

ELECTION 2024

# Trump ally maps out a muscular Oval Office

Ex-budget director touts a ‘post-Constitutional’ agenda for second term

BY BETH REINHARD

A battle-tested D.C. bureaucrat and self-described Christian nationalist is drawing up detailed plans for a sweeping expansion of presidential power in a second Trump administration. Russ Vought, who served as the former president’s budget chief, calls his political strategy for razing long-standing guardrails “radical constitutionalism.”

He has helped craft proposals for Donald Trump to deploy the military to quash civil unrest, seize more control over the Justice Department and assert the power to withhold congressional appropriations — and that’s just on Trump’s first day back in office.

Vought, 48, is poised to steer this agenda from an influential perch in the White House, potentially as Trump’s chief of staff, according to some people involved in discussions about a second term who spoke on the condition of anonymity to describe private conversations.

Since Trump left office, Vought has led the Center for Renewing America, part of a network of conservative advocacy groups staffed by former and potentially future Trump administration officials. Vought’s rise is a reminder that if Trump is reelected, he has said he will surround himself with loyalists eager to carry out his wishes, even if they violate traditional norms against executive overreach.

SEE VOUCHT ON A10

**The Sunday Take:** Biden marks D-Day by channeling Reagan. **A2**

**The Fix:** The pros, cons and odds for Trump’s possible running mates. **A6**



BASHAR TALEB/AFP/GETTY IMAGES



MARKO DJURICA/REUTERS

**TOP:** Palestinians walk among the debris left behind after Israel’s raid Saturday in the central Gaza Strip. Health officials in the enclave said more than 200 people were killed and some 400 wounded. **ABOVE:** Almog Meir Jan, an Israeli hostage being held in Gaza, after he was rescued Saturday from Nuseirat refugee camp. Andrey Kozlov, Shlomi Ziv and Noa Argamani were the other hostages brought back alive in the raid. All four had been abducted from a music festival in the Israeli desert on Oct. 7.

**Cease-fire:** Despite Biden’s urging, no progress on a deal. **A16**

**U.S. intelligence:** Analysts in Israel shared data to aid operation. **A17**

**White House protest:** Thousands gather with “red line” fabric. **C1**

# Israel rescues four hostages in bloody raid

SCORES OF PALESTINIANS KILLED, WOUNDED

Biden welcomes operation, continues cease-fire push

BY CLAIRE PARKER, MOHAMAD EL CHAMAA AND LIOR SOROKA

Israel’s military launched one of the bloodiest raids of the war Saturday, killing more than 200 Palestinians in an operation to rescue four hostages from the central Gaza Strip.

Israeli forces recovered the hostages alive from two buildings in Nuseirat, an impoverished refugee camp. But the fiery assault, in the middle of the day, left unimaginable devastation in its wake.

Residential blocks were destroyed, tanks menaced the streets and grievously wounded Palestinians, some without limbs,

writhed in pain on the dusty roads of the camp’s central market, according to videos and images of the raid. Many of them never reached local hospitals, health officials said. But even then, medical facilities decimated by the war often have little ability to treat injured patients.

“Israel committed a massacre in Nuseirat,” Khalil al-Degran, spokesman for al-Aqsa Martyrs Hospital in nearby Deir al-Balah, said at a news conference Saturday. “In this terrible state ... the hospital cannot absorb the number of dead and injured. The hospital has been at full capacity for weeks.”

Degran and other health officials  
SEE GAZA ON A19

# Captives’ freedom sparks rare day of joy in months-long war

BY STEVE HENDRIX AND SHIRA RUBIN

JERUSALEM — Israelis, grinding into their ninth month of a war that has seemingly devolved into a military quagmire, a diplomatic stalemate and an object of global condemnation, finally had reason to cheer Saturday, and cheer they did.

Minutes after news broke that four of the remaining Israeli hostages had been safely plucked from the Gaza Strip in a daytime raid, cheers erupted on sidewalks and beaches, and crowds formed outside the hospitals where the hostages were whisked.

On television, anchors cried during their breaking news

alerts, as did Israeli President Isaac Herzog during his call to Noa Argamani, one of the best known of more than 250 hostages taken to Gaza during the Hamas attacks of Oct. 7.

“Noa, I am so excited to hear your voice — it just brings tears to my eyes,” Herzog said to the 26-year-old, who had been captured on video screaming “Don’t kill me!” as she was carried into Gaza on the back of a motorcycle.

Argamani, one of the dozens of young Israelis captured at a desert dance festival, became a symbol of the agonizing futility — and growing fury — Israelis felt as the months passed and hope for the hostages dwindled.

SEE HOSTAGES ON A20

# For a migrant family, no turning back from border

A mother is undeterred by push to restrict asylum

BY ARELIS R. HERNÁNDEZ

CIUDAD JUÁREZ, MEXICO — Ingrid Orasma had spent weeks trekking through Mexico by foot, train and bus with her two young sons. She reached the border Tuesday only to find out the man she calls “Papa Biden” had imposed new restrictions on how many asylum seekers like her are allowed to stay in the United States.

The thought of remaining a day longer in Mexico was unbearable. Along the journey, she said, Mexican authorities had robbed the group of friends her family was traveling with, pulled them off trains and abandoned them in the desert. She feared what getting stuck south of the U.S. border might bring next.

“To Mexican immigration officials, we are animals,” Orasma, 47, said. “It’s been abuse and

mistreatment at every step.”

So on Wednesday, as President Biden’s new asylum policy went into effect, the Venezuelan woman and her family headed to the border, hoping immigration officials might still let them in. They waited to board a bus toward the border wall. And they prayed.

The stakes were high: Migrants deemed ineligible for protection will be returned to their home countries or Mexico unless they express a convincing fear of harm that qualifies them for an exemption under tougher screening procedures.

Orasma had a long list of complaints about life in Venezuela. But it was unclear if any of them would be enough to convince an immigration officer that they should get to stay.

“What options do I have?” she asked, caressing her 10-year-old  
SEE IMMIGRATION ON A8

# Beauty remains a narrow standard in eyes of AI

When directed to display attractive women, image generators rarely deviated from Western ideals

## AI-GENERATED IMAGES



GENERATED BY DALL-E, MIDJOURNEY AND STABLE DIFFUSION

**AI generators Midjourney, DALL-E and Stable Diffusion responded to a prompt asking for a “beautiful woman” by rendering a narrow vision of attractiveness.**

BY NITASHA TIKU AND SZU YU CHEN

She’s smiling, and her hair is long. Her body looks like Barbie — slim hips, impossible waist, round breasts. Her cheekbones are sharp, but her collarbone is sharper.

You could swear you’ve seen her on Instagram.

Despite the growing profusion of AI image generators, they all had remarkably similar responses when The Post directed them to portray a beautiful woman.

As AI-generated images spread across entertainment, marketing, social media and other industries that shape cultural norms, The Washington Post set out to understand how this technology defines one of society’s most indelible standards: female beauty.

Using dozens of prompts on three of the leading image tools — Midjourney, DALL-E and Stable Diffusion — The Post found that they steer users toward a startlingly narrow vision of attractiveness. Prompted to show a “beautiful woman,” all three tools generated thin women, without exception. Just 2 percent of the images showed visible signs of aging.

More than a third of the images had medium skin tones. But only nine percent had dark skin tones.

Asked to show “normal women,” the tools produced images that remained overwhelmingly thin.

SEE AI ON A14

BOOK WORLD

English novelist Sarah Perry lost her faith — and found her voice.

ARTS & STYLE

The best bets in music, theater and more for the summer season.

BUSINESS

Artificial intelligence is helping (and possibly harming) our pets.

TRAVEL

Hotels in Thailand with “White Lotus” charm on a Best Western budget.

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