

Putin. Xi air shared grievances against U.S.

Show of unity lets China provide diplomatic cover for Russia's mobilization

BY EMILY RAUHALA

Russian President Vladimir Putin and Chinese leader Xi Jinping met Friday on the side-lines of the Beijing Winter Olym-pics on Friday, a show of solidari-ty and shared grievance calibrat-ed to challenge the U.S.-led world order amid a tense diplomatic standoff on Ukraine.

standoff on Ukraine.
Their sweeping joint statement to mark the occasion was a unified blast at the United States
— and some of the major impasses between Russia and the West playing out with Moscow's forces massed near Ukraine's border.
There was proceed encountries to

massed near Ukraine's border.
They expressed opposition to
NATO enlargement and called
out "actors representing but the
minority on the international
scale" who "continue to advocate
unilateral approaches to addressing international issues."
President Biden's absence
from the spectacle – having
ordered a diplomatic boycott in
protest of Beijing's human rights
abuses – underscored the notso-subtle subtext of Priday's
Olympic event: the renewed divi-

addiscs — distinctioned the model and account a subject of Priday's Olympic event: the renewed driving of the world, at the moment at least, into two major camps, China and Russia versus the United States and its allies.

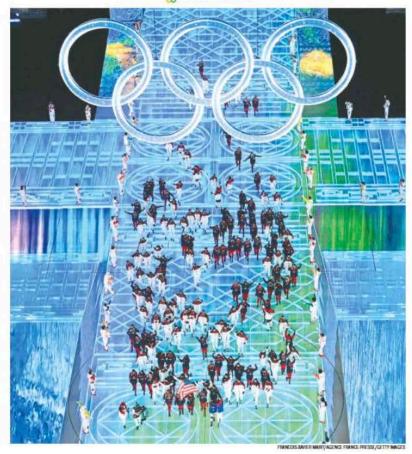
Xi, who has not met another foreign leader in person in almost two years, said China and Russia "firmly support each other in safeguarding their core interests," according to a summary of the meeting by China's state news agency Kinhua.

Adding deeds to the words, Putin announced a deal to supply China with more gas via a new SERPHIN ON ALS

Sanctions: Allies in disagreement over timing of possible action, A12



BEIJING OLYMPICS



A show of strength and unity

As Olympics begin, Beijing projects 'shared future' of undisputed Chinese power

BY CHRISTIAN SHEPHERD

BEUING — From dancers waving giant green glow sticks like freshly sprouting grass to six ce hockey players covered in psychedelic colors slapping pucks toward the Olympic rings, the Opening Ceremonies of the Beijing 2022 Winter Games were meant to represent

2022 Winter Games were meant to represent unity and a new beginning.
On a freezing Friday evening, 45,000 specta-cora piled on layers to half-fill Beijing's National Stadium, also known as the "Bird's Nest" for its outer casing of crisscrossed metal slats, on the day that marks the start of spring in the traditional lunisolar calendar.

The U.S. delegation passes through Beiling's National Stadium on Priday during the Opening Ceremonies of the 2022 Winter Games.

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But China's motto of coming "together for a shared future" during the hardshipe of the pandemic—an echo of President XI Jinping's political philosophy of building a "community with a shared future for mankind"—has been countered by U.S.-led diplomatic boycotts that seek to hold the Chinese Communist Party accountable for human rights abuses, military accountable for human rights abuses, military aggression and ascendant nationalism during Xi's rule.

And the coronavirus-constraining "closed loop" of designated buses and hotels has made it impossible for most Beijing residents to take part in the events. As of Friday, 308 people in SECOLYMPICS ON ALS

More jobs, despite omicron

REPORT POINTS TO

467,000 positions added as virus surged in U.S.

The U.S. economy added 467,000 jobs in January even as the omicron variant spiked to record heights, showing that the resilient labor market had enough momentum to power through one of the pandemic's biggest surges.

The unemployment rate ticked up slightly to 4 percent, from 3.9 percent the month before, because more people were looking for work, another positive trend.

ing for work, another positive trend.

The monthly report, released by the Labor Department, stems from a survey taken in mid-Janu-ary, around the time the omicron variant was beginning to peak. The rapid spread during that period upended many parts of the economy, closing schools, day cares and a number of businesses,

coronaly, crossing schools, vacues and a number of businesses, and forcing parents to scramble. But the labor market, according to the new data, performed very well during that stretch. Over the past 12 months, the United States has added nearly 7 million jobs as workers have found ample openings in an economy still recovering from the pandemic's first days.

"America is back to work," President Biden said Friday at the SELLORS ON ACCESSION A

Change in non-farm jobs

ludge temporarily halts Youngkin's mask-optional order for Va. schools

An Arlington judge on Friday barred enforcement of Gov. Glenn Youngkin's mask-optional order for Virginia schools — a major victory for the seven school boards that sued to stop it, and a sharp rebuke for the new gover-nor.

In her 10-page order, Arlington Circuit Court Judge Louise Di-Matteo offered a check to Young-kin's assertion of gubernatorial

authority, writing that the Vir-ginia Constitution gives authority to local school boards to make safety and health decisions – in-cluding masking – for their stu-dents. She also wrote that a state dents. She also who the data a state law passed over the summer re-quiring school districts to comply with federal health guidance makes Youngkin's mask-optional order impossible to carry out, be-cause it, too, delegates authority over decisions such as masking to local school boards.

The single issue before the

SALT LAKE CITY — The ongoing battle over the future of the Republican Party erupted into open view Friday as former vice president Mike Pence said it would have been 'un-American' for him to overtum the election at Donald Trump's insistence and the party's grass-roots members overwhelmingly voted to censure two Republicans for investigating the Jan. 6 attack on the Capitol.

Trump loomed over the day's

His rebuke comes as GOP censures Kinzinger. Cheney over Jan. 6 probe

Pence enters new territory: 'Trump is wrong'

action, though he was uncharac-teristically silent as the party's top activists and donors huddled in Utah and a prominent conserva-tive legal group hosted Pence and some of the party's top figures in Florida.

In both cases, grappling with Trump's repeated false attacks on

the 2020 election results — and the pro-Trump mob that ran-sacked the Capitol one year ago — was the source of discord at a time when the party is trying to remain united ahead of the midterm elec-

tions.

In Utah, where activists and donors gathered for the Republican National Committee's winter meeting, the party took the unprecedented step of formally condemning two Republican law-makers, Reps. Lie Cheney of Wyoming and Adam Kinzinger of Illinois, for their work on the House Jan. 6 committee — and made

moves that would allow the party to send money and political help to Cheney's primary opponent. The censure was pushed by RNCChairwoman Ronna McDaniel, and the vote was overwhelming, passing without any public debate. It took all of one minute.

debate. It took all of one minute.
There was no pretense that the
punishment was about anything
other than the investigation of the
Jan. 6, 2021, insurrection — the
most serious attack on the Capitol
since the War of 1812 — and what since the War of 1812 — and what happened before and after the

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How to create a stylish mudroom near your front door

Residents and visitors can use functional space to store coats and shoes

BY MICHELE LERNER

While mudrooms, family entrances, family foyers and drop zones are typically informal spaces adjacent to the garage or at the back of the house, some architects are seeing more of an interest in moving these practical rooms closer to the front door.

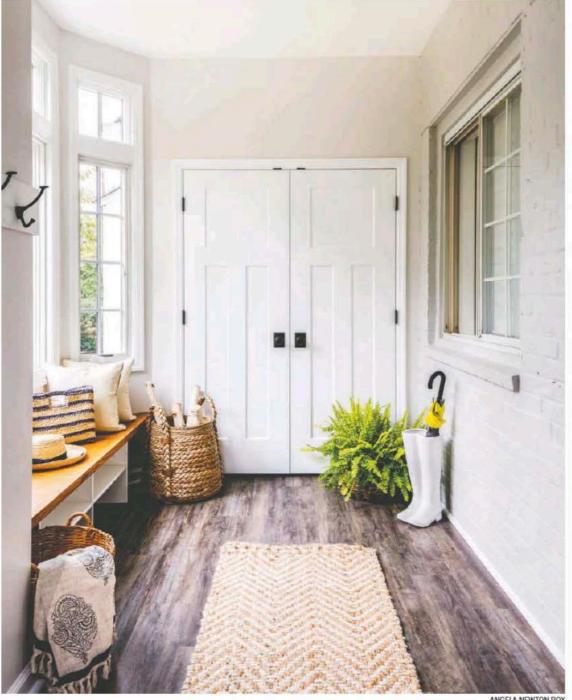
For example, Tom Reineberg, an architect with InSite Builders & Remodeling in Bethesda, recently converted a front porch to a mudroom for clients who weren't using the porch and wanted usable interior space. He kept a covered roof area for deliveries and was able to design a room that had natural light and was functional and aesthetically pleasing to the owners.

We asked three specialists for advice about this trend: Reineberg; Melissa Cooley, a senior designer-interiors specialist with Case Architects & Remodelers in Bethesda; and Jessica Parker Wachtel, a senior associate with GMT Architects in Bethesda. All three responded via email, and their comments were edited for brevity.

What should homeowners consider when they want to convert a front space such as a porch or an interior room to a

Reineberg: In converting a front space such as a porch (outside) to a mudroom (inside), it is important to be thoughtful about the overall design. The goal is to improve the aesthetic of the exterior while creating a sense of cohesiveness within the home. There should be a comfortable feeling upon entering, like you have walked into a new foyer or room, vs. the feeling of entering a space that was bumped out for extra storage. The strategic use of windows generates an abundance of natural light and prevents cubbies from looking like a wall of shelves.

Cooley: If you live in a home where your entry door is directly connected to your living room, which leaves very little flexibility for a drop zone for everyday essentials, consider using a nearby closet in your entryway or creating cubbies in your garage or below your entry staircase. Consider these spaces as they sometimes hold square footage that may go unused. If converting a closet that is directly off the main entrance, consider incorporating a similar



When converting an area to a mudroom, there should be a comfortable feeling upon entering, as if you have walked into a new foyer or room, vs. entering a space that was bumped out for extra storage.

style that blends with the rest of your home. Include elements that add visual interest, style and comfort. Make it interesting by adding personalized baskets, color or even wallpaper, but also think of ways that may encourage your family to keep it tidy and organized. Create a space that is tailored for your household's needs.

Wachtel: In a new custom home, I would recommend utilizing closed storage cabinets so the space does not feel cluttered. If possible, consider designing custom cabinets to blend in with adjacent wall finishes, such as paneling, paint colors, etc. To utilize an existing front space, such as a front porch, this could be as simple as installing a few hooks on the wall above a bench. Shoes can be stored in bins below the bench.

What are some pros and cons of a front mudroom?

Cooley: Having a mudroom or perhaps a drop zone at the foyer area may pose some pros and cons. If a mudroom located at the immediate entry of a home is unorganized, it may encourage household members to create several drop zones in the home, causing clutter and dysfunction. If it is not properly designed with thoughtfully designated areas, it may be a dumping zone for all types of things. If kept organized with a calendar, to-do list, areas for keys, charging station, dedicated shoe and coat storage, this area can be one of the most essential and effectively working areas in the home.

Wachtel: Pros: If the front door is your main point of entry, this would be the ideal space to drop shoes and coats, to avoid walking through the house to a separate mudroom. When guests come over, you can easily hang their jackets and offer a place to leave

Cons: Mudroom spaces can get messy, so try to focus on closed storage options. A mudroom should also primarily be for inseason jackets and shoes that are currently in use. Out-of-season

jackets and extra gear can be stored in a closet to avoid overcrowding the space.

What materials work best for a front mudroom?

Reineberg: Luxury vinyl plank (LVP) is attractive and practical for a mudroom. It gives a warm appearance and insulates the floor. LVP is highly durable, retains its appearance despite a lot of abuse and foot traffic and is effective in areas with wet shoes, boots and umbrellas. If something is dropped on LVP flooring, there is a good chance that the object will not break.

Cooley: Any floor tile, such as porcelain, ceramic, cement or travertine tile with a matte finish is suitable for a mudroom area, or even a luxury plank vinyl flooring, as they all are durable materials. Refrain from installing tile with a polished finish as it is slippery and may cause a hazard. You can also use hardwood floors in a mudroom; however, consider area rugs on hardwood floors as moisture and liquid from outdoor clothing may eventually cause discoloring on the floor. Consider shelves that are in close reach to avoid items tipping over and fall-

Wachtel: Tile flooring is great in a mudroom space for easy cleanup from wet or muddy shoes. Wainscoting or other paneling installed behind wall hooks will be more durable for hanging jackets than drywall. Make sure to include a bench or chair in the space so people have somewhere to sit down when putting shoes on and taking them off.

Does this kind of project require a design/build firm or an architect? Or could a handyman take on a space conversion like this?

Cooley: Depending on the scale and organization needed for your mudroom project, consider calling on the help of a handyman service, if the project is on the smaller side. You may also find it helpful to consider a design build firm if the project is on the larger side and involves remodeling of other areas in the home.

Reineberg: It depends on what you are hoping to achieve. If the desire is to create a new space with an aesthetic appeal that is made to look and function consistently with the original house, a design/ build firm is the best route. If, however, the space is entirely utilitarian, an experienced handyman could be used for the project. Knowledge of the permitting process and new materials and products is also important.

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