is senior manager of the Freewrite Project, part of the Prison and Justice Writing Program at PEN America.

Senior Ballet Classes



Public data on the number of senior ballet students doesn't exist, but there has been an increase in programs and classes for people 55 and over. Magdalena Wosinska for The New York Times

To the Editor: