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From: (b)(6)
Sent: Fri, 9 Feb 2024 13:19:49 +0000
To: Coulter, Sonata N
Subject: FW: Friday in Russian News - February 9, 2024

Lowlights from the Carlson interview:

Very best,

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Director

Office of Russian Affairs (EUR/RUS)

From: Moscow, Press <MoscowPressMail@state.gov>

Sent: Friday, February 9, 2024 6:26 AM

Subject: Friday in Russian News - February 9, 2024

Putin Interview with Carlson, Media Slam New Ukrainian Commander-in-Chief, New Initiative on “Undesirable” Organizations



Friday in Russian News - February 9, 2024

Top Stories

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Putin uses Carlson's interview to discuss history, push propaganda: American political commentator Tucker Carlson published his interview with Russian President Vladimir Putin early Friday morning. While the former Fox News host asked the Russian president questions on topics ranging from the future of AI technology to the imprisonment of American journalist Evan Gershkovich, the bulk of the two-hour conversation was dedicated to Putin's motivations for launching the war in Ukraine. In response to the first question, Putin gave a lengthy lecture about Russia-Ukraine history covering a period of hundreds of years, claiming that Ukraine is an "artificial state that was shaped at Stalin's will". He also said that Washington's policy does not depend on the president but on the mood of the elites, and added that the United States is using force to adapt to a changing world, but "the tools the U.S. is using are not working". Putin also stated that the world order, including the position of the U.S. in it, will change regardless of how the war in Ukraine ends. The Russian media were expectedly ecstatic about the interview. Gazprom-owned NTV said the interview started with "a basic history lesson for his interlocutor". State Rossiya 1 characterized the Western reaction ahead of the broadcast as "extremely nervous", while state-controlled Channel One said it was "toxic". The interview has also been extensively promoted on Telegram, with many praising both Putin and Carlson, although some were not happy with the conversation. Lev Vershinin, an associate of now-detained separatist Igor Strelkov, said that Putin was a "weak, small, confused man". The interview garnered 83.3M views. TV: Channel One Rossiya 1 NTV News: RIA Kommersant RG Izvestia In detail: TASS Telegram: Obraz Budushego (Image of the Future) Lev Vershinin

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Putin names condition for Gershkovich's release in interview with Carlson.

American journalist Evan Gershkovich, who is detained in Russia, may return to his homeland if the U.S. intelligence agencies meet their Russian counterparts' demands on certain issues, Russian President Vladimir Putin said. During an interview with Putin, journalist Tucker Carlson asked whether Russia could release Gershkovich as a

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goodwill gesture. "We have made so many goodwill gestures that I think we have exhausted all the limits. No one has ever responded to our goodwill gestures with similar gestures," Putin responded. "But we are, in principle, ready to talk about the fact that we do not exclude the fact that we can do it with a counter-movement from our partners," he continued. He also echoed the narrative that the journalist had been passing information to U.S. intelligence services. Carlson ended by expressing hope that Gershkovich would still be released. [TASS](#) [Interfax](#) [Vedomosti](#) [Izvestia](#)

Tucker Carlson meets with Snowden, Tara Reade in Russia. American journalist Tucker Carlson during his trip to Russia met with ex-U.S. intelligence officer Edward Snowden and Tara Reade, who accuses U.S. President Joe Biden of harassment. Russian media circulate this news, citing the news site Semafor. "On Thursday, the former Fox News host met with [...] Edward Snowden for several hours. Although the former NSA whistleblower made regular media appearances in the years after he fled to Russia, he has largely shied away from public appearances in recent years, citing a desire for greater privacy for his family," the publication said. According to him, Carlson spoke with Snowden for several hours; he also recorded an interview with Reed. Kremlin's representative Dmitry Peskov noted that he does not have information about Carlson's meetings. [RIA](#) [RBC](#) [Izvestia](#) [Moskovskiy Komsomolets](#)

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Putin says BRICS share in world economy surpassed the one of G7. The share of the BRICS countries in the world economy has surpassed that of the G7, Vladimir Putin said in an interview to American journalist Tucker Carlson. "In 1992, I think, the share of the G7 countries in the world economy was 47%, and in 2022 it fell somewhere, I think, to 30% and a little bit. The share of the BRICS countries in 1992 was only 16%, and now it exceeds the level of the G7," Putin pointed out. In his opinion, "this is not related to any events in Ukraine". Putin also emphasized that the share of the U.S. dollar in Russia's trade payments with third countries has fallen to 13%, while the ruble's share is now 34%, and the yuan's share has grown from almost 3% to more than 34%. [RIA Lenta.ru](#) [Gazeta.ru](#)

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Social Media Coverage

On Putin's interview with Tucker Carlson: All Telegram channels exploded with discussions of Vladimir Putin's interview with American TV host Tucker Carlson. Pro-Kremlin bloggers call it "the most high-profile interview of our time". Commentators

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emphasize that the interview was aimed at a Western audience, and that "not much new was said" for Russian residents. Bloggers are jubilant about the fact that the cumulative reach of the interview has exceeded several tens of millions of views and "the entire Western Twitter feed is full of quotes from our President". "This is an unambiguous success. A real breakthrough in the West's information dome, which the West has been building with regard to information from Russia for decades. Moreover, the whole world is watching it, including Ukraine, whose residents already understand perfectly well that it is the decisions made by the Russian President that largely determine not only their present day, but also the future," pro-Kremlin channel Mir segodnya s Yuri Podolyaka (The world today with Yuri Podolyaka) (2.7M) posts (Views: 1.2M). Pro-Kremlin channels praise Putin's erudition. Political-military publicist and pro-Kremlin blogger Mikhail Onufrienko (The World by Mikhail Onufrienko) (599K) believes that Carlson is apparently "for the first time talking to a man who knows EVERYTHING" (Views: 174K). "Too bad Tucker didn't start a conversation about conservative values...This is the one thing Russia can and should be building an ideology outward on right now," media manager and propagandist; editor-in-chief of the state broadcaster RT Margarita Simonyan (477K) posts (Views: 199K). Liberal channels have sharply criticized the interview, saying it shows Putin is "disconnected from reality". "The only reason to watch [the interview] is just to understand the extent of the marasmus," opposition journalist and publicist Alexander Nevzorov (1M) says (Views: 333K). Opposition journalist and political scientist Michael Naki (123K) believes that the interview is just another "pseudo-historical speech" after which "an American Redneck-Trumpist will get bored after a couple of minutes" or "will simply realize that he is just another crazy grandfather with a nuclear button who deserves no sympathy or respect" (Views: 33K).

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