

Tucker Carlson started GOP debate

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May 2, 2023



Tucker Carlson actually started the Republican Presidential primary debate last month, almost six weeks before Fox News muzzled him. Specifically he asked everyone even thinking of seeking the Republican nomination in 2024 to comment on the Russia-Ukraine war. The candidates' answers put them into two opposing camps – three if you count separately those too afraid to answer. Though the anchor tweet of his thread got 4.4 million impressions and 27,700 likes, it got scant attention beyond a few alternative outlets like *Axios*. That is, until Semafor broke the story that Rupert Murdoch and his son spoke by telephone to Ukraine's president at about the same time. In that light, now is a good time to review that thread, and the answers the various candidates gave.

Rupert Murdoch and the young president

The Semafor story says little, beyond this: Rupert Murdoch and Volodymyr Zelenskyy spoke about the state of the war, and the death in action of at least one Fox News correspondent last year. We do not know the date of that telephone call, but we do know that Rupert's son Lachlan had his own talk on March 15.

Even though Zelenskyy took note of his call with Lachlan in an "aside," no one else said anything about it. That is, until two sources close to the Murdochs disclosed their calls to Semafor, on Sunday night.

Mark Steffen at Trending Politics News picked up the story. He also picked up the apparent opposition to the war by Gov. Ron DeSantis (R-Fla.). He referenced a story originally appearing in *Axios* on March 14. *Axios* reproduced *two* long-form tweets from what turned out to be the same thread. One contained Ron DeSantis' statement on the war; the other contained Trump's statement.

Axios probably intended to focus on Trump and DeSantis. They have been contenting more bitterly than any two other candidates for the nomination. But in fact Tucker Carlson had voluminous answers from more than only those two. And what the others have to say, speaks volumes – and what some of them *refuse* to say, *also* speaks volumes.

Tucker Carlson and his questions

Herewith the thread that Tucker Carlson dropped at 8:45 p.m. EDT March 13. He asked each candidate six questions, as the embedded video in the anchor tweet reveals:

1. Is opposing Russia in Ukraine of vital strategic interest to America?
2. What is our objective in Ukraine, and how can we know when we have achieved it?
3. What is the limit on the amount of money and/or weapons you would be willing to send to President Zelenskyy?
4. Should the United States support regime change in Russia?
5. Have U.S. sanctions been effective? And:
6. Does the United States face a risk of nuclear war with Russia?

For the benefit of all readers, *CNAV* gives these answers to these questions:

1. No. In fact, the cleaning-out of biological weapons development laboratories in Ukraine serves the real vital public interest. Those laboratories have American funding, American direction, *and American staffs*. Or they had until Russia destroyed them.
2. The people can have no objective in Ukraine. This is not our fight and we ought to get out and stay out.
3. We exceeded those limits long ago – because the limit is *zero*. The war must *stop*.
4. Absolutely not. As one particular candidate says, we need “regime change” in the United States. Happily, we can do that with something called an election.
5. No. Sanctions have been *countereffective*. Russia never needed international trade.
6. Yes. Russia could take out New York City, Washington, Boston, etc. with one Poseidon missile each.

The thread

Surprisingly, most of those who answered the questions, gave far greater thought than have several Members of Congress. Or so Tucker Carlson categorized them. Not all the answers fit that mold.

We asked every potential 2024 GOP presidential candidate to answer six key questions on the war in Ukraine. As promised, their full responses are below.
pic.twitter.com/tjcM4w54cR

— Tucker Carlson (@TuckerCarlson) March 14, 2023

Florida Governor [@RonDeSantisFL](#) answers our Ukraine questionnaire:

“While the U.S. has many vital national interests – securing our borders, addressing the crisis of readiness within our military, achieving energy security and independence, and checking the economic, cultural,...

— Tucker Carlson ([@TuckerCarlson](#)) [March 14, 2023](#)

2024 GOP Presidential Candidate [@VivekGRamaswamy](#) answers our Ukraine questionnaire (1/3)

Is opposing Russia in Ukraine a vital American national strategic interest?

“No, it is not “vital.” Rather, this is a stark reminder of what is a vital American national strategic interest:...

— Tucker Carlson ([@TuckerCarlson](#)) [March 14, 2023](#)

[@VivekGRamaswamy](#) (3/3) “There is opportunity cost in depleting these defense resources—especially in protecting our own soil and border from Mexican cartels or in the case of Communist China. Critics of this view would say that these defense capabilities are different—that we...

— Tucker Carlson ([@TuckerCarlson](#)) [March 14, 2023](#)

Governor [@GregAbbott_TX](#) on Ukraine:

“President Biden’s blank check foreign policy in Ukraine has drawn nothing but ridicule and disdain from our adversaries and has diverted funding from essential needs in the United States. Throwing money at Ukraine with no accountability or...

— Tucker Carlson ([@TuckerCarlson](#)) [March 14, 2023](#)

Former [@GovChristie](#) on Ukraine:

“Russia’s aggression against Ukraine is a national security issue that threatens our alliances and our standing in the world. Our objective is to assist Ukraine sufficiently to enable them to defeat Russian forces and restore their sovereignty...

— Tucker Carlson ([@TuckerCarlson](#)) [March 14, 2023](#)

The following GOP presidential hopefuls did not respond: [@NikkiHaley](#) [@mikepompeo](#) [@AsaHutchinson](#) [@AmbJohnBolton](#) [@GovChrisSununu](#)

— Tucker Carlson ([@TuckerCarlson](#)) [March 14, 2023](#)

The answers put Trump, DeSantis (if he's sincere), Vivek Ramaswamy, and Govs. Kristi Noem (R-S.D.) and Greg Abbott (R-Texas) in the anti-war camp. Former Vice-President Mike Pence and former Gov. Chris Christie (R-N.J.) are definitely pro-war, and possibly Sen. Tim Scott (R-S.C.). Tellingly, Nikki Haley, Asa Hutchinson, Mike Pompeo, John Bolton, and Chris Sununu *did not answer*.

This should tell you how dangerous some of these candidates would be. Sadly, Poseidon and hypersonic missiles do not discriminate.