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POLITICS

Thousands of federal workers would be easier to fire under Trump rule change

UPDATED APRIL 18, 2025 · 5:33 PM ET



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Shannon Bond

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President Trump speaks in the Oval Office on Friday.

Mandel Ngan/AFP via Getty Images

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The Trump administration is moving forward with efforts to make it easier to fire some federal workers from their jobs, as part of its push to both shrink the federal government and exert more control over it.

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On Friday the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) proposed a rule reclassifying tens of thousands of career civil servants as "at-will" employees, the White House announced in a statement. Removing civil service protections would make workers easier to fire.

The White House said the proposed rule would address "unaccountable, policy-determining federal employees who put their own interests ahead of the American people's."

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President Trump and his allies, including billionaire Elon Musk, have said they want to "disinfect the government with social media," which they criticize as a "deep state," and root out what Trump has called "rogue bureaucrats." They've claimed, without

presenting any proof, that the government is riddled with corrupt employees and non-existent workers. Trump has long argued that his administration should have greater flexibility in appointing people who will faithfully carry out his agenda and firing those who won't.



POLITICS

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TECHNOLOGY



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"If these government workers refuse to advance the policy interests of the President, or are engaging in corrupt behavior, they should no longer have a job," Trump wrote in a post about the proposed rule on his Truth Social platform on Friday.

The effort to strip civil service protections from some workers began on Trump's first day back in office, with an executive order reinstating an order Trump signed at the end of his first term in 2020. (That order was rescinded by then-President Biden days after he took office.) The latest Trump order creates a new category of political appointees in the federal workforce, originally called Schedule F. OPM estimates 50,000 positions, or about 2% of federal workers, will be reclassified under the new rule, which renames Schedule F as Schedule Policy/Career. According to the White House statement, it would apply to "career employees with important policy-determining, policy-making, policy-advocating, or confidential duties." It said once OPM issues its final rule, another executive order would actually reclassify specific positions as Schedule Policy/Career.

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"This rule empowers federal agencies to swiftly remove employees in policy-influencing roles for poor performance, misconduct, corruption, or subversion of Presidential directives, without lengthy procedural hurdles," the White House statement said.



POLITICS

Appeals court clears the way for Trump to fire probationary federal workers once again

It added that Schedule Policy/Career jobs "are not required to personally or politically support the President, but must faithfully implement the law and the administrative policies." They will continue to be filled by "existing nonpartisan, merit-based hiring processes," the White House said.

The American Federation of Government Employees has sued the administration to protect civil service workers, and in a statement Friday its president, Everett Kelley, said that this latest action "will erode the government's merit-based hiring system and undermine the professional civil service that Americans rely on."

Friday's proposed rule comes as Trump continues making sweeping changes to the federal government, shuttering some agencies and moving ahead with mass firings.

Trump has also ousted other government employees he sees as insufficiently loyal, including firing more than a dozen Justice Department officials who worked on federal criminal investigations into him.

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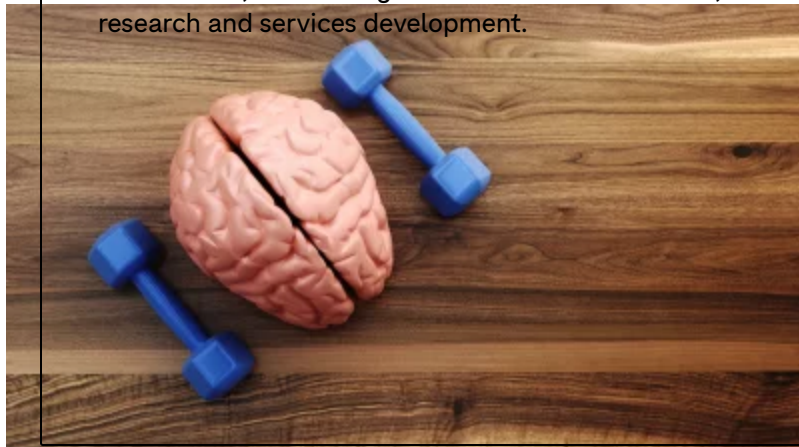
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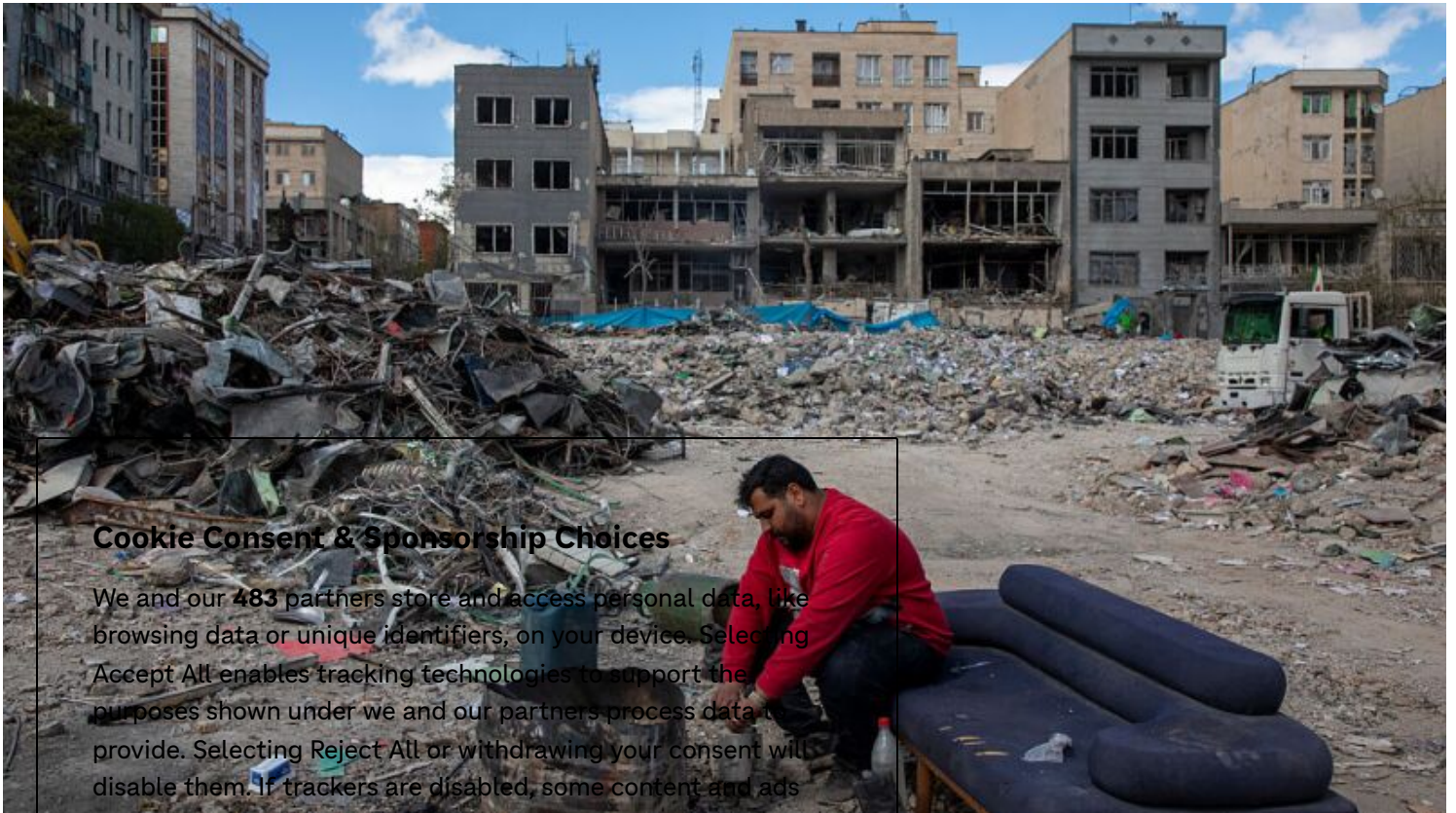
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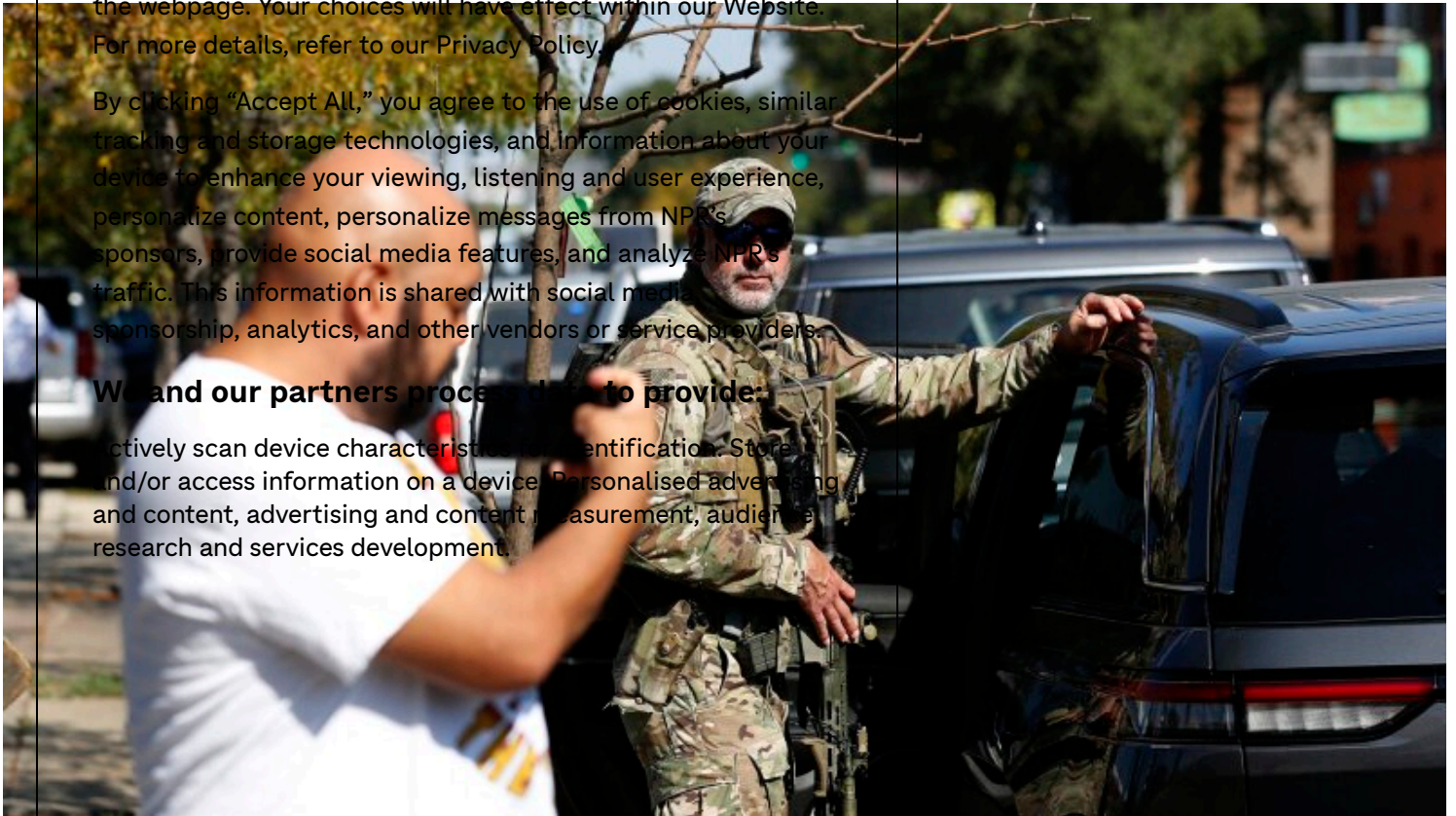
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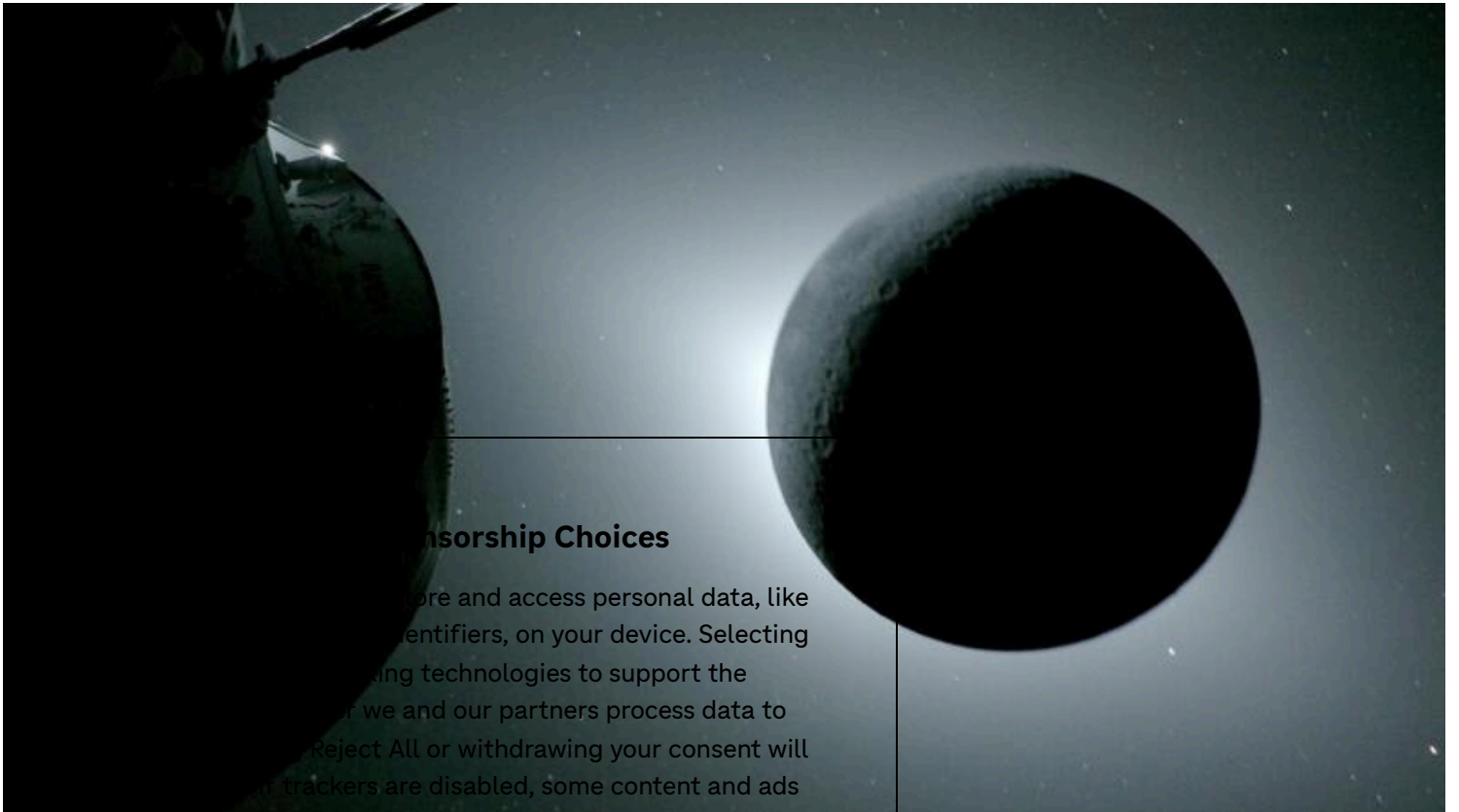
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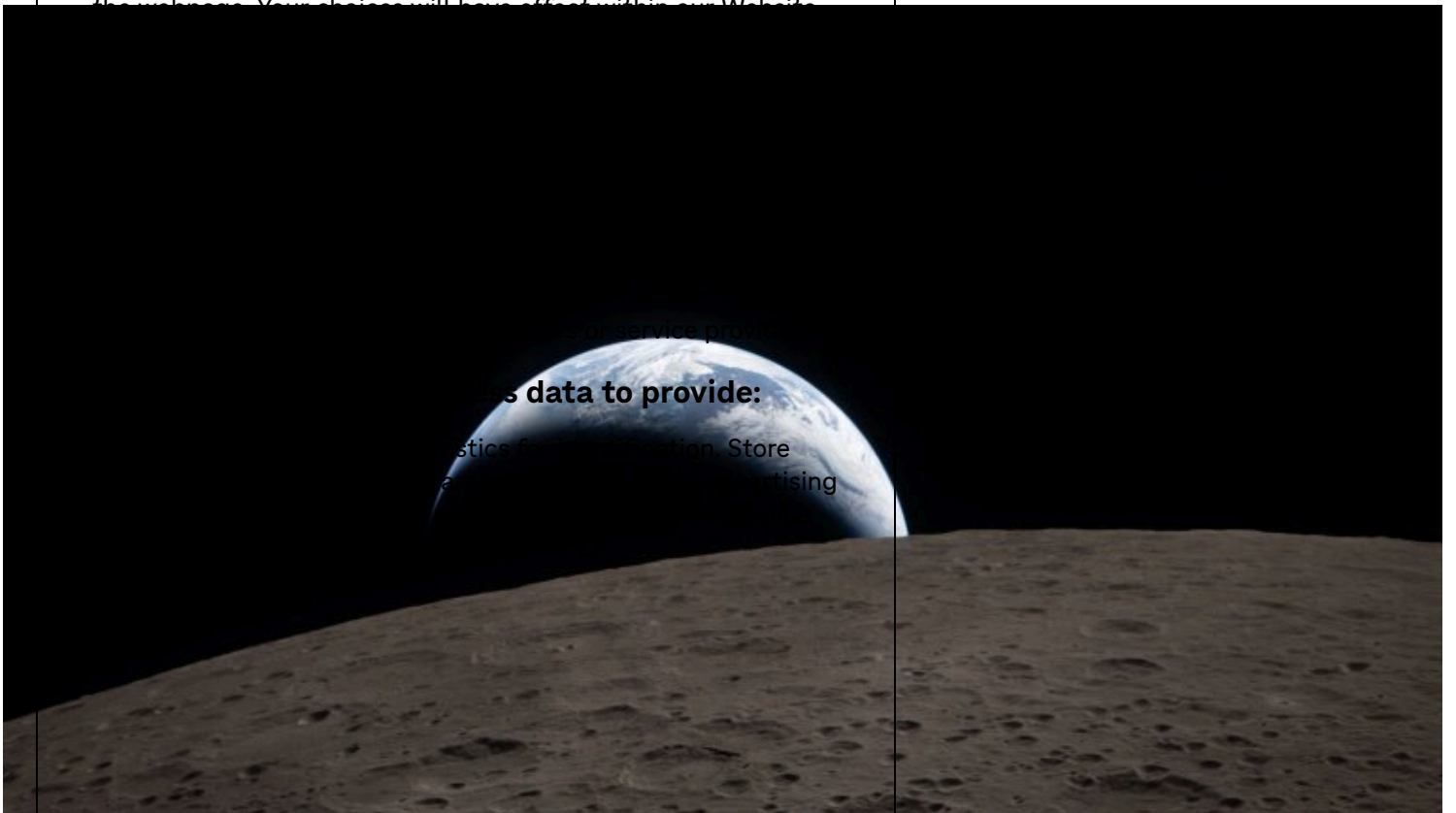
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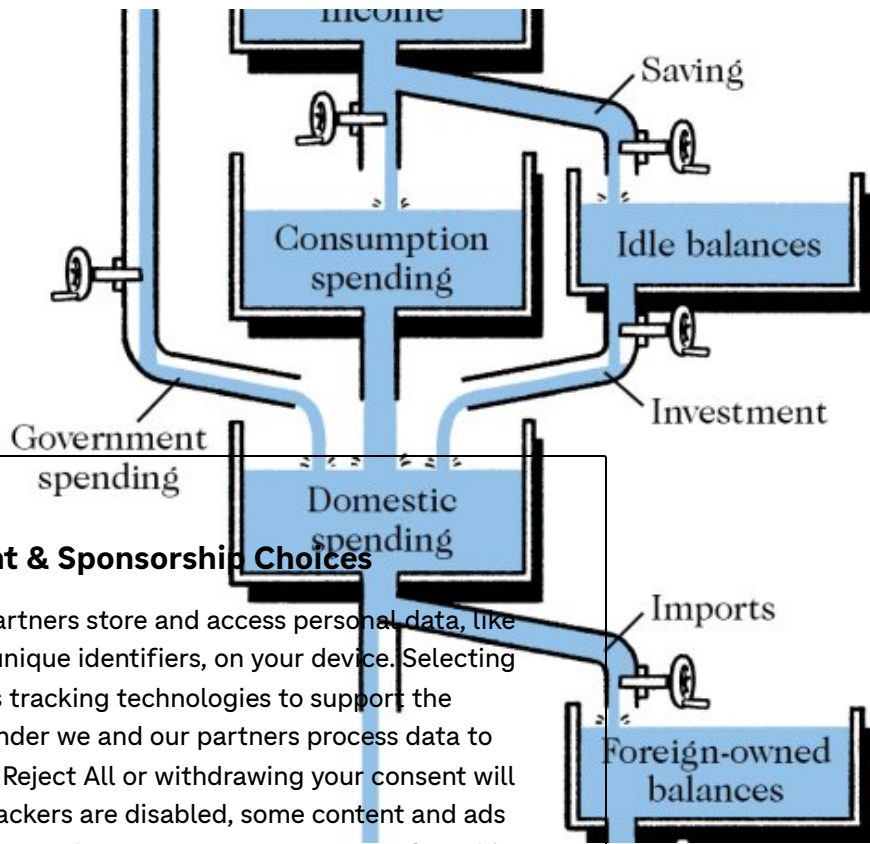
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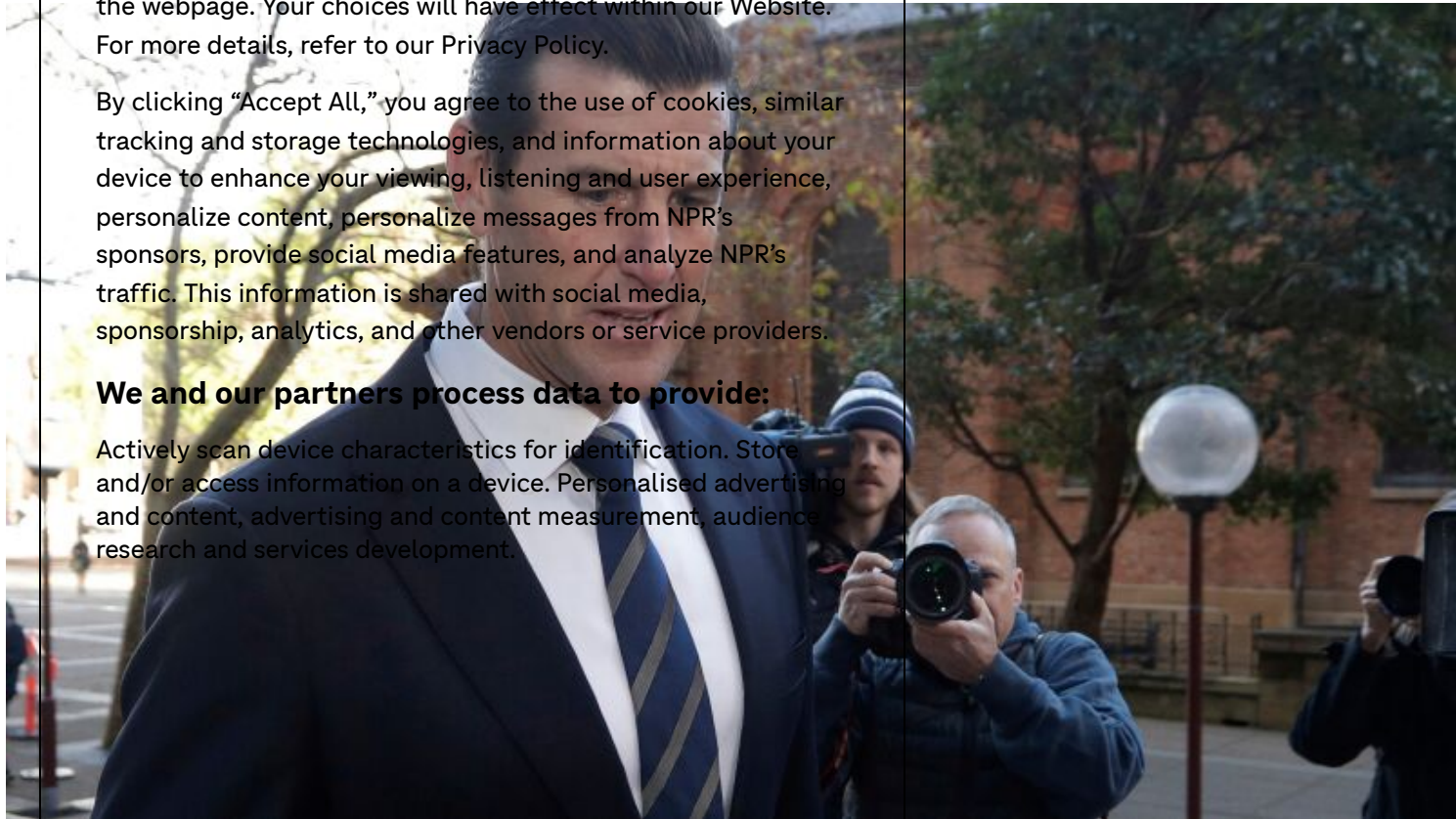
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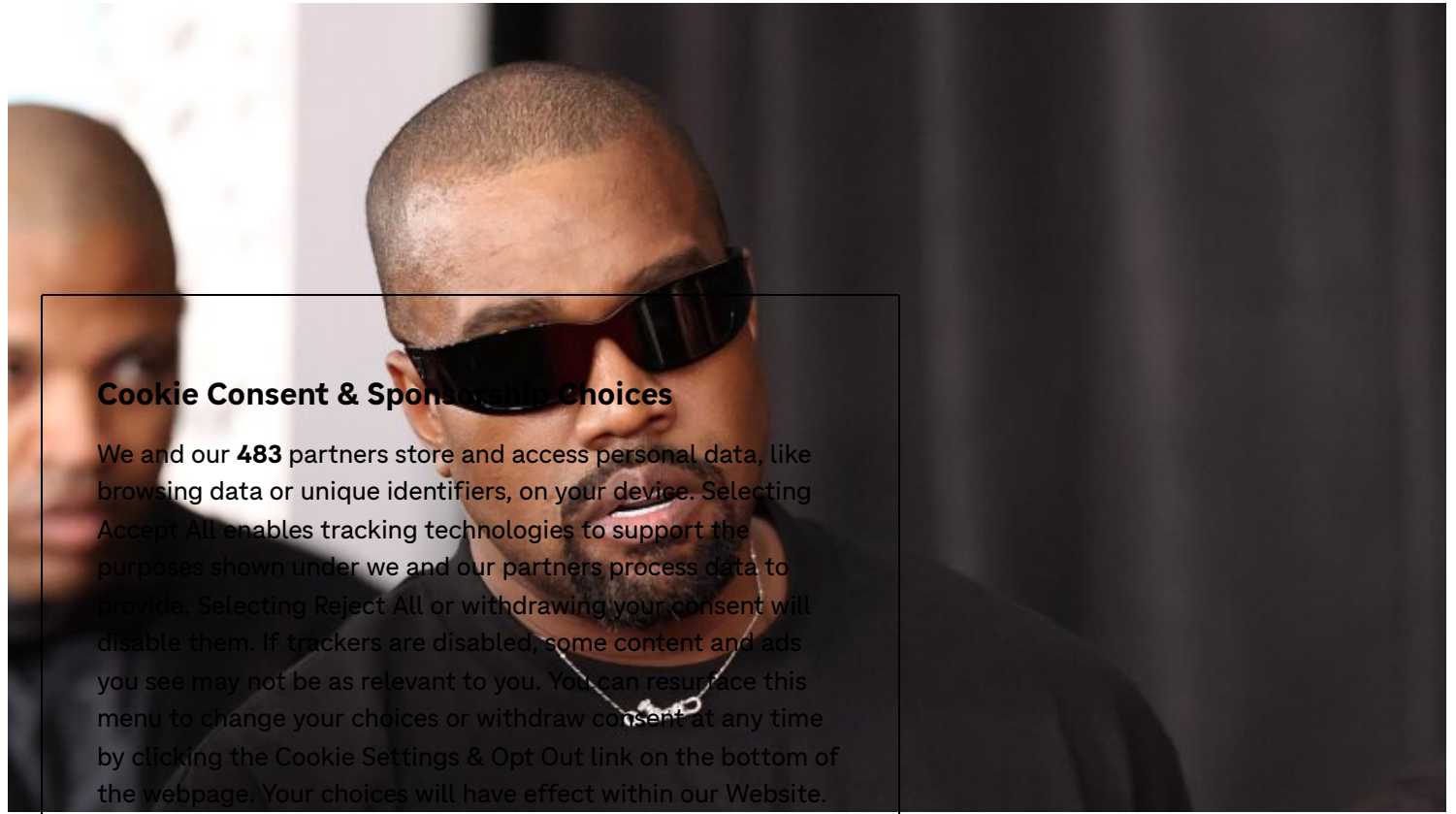
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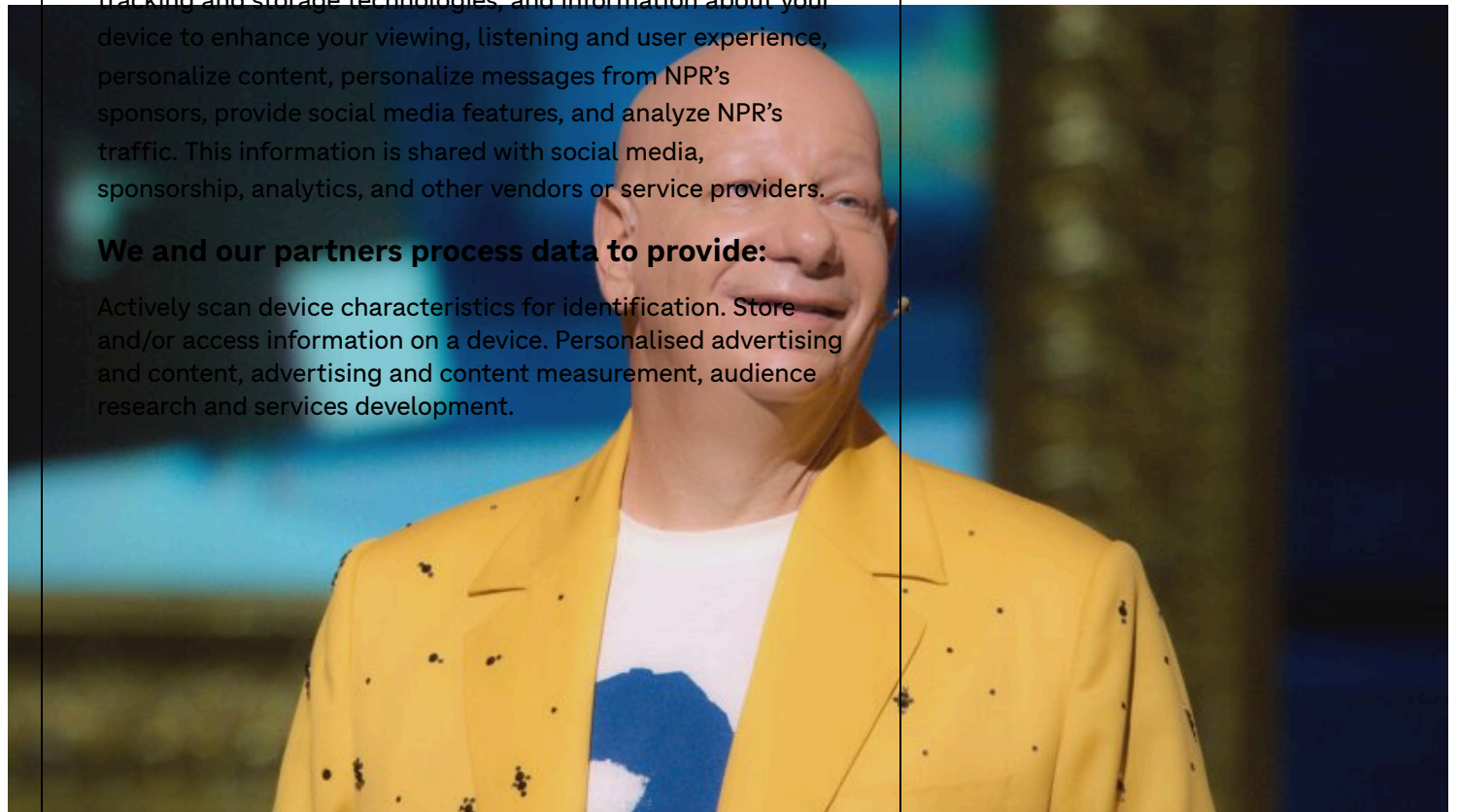
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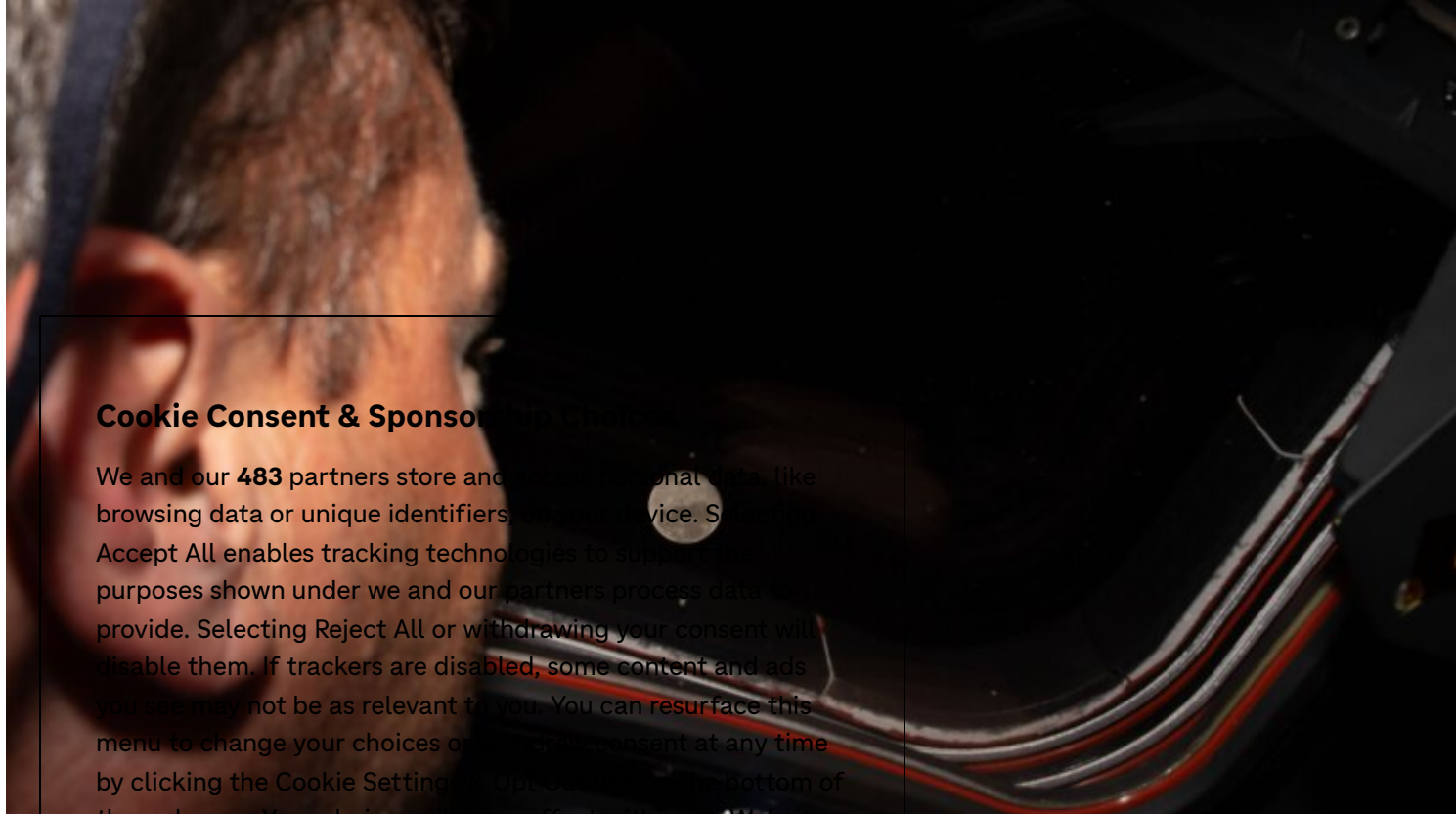
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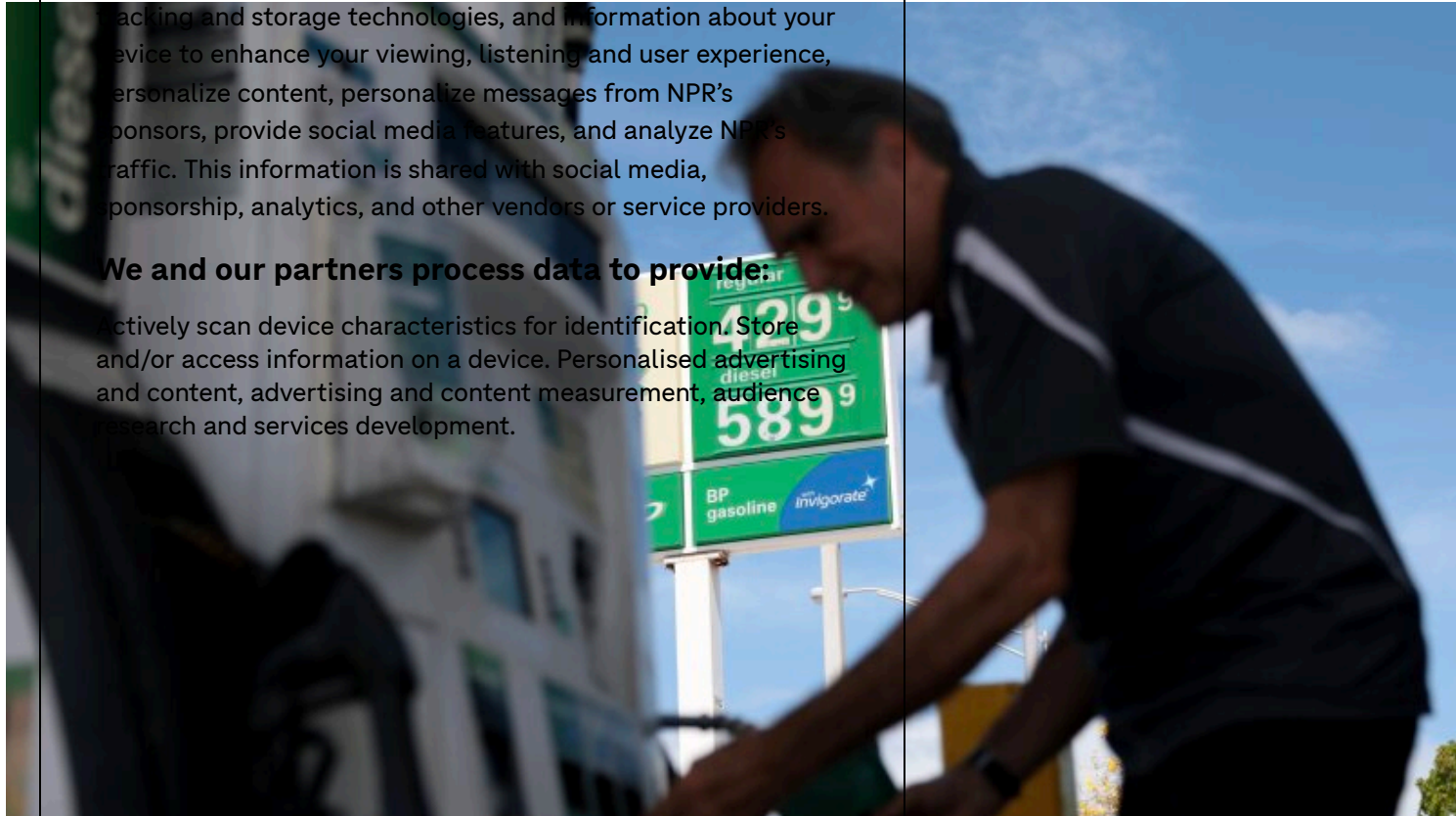
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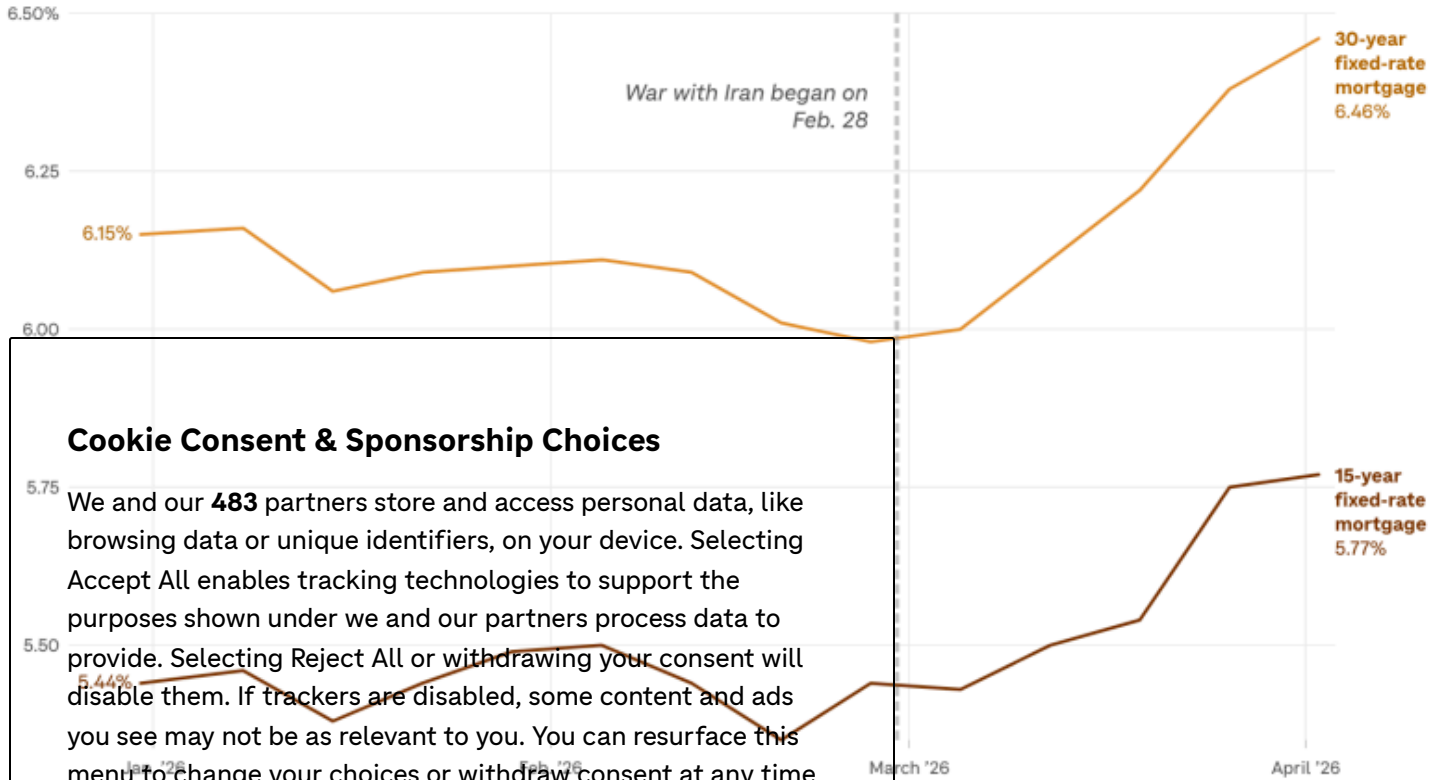


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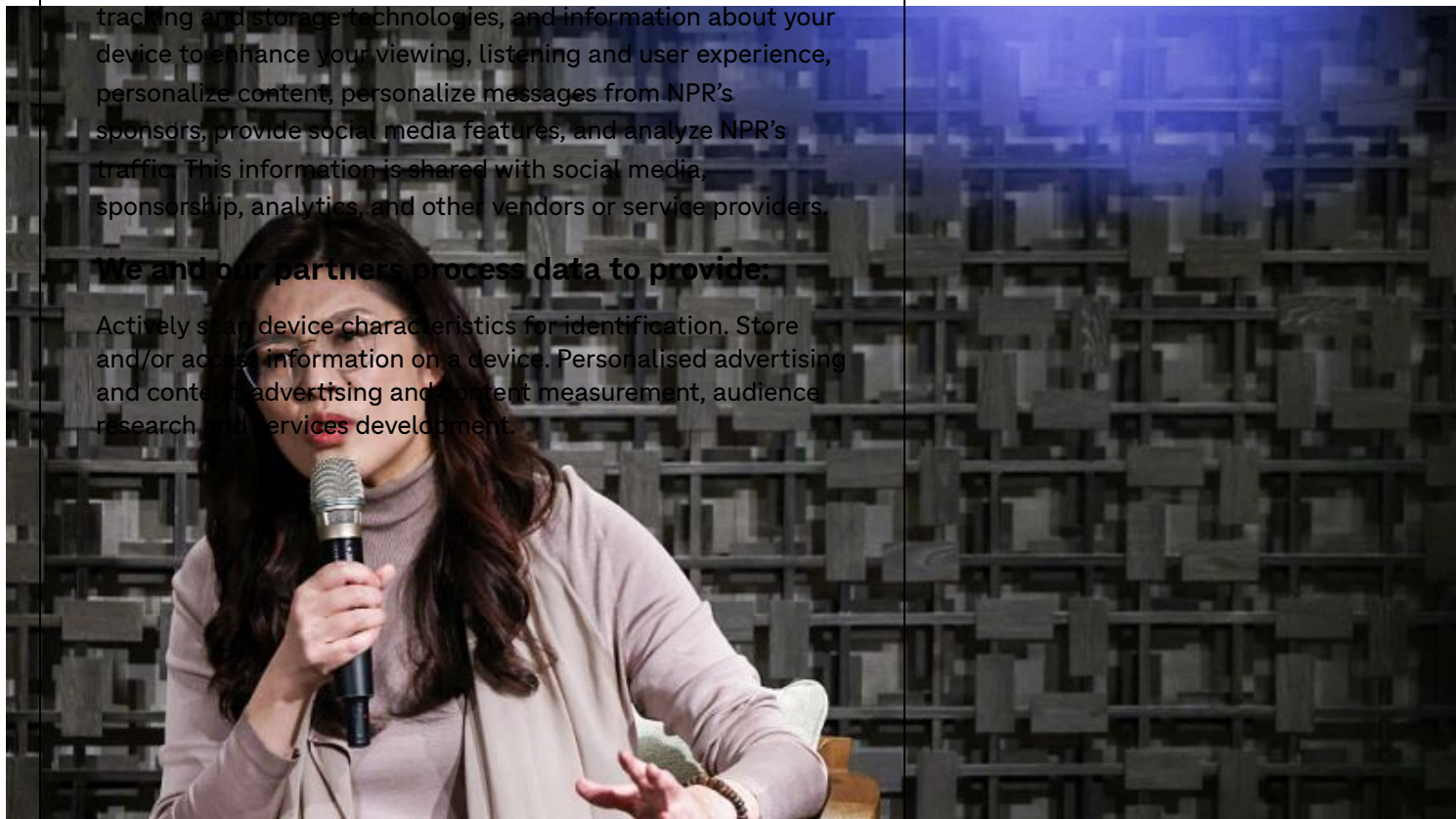
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