



AMERICAN NATIONALIST

Tucker Carlson Reshaped Fox News, and Became Trump's Heir

By NICHOLAS CONFESSORE

Tucker Carlson had a problem. After years in the cable wilderness, he had made a triumphant return to prime time. And his new show, "Tucker Carlson Tonight," had leapfrogged to the heart of Fox News's evening lineup just months after Donald J. Trump's upset victory shattered the boundaries of conventional politics.

But as Mr. Trump thrashed through his first months in office, Mr. Carlson found himself with an unexpected programming challenge: Fox was too pro-Trump. The new president watched his favorite network religiously, and often tweeted about what he saw there, while Fox broadcasts reliably parroted White House messaging. No one was more on message than Sean Hannity, then Fox's highest-rated star, who frequently devoted his show to Mr. Trump's daily battles with Washington Democrats and the media.

Newly planted in Fox's newly vacated 8 p.m. time slot — previously held by the

disgraced star Bill O'Reilly — Mr. Carlson told friends and co-workers that he needed to find a way to reach the Trump faithful, but without imitating Mr. Hannity. He didn't want to get sucked into apologizing for Mr. Trump every day, he told one colleague, because the fickle, undisciplined new president would constantly need apologizing for.

PART 2: The Prince

The solution would not just propel Mr. Carlson toward the summit of cable news. It would ultimately thrust him to the forefront of the nationalist forces reshaping American conservatism. "Tucker Carlson Tonight," the host and his producers decided, would embrace Trumpism, not Mr. Trump. The show would grasp the emotional core of Mr. Trump's allure — white panic over the country's changing ethnic composition — while keeping a carefully measured distance from the president

himself. For years, as his television career sputtered, Mr. Carlson had adopted increasingly catastrophic views of immigration and the country's shifting demographics. Now, as Mr. Trump took unvarnished nativism from the right-wing fringe to the Oval Office, Mr. Carlson made it the centerpiece of "Tucker Carlson Tonight."

He began seeking out stories, one friend observed, that were sometimes "really weird" and often inaccurate but tapped into viewers' fears of a trampled-on American culture. He inveighed against Macy's new line of hijabs, and devoted a segment to "Gypsy" refugees in a Pennsylvania town who Mr. Carlson said had left "streets covered — pardon us now, but it's true — with human feces." (It was not true: Local officials ultimately documented a single instance of a refugee child who had pulled down his pants outside because he couldn't make it back home in time.) He cataloged, and magni-

Continued on Page A16

PELOSI VISITS KYIV, ECHOING U.S. VOW OF WIDE 'VICTORY'

Some Civilians Evacuate Mariupol Steel Plant — Ukraine Is Low on Fuel

This article is by Steven Erlanger, Jane Arraf and Marc Santora.

BRUSSELS — House Speaker Nancy Pelosi traveled to Ukraine's capital over the weekend, leading the second senior American delegation to meet with President Volodymyr Zelensky in a week and declare support for his country's fight to beat back the Russian invasion.

With each visit — the secretaries of state and defense traveled to Kyiv over the previous weekend — the promise of American commitment to a Ukrainian victory appears to grow, even as how the United States defines victory has remained uncertain.

On Sunday, a day after her visit to Ukraine, Ms. Pelosi told a news conference in Poland: "America stands with Ukraine. We stand with Ukraine until victory is won. And we stand with NATO."

Ms. Pelosi, the second in line to succeed President Biden, is the highest-ranking American official to visit Kyiv since the war began, and her words carry weight, seeming to underscore an expanded view of American and al-

lied war aims.

Her visit, with a congressional delegation, followed a joint visit to Kyiv by Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken and Defense Secretary Lloyd J. Austin III on April 24. Mr. Austin caused some controversy and debate afterward when he appeared to shift the goal of the war from defending Ukraine's independence and territorial sovereignty to weakening Russia.

"We want to see Russia weakened to the degree that it can't do the kinds of things that it has done in invading Ukraine," Mr. Austin said, implying that the United States wanted to erode Russian military power for years to come — presumably so long as Vladimir V. Putin, president of Russia, remains in power.

In one positive development on Sunday, the United Nations and the International Committee of the Red Cross helped organize what was described as an "ongoing" evacuation of civilians from the Azovstal steel works in Mariupol, where they have been taking shelter with a dwindling number

Continued on Page A6



Nancy Pelosi with Volodymyr Zelensky in Kyiv on Saturday.

One Russian Tycoon Spoke Up. Retribution Came a Day Later.

By ANTON TROIANOVSKI and IVAN NECHEPURENKO

Oleg Y. Tinkov was worth more than \$9 billion in November, renowned as one of Russia's few self-made business tycoons after building his fortune outside the energy and minerals industries that were the playgrounds of Russian kleptocracy.

Then, last month, Mr. Tinkov, the founder of one of Russia's biggest banks, criticized the war in Ukraine in a post on Instagram. The next day, he said, President Vladimir V. Putin's administration contacted his executives and threatened to nationalize his bank if it did not cut ties with him. Last week, he sold his 35 percent stake to a Russian mining billionaire in what he describes as a "desperate sale, a fire sale" that was forced on him by the Kremlin.

"I couldn't discuss the price," Mr. Tinkov said. "It was like a hostage — you take what you are offered. I couldn't negotiate."

Mr. Tinkov, 54, spoke to The New York Times by phone on Sunday, from a location he would not disclose, in his first interview since Mr. Putin invaded Ukraine. He said he had hired bodyguards after friends with contacts in the Russian security services told him he should fear for his life, and quipped that while he had survived leukemia, perhaps "the Kremlin will kill me."

It was a swift and jarring turn of fortune for a longtime billionaire who for years had avoided running afoul of Mr. Putin while por-

Continued on Page A6

Xi Remains Silent as Virus Lockdown Grips Shanghai for Weeks

By CHRIS BUCKLEY

China's leader, Xi Jinping, waved at crowds of giddily cheering students. He held meetings with Olympic Games officials, economic policymakers and European leaders. He toured a tropical island.

But there was a revealing gap in Mr. Xi's busy itinerary last month, exposing the predicament that Covid is creating in a crucial year when he hopes to extend his hold on power. He stayed behind the scenes when it came to China's biggest, most contentious lockdown since the pandemic began.

Throughout April, Mr. Xi gave no public speeches focused on outbreaks in China as its biggest city, Shanghai, shut down to try to stifle infections, and then Beijing went on alert after a burst of cases. Nor did Mr. Xi directly address the 25 million residents of Shanghai who have been ordered to stay at home for weeks, despite their complaints of scarce food, overwhelmed hospitals and zigzags in mass quarantine rules.

"He wants to deliberately keep a certain distance in from Shanghai," said Deng Yuwen, a former editor of a Communist Party newspaper who now lives in the United States. "No doubt, he's do-

Flurries of Complaints Highlight Cracks in Zero-Covid Policy

ing a lot about fighting the pandemic behind the scenes, but of course he does not want to be directly drawn into the mess in Shanghai."

Mr. Xi's orders have instead been passed through subordinates or meeting summaries. They have cited his demand to stick to a "dynamic zero Covid"

goal: essentially ensuring no cases in a population of 1.4 billion by strict mass testing and isolation of infections or close contacts. On Friday, the Communist Party Politburo — a council of 25 leaders, including Mr. Xi — renewed its commitment to that goal, noting the rising economic risks from Covid and the war in Ukraine.

The outbreaks in Shanghai, Beijing and other cities are testing Mr. Xi's acumen and authority before an important Communist Party congress late this year. While he is nearly certain to win a groundbreaking third term as

Continued on Page A9

Pandemic Home Market Creates Vast Riches, and More Inequality

By EMILY BADGER and QUOCTRUNG BUI

Over the past two years, Americans who own their homes have gained more than \$6 trillion in housing wealth. To be clear, that doesn't mean homebuilders have transferred to buyers \$6 trillion worth of new housing, or that existing homeowners have made \$6 trillion in kitchen and bathroom upgrades.

Rather, most of this money has been created by the simple fact that housing, in short supply and high demand across America, has appreciated at record pace during the pandemic. Millions of people — broadly spread among the 65 percent of American households who own their home — have gained a share of this windfall.

It's a remarkably positive story for Americans who own a home; it's also inseparable from the housing affordability crisis for

those who don't. For them, rents are rapidly rising. Inflation is whittling away their incomes. And the very thing that has created all this wealth has pushed homeownership as a means of wealth-building further out of reach.

That dual reality follows what has been a mass wealth creation event with few precedents in American history.

"I really struggle to come up with a parallel to this," said Benjamin Keys, a professor at the Wharton School of Business, trying to identify a moment when this many people gained this much

Continued on Page A13

CAN YOU AFFORD IT? Home prices and loan rates are up, so you need to do the math. PAGE B1



Régine, who made exclusivity an art form, at a 2013 film festival.

RÉGINE, 1929-2022

Creator of World's First Disco Reigns Over Dazzling Empire

By ROBERT D. McFADDEN

She was born Rachele Zylberg in Belgium as the Great Depression struck: a Jewish child abandoned in infancy by her unwed mother and left alone at 12 when her father, a drunken Polish refugee, was arrested by the Nazis in France. She hid in a convent, where she was beaten. After the war, she sold bras in the streets of Paris and vowed to become rich and famous someday.

In 1957, calling herself Régine, she borrowed money and opened a basement nightclub on a Paris back street. She could not afford live music, so the patrons danced to a jukebox. Business was bad, and the young proprietor, in a decision that would have social historians wagging for decades, concluded that the problem was

the jukebox. "When the music stopped, you could hear snogging in the corners," she told the BBC, using British slang for kissing and necking. "It killed the atmosphere. Instead, I installed two turntables so there was no gap in the music. I was barmaid, doorman, bathroom attendant, hostess, and I also put on the records. It was the first-ever discothèque, and I was the first-ever club disc jockey."

And so began Chez Régine, widely regarded as the world's first discothèque. In the 1970s, its owner built a \$500 million empire of 23 clubs in Europe, the Middle East and the Americas, including Régine's in Manhattan, the most

Continued on Page A22

