American Autocracy Threat Tracker

A Comprehensive Catalog Based on Donald Trump and His Associates' Plans, Promises, and Propositions

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Just Security
July 6, 2024

The tracker was originally published on February 26, 2024 and is continually updated. The most recent update was on July 6, 2024.

Introduction

Former President Donald Trump has said he will be a dictator on "day one." He and his advisors and associates have publicly discussed hundreds of further actions to be taken during a second Trump presidency that directly threaten democracy, the rule of law, as well as U.S. (and global) security. These vary from Trump breaking the law and abusing power in areas like immigration roundups and energy extraction; to summarily firing tens of thousands of civil servants whom he perceives as adversaries; to prosecuting his political opponents for personal gain; to pardoning convicted January 6th rioters he views as "warriors," "great patriots" and "hostages." We track all of the specific promises, plans, and pronouncements here and we will continue to update them.

The U.S. Supreme Court's decision granting Trump broad presidential immunity for official acts imposes a potential barrier to accountability for illegal conduct and likely encourages it. Many have warned that in light of Trump's autocratic promises, this legal development poses grave risk to democratic principles and the rule of law. Kevin Roberts, president of The Heritage Foundation, praised the Court's ruling during an appearance on Steve Bannon's "War Room" podcast, calling it "vital" for preventing presidents from having to "second guess, triple guess every decision they're making." He suggested that the decision could support the group's Project 2025 plan (see below) and help conservatives in "taking this country back" if Trump wins in November. Roberts framed this effort as a "second American Revolution," which he shockingly said would "remain bloodless if the left allows it to be." The Heritage Foundation subsequently and unambiguously endorsed that statement in on X:

Trump has long threatened to prosecute his adversaries, but after his felony convictions in Manhattan, both he and his allies have been explicit about doing so in retaliation for that proceeding — despite the lack of any evidence of criminal wrongdoing by those targeted. During the presidential debate he was asked about making these threats and, in response, said Biden "could be a convicted felon as soon as he gets out of office." . According to a *New York Times'* report, the "open desire for using the criminal justice system against Democrats after the [Manhattan] verdict surpasses anything seen before in Mr. Trump's tumultuous years in national politics." Trump pointed to his prosecution and said, "it's very possible that it's going to have to happen to them," namely his political adversaries. After the verdict, his former aide and current advisor Steven Miller asked, "Is every Republican D.A. starting every investigation they need to right now?" Steve Bannon said Alvin Bragg "should be — and will be — jailed," according to Axios. According to Axios's report, another Trump insider pointed to using a federal statute criminalizing civil rights conspiracies. Retaliation has also been embraced by senior GOP leaders in Congress such as Senator Marco Rubio who sounded a call to "fight fire with fire." Former DOJ official and author of the infamous torture memos, John Yoo has composed a justification of retaliation prosecutions. (The *Times* aptly describes it as seeking "to dress up the need for such retribution as a matter of constitutional principle.") Far-right activist Laura Loomer, who Trump has embraced, has gone so far as to say "Not just jail, they should get the death penalty."

As concerning as all that is, it is only a fraction of the evidence that leads us to conclude that there is a significant risk of autocracy should Trump regain the presidency. Trump has said he would deploy the military against civilian protestors and his advisors have developed plans for

using the Insurrection Act, said he would invoke the Alien Enemies Act to conduct deportations of non-citizens, continued to threaten legally-established abortion rights, and even had his lawyers argue that a president should be immune from prosecution if he directed SEAL Team Six to assassinate a political opponent.

Trump also seeks the power to protect his personal wealth as he faces staggering civil fines, and to bolster his immunity as he faces 88 criminal charges in prosecutions in different parts of the country. He has predicted a "bloodbath" if he is not elected (although his meaning has been contested, with some saying he was referring to violence and others that "Trump was talking about US automakers"). At a Veterans Day rally last year, Trump said he would "root out" political opponents who "live like vermin within the confines of our country" warning that the greatest threats come "from within" (words that, according to *ABC News* and others, "echoed those of past fascist dictators like Hitler and Benito Mussolini," and alarmed historians.)

While Trump has claimed he will be a dictator for only the first day of his administration, his promise to do so—even for 24 hours—is antithetical to American democracy and consistent with the history of authoritarianism. Dictatorial powers, once assumed, are rarely relinquished. Moreover, Trump cannot possibly achieve his stated goals for the use of that power (in immigration and energy policy) in one day, meaning that his notion of a "dictatorship" would of necessity likely last much longer.

Many of Trump's former Cabinet officials and advisors—those with the most experience watching him govern behind the scenes—believe he poses a grave danger to the country. John Bolton, Trump's former National Security Advisor, said, "I think Trump will cause significant damage in a second term, damage that in some cases will be irreparable." Trump's former chief of staff, John Kelly, said that the former president praised Adolf Hitler's ability to rebuild Germany's economy, and admired his maintaining "loyalty" of his senior Nazi officials. Alyssa Farah Griffin, former Trump White House Director of Strategic Communications, said, "Fundamentally, a second Trump term could mean the end of American democracy as we know it, and I don't say that lightly." Mark Esper, Trump's former defense secretary, has warned of "more … hyper-aggressive behavior" by Trump if he takes office, recounting when Trump asked if demonstrators gathering around the White House following the death of George Floyd could be shot. Another of Trump's former defense secretaries Jim Mattis reportedly said the former president was "a madman in a circular room screaming."

Significantly, Trump's former vice president and 2020 running mate Mike Pence said recently that there are "profound differences" between the pair "on a range of issues, and not just our difference on my constitutional duties that I exercised on January 6th," such that he would "not be endorsing … Trump this year," adding, "Trump is pursuing and articulating an agenda that is at odds with the conservative agenda that we governed on during our four years, and that's why I cannot in good conscience endorse … [his] campaign."

Trump's openly dictatorial aspirations are complemented by an extensive pre-election plan to fundamentally alter the nature of American government: the Heritage Foundation's 2025

Presidential Transition Project (Project 2025). Created by Trump allies and staffed by those including his past and likely future administration appointees, it is in the words of Heritage Foundation president Roberts, a plan for "institutionalizing Trumpism." Trump has returned the compliment, saying of Roberts (and Heritage) that he's "doing an unbelievable job, he's bringing it back to levels we've never seen … thank you Kevin." There are multiple other Trump world connections with Project 2025. But as it comes under intensified scrutiny Trump has recently sought to distance himself by claiming he knows "nothing about" it, has "no idea who is behind it," had "nothing to do with them," and "disagree[s] with some of the things they're saying[,]" which "are absolutely ridiculous and abysmal." Yet, as noted by *Axios* and other sources, Project 2025 is "undeniably a Trump-driven operation," with Trump's main super political action committee, "Make America Great Again Inc." (or "MAGA Inc."), running online ads promoting a website called "Trump Project 2025."

Project 2025's plans are set forth in an 887-page document entitled "Mandate for Leadership: the Conservative Promise." It details a program to consolidate power in the executive branch, deconstruct the federal administration, and strip remaining agencies of their independence. It proposes to dismantle or radically overhaul the Departments of Justice and State; eliminate the Departments of Homeland Security, Education, and Commerce; radically repurpose other agencies; and eviscerate the professional civil service. Project 2025 is complemented by other 2025 planning efforts by, for example, the America First Policy Institute, the Center for Renewing America, and the Conservative Partnership Institute.

Trump and his associates are reportedly discussing building an administration around loyalists who would "stretch legal and governance boundaries" to accommodate an "aggressive use of the vast powers of the executive branch" (in the words of Project 2025). Among those *Axios* reported to be under discussion for senior government posts are Stephen Miller, Kash Patel, Steve Bannon, and Jeffrey Clark, who is currently under indictment in Georgia for his role in the fake electors scheme and a co-conspirator in the federal election indictment.

When Trump assumed office in 2017, he and his associates did not have such well developed policies and personnel in waiting. Indeed, he made the "mistake" of including people in senior administration positions who remained loyal to the Constitution. As Sec. Esper told Bill Kristol in an April 17, 2024 interview, "There were guard rails in place, guard rail number one being the prospect of reelection, and number two being the people he brought in around him. Some of those guard rails won't be there in number two." A few days later, RNC Co-Chair Lara Trump told an audience to a round of applause, "He's not worried about winning another election. It's four years of scorched earth when Donald Trump retakes the White House."

This autocratic lean has also been pronounced in statements made by Trump and his allies during and after his New York election interference and coverup trial and conviction. Those kinds of attacks on the administration of justice are a hallmark of would-be dictators. As we detail below, Trump has persistently attacked the rule of law when it gets in his way, with the Manhattan case being the most recent example. He committed 10 violations of a gag order protecting witnesses and the jury, falsely accused Justice Juan Merchan, who presided over the

trial, of being "corrupt" and doing "everything within his power" to help President Biden win the election, vilified prosecutors and otherwise spread grotesque disinformation about the proceedings and racist tropes about the judge. Despite acknowledging it is "very dangerous" for him to say so, speaking at Trump Tower the day after his conviction, Trump said that the "crooked" judge presiding over the case "was a tyrant" who "looks like an angel but he's really a devil." Trump allies took a similarly pointed anti-rule of law stance, including in daily appearances outside the trial and a cacophony of unfair and false criticism following its conclusion.

We ignore leaders who promise dictatorship—and those who enable them—at our own peril. To see what America might become under Trump's authoritarian aspirations, we should look at the regimes of other contemporary autocrats, especially as Trump has been mirroring recent autocratic moves in Hungary and elsewhere. With great fanfare, Trump recently welcomed Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán to his Mar-a-Lago resort, Florida, and has long expressed his admiration for Orbán's leadership. The Hungarian's self-proclaimed drive toward an "illiberal state" has seen extensive democratic backsliding. He packed the judiciary to place that branch of government squarely under his control; rewrote election laws to retain his legislative majority; censored the press; used law enforcement to persecute his enemies; and changed Hungary's constitution to help achieve his autocratic goals—and he took that "blueprint on dismantling democracy to Mar-a-Lago." Trump and Orbán's continuing public alignment on key policy issues also "threatens trans-Atlantic security,"—despite Orban's repeated claims to the contrary—with the pair reportedly aligning on, among other this, the Russian-Ukraine war and eyeing an end to U.S. funding and aid to Ukraine. The United States, like many other functioning democracies, is hardly immune from backsliding and lurching toward autocracy.

Because past is prologue, it is also important to analyze relevant data points from the first Trump administration. We include considerable indicators of autocratic tendencies from 2017-2021, such as Trump's calling for his own Department of Justice to prosecute his political enemies, claiming that Article II of the Constitution gave him the authority to do "anything I wanted," shamelessly violating the Constitution's Emoluments Clause to use his government position to enrich himself and his family, and many more. That all culminated in the attempted interruption of the peaceful transfer of power following the 2020 election.

Below we organize Trump's and his allies' autocratic plans by topic, providing full citations to their comments and the factual record. We also offer some potential solutions to address the threat both now and should it come to pass in 2025. This full Threat Tracker will continue to be updated regularly.

For public reference, we have also created a searchable data set of all of Trump's Truth Social posts, which we will also update regularly. They are an important source for tracking the scope of his plans, although we have also drawn information from hundreds of other sources as shown in the links supporting each entry herein.

If you think we have missed something, please send recommendations to lte@justsecurity.org.

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I. Day 1 Dictatorship Promise: Immigration

- Dec. 6, 2023, Davenport, Iowa: Sean Hannity asked Trump whether Trump intended to abuse power or break the law, to which Trump answered, "Except for day one. I want to close the border, and I want to drill, drill, drill." Trump then immediately doubled down on the exchange, describing it for the audience using the word "dictator" – "He [Hannity] says, 'You're not going to be a dictator, are you?' I said: 'No, no, no, other than day one. We're closing the border, and we're drilling, drilling, drilling. After that, I'm not a dictator.'"
    - Dec. 11, 2023, New York: Less than one week later, Trump tripled down on his dictator comment. "I said I want to be a dictator for one day. You know why I wanted to be a dictator? Because I want a wall, and I want to drill, drill, drill."

    - April 12, 2024, Time Magazine interview: Trump said his dictator-for-a-day remarks were a joke, “That was said sarcastically as a joke on Sean Hannity. He said, ‘Do you want to be a dictator?’ I said, ‘Only for one day. I want to close up the border and I want to drill, baby, drill.’ Then I said, ‘After that, then I never want to be a dictator.’ That was done. That was said sarcastically. That was meant as a joke. Everybody knows that.”
        - April 12, 2024, Time Magazine interview: “No, no, wait. If you read it, it was a joke. I wanted to be for one day. You know why? Because we have an incompetent fool that’s allowing people to come into our country. We have an incompetent fool that drove energy prices so high over such a short period of time. And by the way, you know, he's gone to a lot of my policies now. But the day after the election, if they win, there won't be any more oil.”

- Trump’s most touted day one promise is to “seal the border” and carry out “the largest domestic deportation operation in the history of our country.”
    - May 11, 2024, Wildwood, NJ, Trump said: “[O]n day one, we will begin the largest domestic deportation operation in American history.” He also said that “On day one of my new administration, I will seal the border, stop the invasion of people pouring through our border and send Joe Biden's illegal aliens back home where they belong.”
    - April 2, 2024, Grand Rapids, MI: “On day one I will seal the border and we’ll begin the largest domestic deportation operation in the history of our country.”
    - April 2, 2024, Green Bay, WI, Trump said: “On day one, we will terminate every open borders policy of the Biden administration and begin the largest domestic deportation operation in American history, starting with all of the criminals that are pouring in the criminals and the terrorists.”
    - March 2, 2024, Greensboro, NC, Trump said: “And among my first actions upon taking office will be to … seal the border and stop the invasion of our country.” He later said: “On day one of my administration, I will terminate every open border policy of the Biden administration and we will begin the largest domestic deportation operation in American history.”
    - April 19, 2024, Trump campaign website states that “President Trump will secure the border on Day One and allow our brave Border Patrol agents to do their jobs,” according to Steven Cheung, Trump Campaign Communications Director.
    - On May 20, 2024, a 30-second video was posted onto Trump’s Truth Social page featuring hypothetical newspaper articles celebrating a purported 2024 presidential election victory, headlined, “What’s next for America?” and heralding “the creation of a unified Reich.” The articles were styled like early 20th-century newspapers, apparently recycling text from World War I reports, and included headlines such as, the “Border Is Closed” and “15 Million Illegal Aliens Deported,” as well as

        - The Trump campaign eventually deleted the post and insisted the video was created by a "random account" and posted by an unnamed campaign staffer.

- Trump's proposed immigration policies go far beyond securing the border and limiting illegal immigration. He has embraced ordering unlawful immigration roundups and travel bans, using the military domestically to purge undocumented immigrants, violating the Constitution's guarantee of birthright citizenship, and prosecuting American officials and organizations who don't comply with his policies.

- Trump has repeated his promise to "carry out the largest domestic deportation operation in American history" at least 15 times. His plan will significantly restrict both legal and illegal immigration by expanding and toughening draconian immigration and asylum measures introduced by his previous administration, causing millions of undocumented immigrants to be kicked out of the country even after years or decades of having lived here. His proposed policies will see individuals rushed "through the system, stripping due process protections from them, eliminating any access to legal services, and really transforming this into an assembly line deportation machine," according to the American Immigration Council's policy director.

- Trump and team seek to broadly abuse existing statutes to avoid congressional scrutiny. Despite acknowledging the array of lawsuits that would arise from his planned immigration policies, Stephen Miller, the former White House advisor who oversaw Trump's border efforts during the first administration, expressed defiance. He said that Trump's second term would utilize a "blitz" of tactics to overwhelm immigration lawyers that sought to challenge the lawfulness of policies. To ensure deportations are "radically more quick and efficient," Miller said, the Trump team would bring in "the right kinds of attorneys and the right kinds of policy thinkers" willing to carry out Trump's ideas.

- In November 2023, Stephen Miller, outlining the Trump team's plans for mass deportations, suggested to Charlie Kirk on the "Charlie Kirk Show" that another Trump administration would seek to deport as many as 10 million "foreign-national invaders."
    - *The Atlantic* reported that Miller's touted plans to achieve mass removals "understate the magnitude of the effort that mass deportations would require, Jason Houser, a former chief of staff at ICE under Biden, told me. Removing 500,000 to 1 million migrants a year could require as many as 100,000–150,000 deputized enforcement officers, Houser believes. Staffing the internment camps and constant flights that Miller is contemplating could require 50,000 more people, Houser said. 'If you want to deport a million a year—and I'm a Navy officer—you are talking a mobilization the size of a military deployment.' Houser [said.]"

- Trump's proposed immigration policies rely heavily on National Guard troops and military resources to assist law enforcement to purge undocumented immigrants, including via

raids. Additionally, a Trump administration would seek to reassign federal agents and deputize local law enforcement to play key roles in deportation operations, adding that he would offer officers immunity to be able to carry out their jobs effectively.

- As reported by *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *Axios*, *The Atlantic*, and *The Hill*, Trump's policies call for using military funds to hold undocumented detainees in newly built military-style camps, to get around any refusal by Congress to appropriate the funds (as he did in his first term to spend more on the wall than Congress had authorized). Trump's proposal calls for U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents to be sent into the streets to arrest millions, assisted by: (1) agents reassigned from the federal agencies such as the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Drug Enforcement Agency, Homeland Security, and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosive; (2) deputized local police officers and sheriffs; and (3) National Guard soldiers voluntarily provided by Republican-run states.
    - Note that under the previous Trump administration, ICE's controversial 287(g) program grew rapidly. It gives state and local enforcement officers, primarily sheriffs, federal powers to question, arrest and detain suspected undocumented immigrants.
- April 27, 2023, Manchester, NH, Trump said: "We will use all necessary state, local, federal, ***and military*** resources to carry out the largest domestic deportation operation in American history." (emphasis added)
- April 12, 2024, Time Magazine interview, in response to a follow up question about whether Trump's plan includes using the military to deport undocumented immigrants, Trump said: "It would. When we talk military, generally speaking, I talk National Guard. I've used the National Guard in Minneapolis. And if I didn't use it, I don't think you'd have Minneapolis standing right now, because it was really bad. But I think in terms of the National Guard. But if I thought things were getting out of control, I would have no problem using the military, per se." "I can see myself using the National Guard and, if necessary, I'd have to go a step further. We have to do whatever we have to do to stop the problem we have."
- Stephen Miller told the "Charlie Kirk Show" in November 2023 that the Trump administration would dispatch forces to "go around the country arresting illegal immigrants in large-scale raids." To assist ICE in the large-scale, highly complex task ahead, which Miller compared to "building the Panama Canal," he said agents would be reassigned from other other federal law-enforcement agencies, local police and sheriffs would be deputized, and the National Guard troops would participate.
    - For National Guard troop involvement, one scenario would be where Republican governors want to cooperate. "You go to the red-state governors and you say, 'Give us your National Guard,'" Miller said. "We will deputize them as immigration-enforcement officers." The second scenario, Miller said, would involve sending troops from nearby Republican-controlled states into what he described as an "unfriendly state" whose governor would not willingly join the removal program. "The

Alabama National Guard is going to arrest illegal aliens in Alabama and the Virginia National Guard in Virginia," Miller said, adding, "And if you're going to go into an unfriendly state like Maryland, well, they would just be Virginia doing the arrests in Maryland, right? Very close, very nearby."

- (*See* further reporting on Miller's podcast interview, including some of the impracialities of his touted plans, by *The Atlantic* and *The Washington Post*.)

- Speaking to *The New York Times*, Stephen Miller described the camps as "vast holding facilities that would function as staging centers" for immigrants as their cases progress through the system. The camps would be built "on open land in Texas near the border." "He said the military would construct them under the authority and control of the Department of Homeland Security. While he cautioned that there were no specific blueprints yet, he said the camps would look professional and similar to other facilities for migrants that have been built near the border." Miller confirmed a very similar plan in his podcast interview with Charlie Kirk.
  - April 12, 2024, Time Magazine interview: When asked about building new migrant detention camps as suggested by Stephen Miller, Trump said: "It's possible that we'll do it to an extent but we shouldn't have to do very much of it, because we're going to be moving them out as soon as we get to it. And we'll be obviously starting with the criminal element."
- Stephen Miller said in November 2023 that military aircraft and Homeland Security assets will be used in the Trump administration's plan to implement near-constant flights to return migrants home. "So you create this efficiency by having these standing facilities where planes are moving off the runway constantly, probably military aircraft, some existing DHS assets."
- Jan. 25, 2024, via Truth Social, Trump called for states to send their National Guards to the border in Texas to assist Gov. Greg Abbott in what the governor calls a continuing effort to enforce "Trump's Historic Border Security Legacy." "We encourage all willing States to deploy their guards to Texas to prevent the entry of Illegals, and to remove them back across the Border. All Americans should support the commonsense measures by Texas authorities to protect the Safety, Security, and Sovereignty of Texas, and of the American people. When I am President, on Day One, instead of fighting Texas, I will work hand in hand with Governor Abbott and other Border States to Stop the Invasion, Seal the Border, and Rapidly Begin the Largest Domestic Deportation Operation in History. Those Biden has let in should not get comfortable because they will be going home," the statement read.
- Feb. 29, 2024, Eagle Pass, TX, speaking at a press conference attended by Texas Gov. Greg Abbott and Texas and border patrol officials near the U.S.-Mexico border during a campaign visit, Trump embraced efforts by the head of the Texas Military Department Maj. Gen. Thomas Suelzer and the Gov. Abbott to combat the "war" at the U.S.-Mexico border in Texas, including expanding

military camps which involves establishing a “Forward Operating Base” to house Texas National Guard soldiers.
    - Gov. Abbott ”really stepped it up. It's been amazing ….This is an incredible operation.” Trump told the press conference, adding, “I want to thank the governor and the entire group of people behind me. I would call them ’staff’ and I would call them ‘representatives and generals.’ They are unbelievable people. The job they’ve done so quickly and so effectively. Congratulations. Congratulations.”
- April 2, 2024, Grand Rapids, MI, Trump said: “Somebody said ‘how will you get these criminals out?’ I say, ‘the sheriffs, the police, the police officers, the police, law enforcement.’” “And we’re gonna work out a federal immunity for police so they’re allowed to do their job without losing their house and their pension and everything else when the…liberal governors and mayors don't back them.” He later added, “I will shift massive portions of federal law enforcement to immigration enforcement.”
- April 2, 2024, Green Bay, WI, Trump said: “Local police” will be used “to tell us who” the “criminals and the terrorists” are “pouring” into our country. “Our local police know their names and middle names and phone numbers. They know everything about them.” He later added, “I will shift massive portions of federal law enforcement to immigration enforcement. We’re gonna do immigration enforcement, not paperwork, we’re doing all paperwork.”
- Feb. 29, 2024, Fox News interview in Texas, Trump, referring to what he calls “Biden migrant crime,” reaffirmed his plan to use local police officers to implement his intended mass deportation of undocumented migrants. He also said he would give officers “immunity” for them to carry out their jobs. “And the way you do it is your local police. We have the greatest police. They don’t get the respect they have to get. They are treated so badly. They do something and they end up losing their pension, even if it’s a good thing. If they stop crime nowadays they lose their pension, their family, their house. And we’re gonna give immunity to police. And we’re gonna let the police do the job they have to do … they understand who these migrants are. They know them by their first name, their last name, they know where they come from. It’s going to be the local police who are going to turn them over and we are gonna have to move them back to their country,” Trump told Fox News’ Sean Hannity.
    - Trump’s interview was given the same day that a federal judge in Texas temporarily paused a state law, known as Senate Bill 4 (SB 4), from taking effect on March 5 that would have granted local authorities and judges powers to arrest and undocumented persons suspected of illegally crossing the U.S. border. Gov. Abbott has vowed to appeal the decision made in favor of the plaintiffs (civil rights groups and the DOJ).
- March 2, 2024, Greensboro, NC, Trump said: “If Joe Biden’s illegal alien migrants do not go back to their countries, we will never get our country back. But we’re gonna take them back because they’re not going to go back. We’re gonna take them back. Fast. It’s gonna happen quickly. Local police. You know,

the local police know every one of them. Somebody said, 'How are you going to do that?' It's not a Washington thing, it's the local police." He later added: "Our law enforcement is great. And as I told you, when we do deportation, they know the real bad ones. They know all the local. They know them by their first name, their second name, and their middle name, wouldn't you say? They know the good ones and the bad ones. And they're gonna to be working with the federal government on getting them the hell out of here."

- April 12, 2024, Time Magazine interview: Trump said, "We will be using local law enforcement. And we will absolutely start with the criminals that are coming in." "And we're going to be using local police because local police know them by name, by first name, second name, and third name. I mean, they know them very well."
- Trump has said that undocumented immigrants are not civilians and that he would not be violating the Posse Comitatus Act's ban on military enforcement of civil laws by using the military to deport these immigrants.
  - April 12, 2024, Time Magazine interview, Trump said: "Well, these aren't civilians. These are people that aren't legally in our country. This is an invasion of our country. An invasion like probably no country has ever seen before."
- May 11, 2024, Wildwood, NJ, Trump said: "I will shift massive portions of federal law enforcement to immigration enforcement."

- Stephen Miller said that the Trump administration would again try to overturn the *Flores* settlement, which forbids the government from indefinitely holding children.

- Trump plans to invoke the Insurrection Act at the border and use the military to detain migrants.
  - Confirming late last year Trump's plan to invoke the Act, Stephen Miller said, "Bottom line…President Trump will do whatever it takes."
  - In May 2019, multiple senior Trump administration officials confirmed the president's intent to use "tremendous powers" under the Act to remove immigrants.
  - In February 2019, Trump was reportedly "a few sentences away" from using the military to "forcibly expel" migrants from a caravan heading toward the southern border, according to a book by Miles Taylor, Trump's then chief of staff at the Department of Homeland Security.

- Trump has pledged to invoke the Alien Enemies Act, which applies only where there is a declared war with or a threat of invasion by a foreign nation, to speedily and unilaterally deport from the United States all suspected gang members, drug dealers or cartel members, circumventing ICE deportation processes and due process.[1]

[1] A *Just Security* essay on "What Should Courts do if a Future President Invokes the Alien Enemies Act to Deport Immigrants?" notes that the courts would likely be hesitant to weigh in on

- Nov. 4, 2023, Florida Freedom Summit: Trump said, “This is a bomb that’s waiting to happen…And I will invoke the Alien Enemies Act to remove all known and suspected gang members, like MS-13, drug dealers and Cartel members from the United States.”
- Sept. 20, 2023, Dubuque, IA: Trump said: “I’ll...invoke immediately the Alien Enemies Act to remove all known or suspected gang members…the drug dealers, the cartel members from the United States, ending the scourge of illegal alien gang violence once and for all.”
- June 25, 2023, Twitter: The Trump campaign posted, “Invoke the Alien Enemies Act to remove all known or suspected Gang Members, drug dealers, or Cartel Members from the U.S.” The post was reposted by Stephen Miller, who added, “Huge. Trump pledging to invoke Alien Enemies Act to remove the cartel invaders from the United States.”
- June 24, 2023, Washington, DC: Trump said, “I will invoke the Alien Enemies Act...to remove all known and suspected gang members, drug dealers, or cartel members from the United States.”

- Trump has said he plans to reimpose and expand his administration’s previous predominantly Muslim country travel ban. Alongside his planned travel ban, Trump has said he intends to suspend refugee admissions. In January 2017, in tandem with Trump’s travel ban, he also suspended the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program (USRAP). He went on to do so again around the start of the Covid-19 pandemic, and later cut the number of admissions to a “record low.”
  - Oct. 28, 2023, annual summit of the Republican Jewish Coalition, LV, Trump said: “You remember the travel ban? On day one I will restore our travel ban.”
  - May 1, 2024, Waukesha, WI, Trump said: “On day one of the Trump presidency I’m restoring the travel ban, suspending refugee admissions, and keeping terrorists the hell out of our country.”
  - July 7, 2023, Iowa: Trump said, “When I return to office, the travel ban is coming back even bigger than before and much stronger than before. We don't want people blowing up our shopping centers. We don't want people blowing up our cities. And we don’t want people stealing our farms.”
  - Oct. 17, 2023, Newsweek op-ed, Trump said: “we are going to expand each and every ban to keep America safe. We aren't bringing in anyone from Gaza or Syria or Somalia or Yemen, or Libya, or anywhere else that threatens our security.”
  - Oct. 16, 2023, Clive, Iowa: Trump said, “As I’ve already said many, many times before, I will immediately reinstate and expand the wildly successful Trump travel

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critical questions regarding the Act’s language, including “presence or absence of an invasion or predatory incursion, and they are even less likely to probe whether the perpetrator of the supposed invasion or incursion is a foreign nation or government.” This further “heightens” Trump’s risk of abusing the law, “despite its clear inapplicability.” The courts may however be more open to striking down “an invocation of the … Act under modern due process and equal protection law, justiciable grounds for checking abusive presidential action.” And of course, Congress could also tighten the law, which would be the “most certain safeguard.”

ban…We aren't bringing in anyone from Gaza, Syria, Somalia, Yemen, or Libya, or anywhere else that threatens our security."
    - Sept. 20, 2023, Iowa: Trump said he would "expand" the ban "even further to keep Radical Islamic Terrorists out of our country."

- Trump plans to use ideological purity tests for immigrant applicants and to deport resident aliens–foreign nationals who are in the U.S. legally. In pledging to disqualify immigrants who sympathize with islamic terrorists, Trump has lumped in groups he characterizes as communists, Marxists, and fascists. Trump's "strong ideological screening" reportedly will be led by U.S. consular officials, with screening to include searching social media accounts (a practice that began under the Trump administration). Note that ICE and top White House lawyers under the former Trump administration concluded that ideological screenings on foreign nationals would be illegal to implement.
    - Oct. 17, 2023, *Newsweek* op-ed, Trump said: "Next, we will implement strong ideological screening for all immigrants to the United States. No longer will we allow dangerous lunatics, haters, bigots, and maniacs to get residency in our country. If you empathize with Radical Islamic terrorists and extremists, you're disqualified. If you want to abolish the state of Israel, you're disqualified. If you support Hamas or the ideology behind Hamas, you're disqualified. And if you're a Communist, Marxist, or Fascist, you are disqualified."
    - Oct. 17, 2023, *Newsweek* op-ed, Trump said: "Under my administration, we will proactively send ICE to pro-jihadist demonstrations to enforce our immigration laws and remove the violators from our country."
    - Oct 16, 2023, Iowa: Trump said, "Next we will implement strong ideological screening of all immigrants to the United States. No longer will we allow dangerous lunatics, haters, bigots, and maniacs to get residency in our country. We're not gonna let them stay here. We're...gonna have the largest deportation effort in history."
    - Oct. 16, 2023, Iowa: Trump said, "If you empathize with Radical Islamic terrorists and extremists, you're disqualified. You're just disqualified. If you want to abolish the state of Israel, you're disqualified. If you support Hamas or the ideology that's having to do with that, or any of the other really sick thoughts that go through people's minds, very dangerous thoughts. You're disqualified if you're a Communist, a Marxist, or a Fascist, other than the people that are already here you are, of which many are in the Biden administration, you're disqualified. We'd like to get them out too. Maybe we'll work on that."
    - Oct. 16, 2023, Iowa: Trump said, "We'll aggressively deport resident aliens with jihadist sympathies. We have to."
    - Sept. 20, 2023, Iowa: Trump said he would use existing law to "expand" his travel ban and "deny entry" into the U.S. for "communists and Marxists."
    - June 24, 2023, Washington, DC: Trump said he would use Section 212(f) of the Immigration and Nationality Act to "order my government to deny entry to all communists and all Marxists." "Those who come to enjoy our country must love our country." "We're going to keep foreign, Christian-hating communists, Marxists

and socialists out of America." Trump also said that there was a need for a "new law" to address Americans he characterizes as communists and Marxists but didn't elaborate any further.
    - May 11, 2024, Wildwood, NJ, Trump said: "And if you come here from another country and try to bring jihadism or anti-Americanism or anti-Semitism to our campuses, we will immediately deport you, you'll be out of that school."

- Trump again said he plans to end birthright citizenship for babies born in the United States to undocumented parents, in violation of the Fourteenth Amendment.
    - June 10, 2023, Georgia GOP Convention: "We're going to do an Executive Order Day One, so important, ending automatic citizenship for children of illegal aliens."
    - May 30, 2023, video posted on X: "As part of my plan to secure the border on Day 1…I will sign an executive order making clear to federal agencies that under the correct interpretation of the law, going forward, the future children of illegal aliens will not receive automatic U.S. citizenship."
    - Oct. 29, 2018, Axios interview: "It was always told to me that you needed a constitutional amendment. Guess what? You don't." "You can definitely do it with an Act of Congress. But now they're saying I can do it just with an executive order." "We're the only country in the world where a person comes in and has a baby, and the baby is essentially a citizen of the United States ... with all of those benefits." "It's ridiculous. It's ridiculous. And it has to end." "It's in the process. It'll happen...with an executive order."

- Trump could significantly expand "expedited removals" in order to fast track deportations of those in the United States without authorization. Instead of using such removals for those picked up within 100 miles to the border and soon after crossing, Trump is reported to want to use the sped-up process for those who have been in the country for extended periods of time as he did previously.

- Trump has pledged to terminate all work permits and housing benefits for undocumented immigrants, as well as clamp down on other "tax-payer giveaways" to purportedly save Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security.
    - Nov. 4, 2023, Florida Freedom Summit: Trump said, "On day one I will shut down this travesty and terminate all work permits for illegal aliens and demand that Congress send me a bill outlawing all welfare payments to illegal migrants of any kind."
    - Nov. 1, 2023, campaign video: Trump said, "I will reinstate my action making illegals ineligible for public housing."
    - Nov. 1, 2023, campaign video: Trump said, "We will terminate all work permits for illegal aliens, and I will demand that Congress send me a bill blocking any future president from abusing his power to distribute welfare benefits in this manner."
    - May 11, 2024, Wildwood, NJ, speaking on the purported impact of immigration is having on healthcare and Social Security, Trump said: "Day one of the Trump administration, we will cut off all of Biden's taxpayer giveaways to illegal aliens."

He later added: “We will rescue our healthcare system from Joe Biden's migrant invasion. It was recently announced that crooked Joe is now giving Obamacare and all free government health care to illegal aliens.”

- Trump has vowed to prosecute charities, nonprofits and aid organizations that support immigration and asylum (note: the autocratic playbook of cracking down on nongovernmental organizations as “foreign agents”).
    - Nov. 4, 2023, Florida Freedom Summit, Trump said: “And for any radical left charity, non-profit or so called aid organizations supporting these caravans and illegal aliens, we will prosecute them for their participation in human trafficking, child smuggling and every other crime we can find.”

- Trump said he intends to use criminal penalties for bureaucrats who do not comply with his “total ban on … using taxpayer dollars to free illegal aliens.”
    - Dec. 21, 2022, Truth Social: Trump posted, “NO AMNESTY! Our border is open because Joe Biden has ordered it to be open and because Biden has broken the law and torn it into shreds. He has shredded our system, and he is destroying our Country. We need a total ban on Biden using taxpayer dollars to free illegal aliens — and criminal penalties for administrative noncompliance, which happens every single minute of every single day.”

- Those permitted a temporary stay on humanitarian grounds would lose that status and be deported, including tens of thousands of the Afghans evacuated during the 2021 Taliban takeover and granted entry to the United States. Also, Afghans who hold special visas granted for their help to U.S. forces would be revetted to check if they really did offer support.

- Trump has refused to rule out the possibility of reimplementing his highly-criticized policy that separated families at the southern border.
    - May 11, 2023, Goffstown, NH: During a *CNN* Town Hall, Trump said, “Well, when you have that policy, people don’t come. If a family hears they’re going to be separated, they love their family, they don’t come. So I know it sounds harsh,” Pressed further by the moderator, Trump resisted giving a firm answer. “We have to save our country,” he said. “When you say to a family that if you come we’re going to break you up, they don’t come.”

- Stephen Miller said Trump plans to again try to end Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), an Obama-era program that provides protection from deportation and grants work to those who were brought unlawfully to the United States as children. In June 2020, in a 5-4 opinion, the Supreme Court blocked Trump’s attempt to end DACA on procedural grounds.

- Trump wants to refuse asylum claims by reimposing Title 42, a policy he used during Covid-19 by claiming that migrants carry infectious diseases like tuberculosis and other communicable diseases.
    - June 30, 2023, Moms for Liberty Event, Trump said, “And I will use Title 42...to end the child trafficking crisis by returning all trafficked children to their families in their home countries immediately.”

- Trump has said he plans to end sanctuary cities that limit cooperation with federal immigration authorities, renewing his previous administration’s attacks on the policy.
    - April 2, 2024, Grand Rapids, MI: “We will end deadly sanctuary cities immediately.”
    - April 2, 2024, Green Bay, WI, Trump said: “And we will end deadly sanctuary cities.”
    - May 11, 2024, Wildwood, NJ, Trump said: “We will shut down deadly sanctuary cities, such as Newark and Philadelphia. We will not let criminals come into those cities.”

- Key former figures in the Trump administration who would likely be back at the decision-making table have given glimpses into their immigration-related plans.
    - Trump’s former key immigration adviser, Stephen Miller, is expected to play a “senior role” in Trump’s administration, pushing ahead on reinvigorating the administration’s previous hard stance on immigration and asylum issues. Miller wielded great influence over Trump’s previous immigration policies. Only days after Trump took office in 2017, Miller began gathering a group of bureaucrats perceived to be loyal to Trump to start drafting executive orders; and in recent interviews he has essentially boasted that he would move even faster and more forcefully, again recruiting swathes of loyalist lawyers. Note that Miller also leads the conservative legal group “America First Legal,” which “has a board seat with Project 2025.”
        - *NYT*, Nov. 1, 2023, Miller said: “Any activists who doubt President Trump’s resolve in the slightest are making a drastic error: Trump will unleash the vast arsenal of federal powers to implement the most spectacular migration crackdown…The immigration legal activists won’t know what’s happening.”
        - *NYT*, Nov. 1, 2023, Miller said: “Mass deportation will be a labor-market disruption celebrated by American workers, who will now be offered higher wages with better benefits to fill these jobs.” “Americans will also celebrate the fact that our nation’s laws are now being applied equally, and that one select group is no longer magically exempt.”
        - *Axios, Aug. 21, 2023*, Miller said: “The first 100 days of the Trump administration will be pure bliss — followed by another four years of the most hard-hitting action conceivable.”

        - *Axios, Aug. 21, 2023*, Miller said: Being in lockstep with Trump's immigration goals would be "non-negotiable priority" for any applicant hoping to secure a spot in Trump's administration.
    - Tom Homan, former Acting Director of ICE under the Trump administration, recounted a meeting he had with Trump soon after he announced his 2024 campaign.
        - *NYT*, Nov. 1, 2023, Homan said: I "agreed to come back" in a second Trump term and would "help to organize and run the largest deportation operation this country's ever seen."
        - *Fox News*, Dec. 17, 2023, Homan said in an interview with Fox News, "People say, 'How are you going to remove millions?' The answer is: One at a time." "No one's off the table. If you're in the country illegally in violation of immigration law, you are a target." "It's going to have to result in a historic — the biggest ever — deportation operation in the history of this country. That's what happens. When you've got historic illegal immigration, well, that means you've got a historic removal program. That's just the way it is. If we're going to enforce our laws, that's the way it is." "We're not going to turn a blind eye to them if they're in the country illegally. We take them into custody. That's our job. So, it isn't like we walk through a neighborhood looking for people who look different from us. These are targeted enforcement operations."

- Trump has continued to use inflammatory and xenophobic rhetoric against immigrants whom he has likened to "animals" and says seek to "invade" and "poison the blood" of the United States. Trump himself has used the phrase "stop the invasion" at least 10 times.
    - March 17, 2024, Fox News interview, confronted on his use of words like "animals," "vermin," and "poisoning of the blood," which echo the language of Hitler and Mussolini, Trump defended his statements that "our country is being poisoned." "We can be nice about it, we can talk about, 'Oh, I want to be politically correct,' but we have people coming in from prisons and jails, long-term murderers, people with sentences that the rest of their lives they're going to spend in some jail in some country that many people have never even heard of. They're all being released into our country." He continued: "These are people at the highest level of crime, and then you have mental institutions and insane asylums — I always say the difference is one is 'Silence of the Lambs,' you know, it's a mental institution on steroids, OK? — and those mental institutions and insane asylums are being emptied out into the United States, and then you have terrorists pouring in at levels we have never seen before."
    - March 16, 2024, Daytona, OH, again promising to carry out the "largest domestic deportation operation in American history," Trump said, "Young people, they're in jail for years, if you call them people, I don't know if you call them people. In some cases they are not people, in my opinion, but I'm not allowed to say that because

the radical left say, 'that's a terrible thing'." "These are animals, okay, and we have to stop it," he said.

- Trump said, "We're gonna get them out fast. We're gonna have the largest deportation operation in history," before proceeding to read the lyrics of the song "The Snake," as he often has since 2016, which he called a "very accurate metaphor" for the U.S.-Mexico border and those "people we have coming in." "We're taking in snakes, we're taking in snakes," Trump said after ending the poem. "These are tougher than anyone we've got in the country. These are hardened criminals and we've got hundreds of thousands of them." He referred to one person as an "illegal monster."

- April 2, 2024, Grand Rapids, MI, Trump described immigrants as "animals" and "not humans." According to *Politico*, Trump likened undocumented immigrants to "animals" nearly half a dozen times. As the crowd waited for Trump, "a short video featuring grisly clips of news reports documenting crimes allegedly committed by immigrants played over dramatic music." Speaking on the death of Laken Riley, Trump referred to her suspected killer as "an illegal alien animal." "The Democrats say, 'Please don't call them animals. They're humans.' I said, 'No, they're not humans, they're not humans, they're animals." He went on to say, "I'll tell you that the illegal alien trespassers, they must go back to their homes, they have to go back because no country, no country can stand this invasion." "It's wrecking our civilization."
- April 2, 2024, Green Bay, WI, Trump said: "With your vote, I will seal the border, I will stop the invasion, I will end the carnage, bloodshed and killing, and we will crush the human traffickers. You know, they traffic in women, mostly in women. We will vanquish the child smugglers. And we will liberate this nation from crooked Joe and his migrant armies of dangerous criminals once and for all. This is an invasion of our country. And by the way, hundreds of thousands of people between the drugs that come in the border and all of the death that's brought into the border in so many different ways. Hundreds of thousands of people are being killed in our country every year. If we had a war with a country like Mexico, we wouldn't lose people like that. This is bigger than a war." "We are being invaded and invaded by a lot of people that are people we don't want in our country. I will never, ever let that happen," Trump said, later adding, "And think of it, the legions and legions of Biden migrants pouring into the [country,] it's really becoming a third world country, we are actually becoming if you think about it a third world country, and we're not going to let that happen."
- March 9, 2024 Rome, GA, Trump said: "I will seal the border … and I will stop this invasion … I will end … the conquest of our country. They're conquered our country. These people are conquering our country. They're horrible people."
- Feb. 29, 2024, Fox News interview, Trump said to Sean Hannity, "So it's a very terrible thing what's — our country is being poisoned. We're really being poisoned."

- Jan. 25, 2024, Truth Social, Trump said: “When I was President, we had the most secure Border in History. Joe Biden has surrendered our Border, and is aiding and abetting a massive Invasion of millions of Illegal Migrants into the United States. Instead of fighting to protect our Country from this onslaught, Biden is, unbelievably, fighting to tie the hands of Governor Abbott and the State of Texas, so that the Invasion continues unchecked. In the face of this National Security, Public Safety, and Public Health Catastrophe, Texas has rightly invoked the Invasion Clause of the Constitution, and must be given full support to repel the Invasion.”
- Jan. 5, 2024, Sioux Center, IA: Trump said: “But a vote for Donald Trump in these caucuses is a vote to secure our border. It’s a vote to stop the invasion of millions of people from parts unknown. We don’t even know where the hell they come from. They come from parts unknown.”
- Dec. 16, 2023, Durham, NH, Trump said: “They're poisoning the blood of our country,” adding, “all over the world they are pouring into our country.”
- Nov. 8, 2023, Hialeah, FL: Trump said: “Anybody ever hear of Hannibal Lecter? “He was a nice fellow. But that’s what’s coming into our country right now.”
- September 2023 interview with *The National Pulse*, Trump said that immigration into the United States is “poisoning the blood of our country.” “Nobody has any idea where these people are coming from, and we know they come from prisons. We know they come from mental institutions and insane asylums. We know they’re terrorists. Nobody has ever seen anything like we’re witnessing right now. It is a very sad thing for our country. It’s poisoning the blood of our country. It’s so bad, and people are coming in with disease. People are coming in with every possible thing that you could have.”
- March 13, 2023, Davenport, IA, Trump said: “And I said, ‘This is an invasion of our country.’ And it is, by the way. This is an invasion of our country, what’s coming across our border. It’s no different than soldiers. And they’re bringing a lot of different problems than soldiers would bring. They’re not bringing merely bullets. They’re bringing plenty of them, but they’re causing tremendous problems for our country. And it’s a problem that we may have a very, very long…Unless we do something quickly, and we have to do it smart, and we have to work with law enforcement to do it properly, it’s not going to be easy, but they’re hurting our country. They’re killing the blood, the lifestream of our country, and we’re going to do something about it.”
- March 5, 2023, CPAC, Trump said: “Other countries are emptying out their prisons, insane asylums and mental institutions and sending all of their problems right into their dumping ground: the U.S.A…We have complete chaos. Fentanyl is pouring in. Families are being wiped out, destroyed, and there’s death everywhere, all caused by incompetence.”
- Nov. 14, 2022, Mar-a-Lago, Trump said: “Our Southern border has been erased, and our country is being invaded by millions and millions of unknown people…We’re being poisoned.”

- March 2, 2024, Greensboro, NC, Trump said: “And among my first actions upon taking office will be to…seal the border and stop the invasion of our country.”
- May 11, 2024, Wildwood, NJ, Trump spoke about the “border invasion,” which he also called the “Biden invasion.” He said, “on day one, we will begin the largest domestic deportation operation in American history.” He also said, “On day one of my new administration, I will seal the border, stop the invasion of people pouring through our border and send Joe Biden's illegal aliens back home where they belong.” He warned, “Millions and millions of people are taking over our cities or suburbs. It cannot be sustained by any country.” After reading the lyrics of the song “The Snake,” as he often does when criticizing immigrants during his campaign rallies, Trump went on to say: “When I return to the White House, we will stop the plunder, rape, slaughter, and destruction of the American suburbs, cities and towns. They’re destroying your cities. They're destroying your towns and suburbs.”
- May 1, 2024, Waukesha, WI, Trump said: “But we're going to immediately seal the border, we're going to stop the invasion, we're going to send Joe Biden's illegal aliens back home, where they belong, we're going to send them back home where they belong. In addition to criminals, drugs, terrorists, mental patients, Joe Biden's border catastrophe is also bringing colossal costs, unbelievable costs of being brought in by this catastrophe on our border. Crooked Joe is flooding our country, with millions and millions of low wage migrants from crime ridden countries all over the world. This isn't just South America, they’re come from all over the world. Last week, 22 from the Congo in Africa. They're coming from Africa, they're coming from Asia, they're coming from the Middle East.” Trump later said: “But it should be no surprise that in addition to the millions and millions of people invading our country from the border, crooked Joe is now reportedly planning…to bring massive numbers of Gazans from the Middle East…to your American towns, your towns and villages. Your towns and villages will now be accepting people from Gaza. Lots of people from Gaza and, and various other places, Yemen, lots of other places…He's now delivering thousands. He just announced last night he's going to deliver thousands of people to a town near you. Joe Biden seems…determined to create the conditions for an October 7 style attack right here in America. It's gonna happen. with all of these people coming in from the southern border, you know.” And add “That for a year and a half they've been actually flying planes in and landing in towns all over the country. And they're flying them in by the thousands. They're flying them in, going over the border, they are flying them in.”
- May 1, 2024, Waukesha, WI, Trump said: “Under no circumstances shall we bring thousands of refugees from Hamas-controlled terrorist epicenters, like Gaza to America. We just can't do it. You know, we also have to run our country. It's nice to be nice. It's nice to be good. We got to run our country, our country's in trouble. Our country might not survive. I'll tell you what, if we don't win this election, I don't think our country is going to survive. I will say it and I've never said that publicly, I don't think. But I felt it for a long time. I actually think our

country is not going to survive. There are plenty of neighboring Muslim countries to take them, they should take them. They don't want them by the way. They don't want them, they don't want them. We do not need a Jihad in the United States of America. We do not need our once great cities to become hotbeds of terrorism."

- April 6 2024, Palm Beach, FL, speaking at a multimillion-dollar fund-raiser, Trump said, "These are people coming in from prisons and jails. They're coming in from just unbelievable places and countries, countries that are a disaster," the *New York Times* reported. Seemingly referring to an instance during his presidency when he called Haiti and some African nations "shithole countries," compared to some European countries, Trump went on to say: "And when I said, you know,' Why can't we allow people to come in from nice countries,' I'm trying to be nice," adding, "Nice countries, you know like Denmark, Switzerland? Do we have any people coming in from Denmark? How about Switzerland? How about Norway?" He continued, "And you know, they took that as a very terrible comment, but I felt it was fine."

- Trump has echoed the white supremacist conspiracy theory known as the "Great Replacement." This ideology—which has garnered support from MAGA Republicans, MAGA media, and beyond—alleges that Democrats and elites intend to dilute the white American population and improve electoral gains by bringing non-white migrants into the country.
  - March 2, 2024, Richmond, VA, Trump said: "They're trying to sign them up to get them to vote in the next election." "Every day Joe Biden is giving aid and comfort to the foreign enemies of the United States. Biden's conduct on our border is by any definition, a conspiracy to overthrow the United States of America."
  - March 2, 2024, Greensboro, NC, Trump said: "Biden's conduct on our border is by any definition a conspiracy to overthrow the United States of America." "Biden and his accomplices want to collapse the American system, nullify the will of the actual American voters and establish a new base of power that gives them control for generations." "Joe Biden is giving aid and comfort to foreign enemies of the United States." He later went on to state: "They're coming from China. 29,000 people in the last three months from China. They all happen to be of the age from 18 to 25. What the hell is going on with that?...You know, that's called 'military fighting age,' right? That's called, 'prime fighting age.' Dana White of the UFC says I like fighters from 18 to 25. That's what's coming in from China 18 to 25."
  - May 1, 2024, Waukesha, WI, Trump said: "Why would somebody want to have people pouring into our country, unvetted unchecked, we know nothing about them? Even from a health standpoint, they're coming and they have problems. It's sad. But those problems are contagious, other people will get those problems. Why would, why would anybody want this?" Trump went on to give three explanations. First, "They hate our country." Second, "They're stupid." Finally, he added, "And the other thing is that they want those votes, you know,

and you wouldn't think they could do them that quickly. But they're trying to sign people up that just got here that don't speak a word of English, that have lived in prisons and lived in mental institutions, they want the vote."

- April 2, 2024, Grand Rapids, MI, Trump said: "Many of them are military age, which is very strange. You don't see very many women coming in and you see a lot of them coming in, they're about 19 to 25, 26 years old. Especially from China. We have 29,000 over the last few months. 29,000 from China, and they all seem to be perfectly fit for military service, ready for military service. It's crazy."
- Feb. 29, 2024, Eagle Pass, TX, Trump told Texas state officials that Biden is "allowing thousands and thousands of people to come in from China, Iran, Yemen, the Congo, Syria and a lot of other nations. Many nations are not very friendly to us. He's transported the entire columns of fighting-age men and they're all at a certain age and you look at them, and I said 'they look like warriors to me, something's going on.' It's bad."
- Feb. 29, 2024, Fox News interview, "They're coming from numbers and countries that you wouldn't believe. So you have 28,000 from China, all fighting-age. You don't see women and you don't see men much older than that. It's from 18 to 25, 26 years old." "Well, China has, as of today, 29,000 young men, for the most part, in our country for the last three or four months. There's something going on. Look, there's something going on." Speaking on those leading current immigration policies, Trump said, "So there's two things that you think of. Number one, they maybe want the votes. I think they're gonna get these people registered to vote…Either they're stupid or they hate our country."
- April 12, 2024, Mar-a-Lago, during a joint press conference with Trump, House Speaker Mike Johnson also spouted similar rhetoric that, "by design," Biden is pumping undocumented migrants into the United States to affect the election.
    - He said: "And election integrity is tied to border, the lack of border security. President Biden has created a catastrophe and he did it by design." He then said: "But among the problems that flows from this open border catastrophe is directly related to this threat to our election integrity. Why is that? You need to understand something really important about federal law. Since 1993, the National Voter Registration Act, we call it 'The Motor Voter Law, allows people to sign up to vote when they get a driver's license. If an individual only asserts or simply states that they are a citizen, they don't have to prove it, they can register that person to vote in a federal election. And you see states are currently prohibited, believe it or not, the states are prohibited from asking someone to prove that they're a citizen…The federal voter registration form just has a checker box. And if you do that, you're good. The states can allow. We think that's a serious problem. And so what we're going to do is, the House Republicans are introducing a bill that will require proof of citizenship to vote. It seems like common sense. I'm sure all of us would agree, we only want US citizens to vote in US elections. But there are some Democrats who don't want to do that. We believe that one of their designs, one of the

reasons for this open border, which everybody asked all around the country, ‘Why would they do this? Why would they allow this chaos? Why the violence?’ Because they want to turn these people into voters. Right now, the administration is encouraging illegals to go to their local welfare office to sign up for benefits. Well, guess what, when you go to a welfare office they also ask you if you would like to register to vote, and so many people, we think are going to do that. And you know, what, the numbers are so high, there's so many millions of illegals in the country, that if only one out of 100 voted, they would cast potentially hundreds of thousands of votes in the election. That could turn an election. This could be a tied election in our congressional races around the country. It could, if there are enough votes, affect the presidential election. And so that's why House Republicans are going to act. I'm going to announce today, here stand alongside President Trump, that we will do everything within our power to ensure that we do have free and fair elections in this country. If we don't have that in a constitutional republic, we have nothing. It’s the basis of who we are as a nation, and we owe that to the American people. And so what we're going to do is introduce legislation to require that every single person who registers the vote in a federal election must prove that they're an American citizen first. You have to prove it. That will be a new part of the federal law and a very important one. Our bill will establish new safeguards that will put us on par, by the way, with virtually every other democracy around the world that also prohibits non-citizen voting. And this is a critical thing for us to do at a very critical time. Our bill also requires states to remove non-citizens from their existing voter rolls. That's a big problem too. And, and it will provide access to databases from the Department of Homeland Security and the Social Security Administration to help the states administer this. As the entity that is responsible for regulating federal elections, Congress has this responsibility. We cannot wait for widespread fraud to occur or to occur, especially when the threat of fraud is growing with every single illegal immigrant that crosses that border. This is something most Americans are deeply concerned about. The latest poll says 78% of the Americans who were polled say that preventing illegal immigrants from voting in our elections is a top priority. In every place I've gone around the country, whether it's out west, Midwest, Long Island, Deep South, it doesn't matter. Everybody is concerned about this, we have a job to do. Here's what you need to look for. And I'll turn it back to the President. When we put this bill on the floor, you're going to see a record vote by Republicans and Democrats. You'll see that the Republicans stand for election integrity. And then we'll be able to ask this very important question of the Democrats, they're going to have to go on record, ‘Do you believe the that Americans and Americans alone should be the ones who vote in

American elections?' We're about to find out their answer. And I think that will be a very interesting one for everybody to see."

- Trump has claimed that unnamed South American countries, as well as other countries "all over the world," are releasing their prisoners, terrorists, and mentally ill patients into the United States—a claim that has been widely rebuffed. Alongside this, Trump often claims "communities are being ravaged" by a new form of crime, "Biden migrant crime."
    - March 5, 2023, CPAC, Trump said: "Anybody see Silence of the Lamb[s]? That's where they come from. Insane asylum. That's a stronger word than a mental institution. And they're putting them into our country"
    - Nov. 8, 2023, Hialeah, FL: Trump said: "Anybody ever hear of Hannibal Lecter? He was a nice fellow. But that's what's coming into our country right now."
    - April 14, 2023, National Rifle Association speech: Trump said: "I read a story not long ago where a man who takes care of a large segment of people in a mental institution in a South American country, a doctor, sounded like a great man actually, he said he no longer has anything to do. He used to work 24 hour days. He said, 'All of our patients have been released into the United States of America.' And this is what we have. This is what we've allowed to happen. And we can't allow this to happen because we will not have a country any longer. We can't allow it to happen."
    - April 27, 2023, NH, Trump said: "Why do you want people from prisons and mental institutions and insane asylums? That's a step above, that's Silence of the Lamb type….There was a story recently about a psychologist. Or psychiatrist. But a psychologist who worked in mental wards in South America. And he said, 'I worked 24…' – a good man – he worked 24 hours a day taking care of very mentally ill people. And he was sitting there reading a newspaper and they asked him, 'what – what's he doing?' He said, 'I have no more work. The people have all been let go into the United States.' Can you believe [it]? This is what we're doing."
    - March 25, 2023, Waco, TX, Trump said: "Other countries are emptying out their prisons and sane asylums and mental institutions and sending their most heinous criminals to the United States. And who can blame them? Who can blame them? These are very smart people, the presidents and the heads of these countries, presidents, prime ministers, and dictators, I know them all. But they're very smart, very streetwise, and they're sending their criminals to live in the United States. We're talking about mental institutions and prisons. Think of it. And they're all coming in." He continued: "I read a story recently, where a doctor in a mental institution, in a certain country in South America is saying, 'My whole life, I've been so busy taking care of people, but now, I have no people to take care of, because they're all being sent into the United States.' And I said, 'How stupid are we? How stupid are we? How stupid are we?'"
    - Feb. 29, 2024, Eagle Pass, TX, speaking at the U.S.-Mexico border to border patrol agents on the alleged crimes of "illegal aliens" and referring to the operation at the border as like a "war," Trump said: "They're coming from jails,

and they're coming from prisons, and they're coming from mental institutions, and they're coming from insane asylums, and they're terrorists. They're being led into our country. It's horrible. It's horrible." "They're sending their people from jails and prisons and mental institutions."

- Feb. 29, 2024, Fox News interview, "Millions and Millions of people. And they come from jails and prisons. They come from mental institutions and…a step above that, the insane asylums … and you have terrorists coming." "When you have prisons and jails and mental institutions being emptied out, not just in South America, all over the world … you can check your prison population throughout the world and it's all coming into our country."
- April 1, 2024, West Michigan Live radio interview with Justin Barclay, Trump repeated his claim that countries were emptying their prisons and "mental institutions" into the United States. "Now they're coming in, they're pouring in the criminals from jails and from mental institutions, and terrorists by the way, and at levels that no country has ever seen before. It's insane what they're doing. Insane," Trump told Barclay. "I guarantee you the real crime rate all over the world is way down," Trump said, adding, "And I'd do the same thing, if I were a dictator or a president, anybody running a country, I would do the exact same thing. First thing I'd do is say wow, I'd empty up every prison and every mental institution, and that's what the countries are doing all over the world." Trump again claimed that Venezuela's crime rate has fallen by 67% because it has released many of its prisoners and former prisoners to the United States, adding that Venezuela doesn't "have gangs anymore in the different cities and outside of the cities. They're all gone, and the people are thrilled." "They've taken all of their gangs, their gang leaders, every one of their gangs is gone now. They dumped them into the United States."
- April 2, 2024, Grand Rapids, MI, Trump titled his real speech, "Biden's border bloodbath," repeating his accusations that President Biden is to blame for the alleged spike in "migrant crime," and that Biden is allowing a "bloodbath" that is "destroying our country." "Under Crooked Joe Biden, every state is now a border state. Every town is now a border town because Joe Biden has brought the carnage and chaos and killing from all over the world and dumped it straight into our backyards. And people are coming in from prisons and mental institutions, and nobody's seen anything like it." "We have a new form of crime, it's called 'migrant crime.'…They're sending prisoners, murderers, drug dealers, mental patients and terrorists—the worst they have in every country, all over the world, this isn't just in South America. They're coming from the Congo, from Yemen, from Somalia, from Syria, they're coming from all over the world." Trump later said that Michigan "communities are being ravaged by a new form of crime and that's that 'migrant crime' that we name. It should be called 'Biden migrant crime.'" And also alleged that the Biden administration is "allowing prisoners and mental institution people and terrorists into our country with no checks, no nothing, no checks, no nothing, by the millions and millions." Toward the end of his rally speech, Trump again repeated that "they send the people…that they

want out…That's why they come out of jails and prisons, that's why they come out of the mental institutions and insane asylums."

- April 2, 2024, Green Bay, WI, Trump said: "[C]ommunities are being crushed by 'Biden migrant crime,' you know, we have a new category of crime. It's called 'migrant crime.' It was brought to you by the worst president in the history of our country. Joe Biden[.]" He said that Wisconsin's "police force is being diverted from traffic stops to 'migrant crime.' My favorite new term, 'migrant crime.' It's a new category of crime." Trump also repeated that crime in Venezuela had dropped by 67% because they were sending their criminals into the United States: "And the reason is they take their gangs and they're criminals and they brought them into the United States." Trump also said: "They're sending prisoners, murderers, drug dealers, mental patients, terrorists. The worst of every country is coming into our country. Now, they're coming from the Congo, Yemen, Somalia, Syria, all over the world. They're coming, they're country changing, country threatening and they're country wrecking. They're destroying our country." He further added, "Joe Biden is so weak on the border that other countries are now publicly taunting and extorting him by pumping migrants across our wide open border. They're opening their jails and they're opening their mental institutions and they're bringing them right in and nobody stops him. Nobody. Nobody has any idea what's going on. Just this week, Mexico's president declared that they will keep the flood of illegal aliens pouring in. They're going to pour into our country unless Biden hands over $20 billion a year just to sit down."
- March 2, 2024, Greensboro, NC, Trump said: "But let there be no doubt this is Joe Biden's invasion." He said that he would not let Biden turn the United States "into a crime-filled, disease-ridden dumping ground, which is what they're doing, they're dumping. Everybody is being dumped into the United States of America." He stated: "Our border is an open and gushing wound, it's pouring drugs, gangs, terrorists, and millions and millions of illegal aliens into our country…They're actually cutting the wire fences so that thousands and thousands of migrants can pour in." Later in the rally, Trump told the crowds, "Under Biden, we now have a brand new category of crime. It's called 'migrant crime.' We have 'migrant crime.' We have criminals that are going around having boxing matches with police officers. Nobody's ever seen it before…We have tough people coming in…And they're coming in from jails and prisons. They're emptying out all over the world. Last night, they had four people coming in from the Congo…They're coming from Africa. They're coming from Asia. They're coming from all over South America. They're coming from the Middle East. They're coming from China." He also went on to speak about high-profile murders by suspected undocumented migrants, which he referred to as 'Biden migrant crime,' before stating: "It's a whole new category of crime. And it's probably going to be more vicious than anything we've seen. These are vicious people. They're from jails, many of them are from jails. Many of them are for mental institutions. This is what they're dumping into the United States…They want to clean out their jails…jails all over the world. You

take a look at their prison population, it's way down, because they've taken people out of those jails, and they've dumped them into our country. They've taken people out of their mental institutions and insane asylums…'insane asylum is like mental institution on steroids.' That's 'Silence of the Lambs.' Did you ever hear of a fine gentleman named 'Hannibal Lecter'?...Well, that's what they have in insane asylums, and they're dumping them into a community near you…Venezuela comes out and said, 'We're dumping all our criminals into the United States. But the second part, we're never taking them back. Don't ever bring them back.'"

- April 12, 2024, Mar-a-Lago, during a joint press conference with House Speaker Mike Johnson, Trump said: "But I would like to demand that our border be closed because we have millions of people coming into our country, millions and millions of people are pouring in at levels that nobody's reporting, nobody's going to talk about, but I believe you could have 15 million already in. Some are terrorists. They come from jails and prisons, they come from mental institutions and insane asylums. They come from all over the world, not just South America, they're coming from all over the world, Venezuela announced that their crime is down 67%, because of the fact that they've taken the gang members, the leaders and the members, and they've deposited them very nicely into the United States of America. That's just Venezuela. It's happening with the Congo. It's happening with countries all over. Africa, Asia, South America. All over the world it's happening. Our country is like a dumping ground. And we're going to have it stopped." He further said: "But we probably have 15 million people. And they come from places that you don't wanna know about. And they're gonna be big problems. And it's getting worse. It's 'migrant crime.' It's a new category of crime, 'migrant crime.' And I'm just demanding." And later stated: "And I think most people are united on the fact that they don't want people pouring in from prisons and jails and mental institutions. They don't want that to happen. They don't want it to take place. And it's not going to happen for long."
- May 11, 2024, Wildwood, NJ, Trump said: "We got to do something about the fact that 20 million people have come into our country from prisons, from jails, from mental institutions, from insane asylums. And they're terrorists. Many are terrorists." He went on to say, "Maybe this is a great political thing. To have millions of prisoners and mental institution people come in. Maybe it's a good thing." And later added: "The biggest thing we have is we have millions of people here that are criminals. We really, I mean, they're criminals. Think of it, Venezuela, just announced, and they had a new number 67, now it's 72%, 72% they're down in crime, because they took their gang members, they took a lot of their criminals and they moved them into the United States of America. Jail populations all over the world are way down, and these fools back there, the press, the fake news, they don't want to report it. You know why they're down? Because they're sending people in their jails into the United States, from Africa, from Asia, from all over the world. They're emptying out their jails into the United States. They're emptying out their mental institutions into the United States, our

beautiful country, and now, the prison populations all over the world are down. They don't want to report that. The mental institution population is down because they're taking people from insane asylums and from mental institution. You know what the difference is, right? An insane asylum is a mental institution on steroids. 'Silence of the Lambs.' has anyone ever seen 'The Silence of the Lambs?' The late great Hannibal Lecter is a wonderful man. He oftentimes would have a friend for dinner. Remember the last scene? 'Excuse me, I'm about to have a friend for dinner,' as this poor doctor walked by. 'I'm about to have a friend for dinner.' But Hannibal Lecter, congratulations, the late great Hannibal Lecter. We have people that are being released into our country that we don't want in our country. And they're coming in totally unchecked, totally unvetted. And we can't let this happen. They're destroying our country. And we're sitting back, and we better damn well win this election. Because if we don't, our country is going to be doomed. It's going to be doomed."

- May 1, 2024, Waukesha, WI, Trump said during a rally: "And that doesn't even include some of the horrible numbers that we're seeing flowing in from the poor and crime-ridden countries all over the world. They have people flowing in from the poorest and heaviest crime countries all over the world. Congratulations. They come out of prisons. They come out of mental institutions, and they're coming in to be a neighbor right near you. So congratulations." He later added said: He went on to say we "now…have thousands of terrorists coming into our country."
- March 16, 2024, Daytona, OH, Trump accused the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Venezuela of emptying their prisons into the United States.
  - "I call it 'Biden migrant crime,' but it's too long. So let's just call it 'migrant crime'. We have a new category. You have vicious crimes, you have violent crimes, you have all these, now we have migrant crimes and they're rough. They're rough and it's going to double up. And you see what's happening. Throughout the world right now, I don't know if you know this, crime is way, way down. You know why? Because they sent us their criminals. That's why. It's true. It's true. They sent, do you know Venezuela is down 66% because they sent us their gang members and their gangsters. They sent us their drug dealers and their murderers. They're all coming into our country and Venezuela now, their crime is down 66%. And all over the world, crime is down because they've sent them to the United States of America because we have a stupid president that allows this to happen."
  - "They're sending from all over the world, not just South America, Latin America. They're sending them from Asia. They're sending them from Africa. The Congo, last night, 22 people arrived from the Congo. Now, the Congo is a very nice place I would imagine, but they arrived from the Congo and they came from prison. Where are you from in the Congo? What's your address? Prison. Now these are rough people. They're

coming from Africa, they're coming from Asia, they're coming from the Middle East, they're coming from Yemen. All over the place from Yemen."
        - "And I would do the same thing if I had prisons that were teeming with MS-13 and all sorts of people that they've got to take care of for the next 50 years, right?...We have so many people. We have so many people being hurt so badly and being killed. They're sending their prisoners to see us. And they're bringing them right to the border and they're dropping them off and we're allowing them to come in."
    - June 16, 2015, Trump said announcing his presidential; campaign that "When Mexico sends its people, they're not sending their best—they're not sending you. They're not sending you. They're sending people that have lots of problems and they're bringing those problems with us. They're bringing drugs. They're bringing crime. They're rapists. And some, I assume, are good people." He also said: "I can never apologize for the truth. I don't mind apologizing for things. But I can't apologize for the truth. I said tremendous crime is coming across. Everybody knows that's true. And it's happening all the time. So, why, when I mention, all of a sudden I'm a racist. I'm not a racist. I don't have a racist bone in my body."
    - July 5, 2015, Fox News, Trump said: "What can be simpler or more accurately stated? The Mexican Government is forcing their most unwanted people into the United States. They are, in many cases, criminals, drug dealers, rapists, etc."
    - July 6, 2015, commenting on his June 16 campaign announcement comment (see above), Trump said in a three-page statement commenting that "the worst elements in Mexico are being pushed into the United States by the Mexican government." "The largest suppliers of heroin, cocaine and other illicit drugs are Mexican cartels that arrange to have Mexican immigrants trying to cross the borders and smuggle in the drugs. The Border Patrol knows this," Trump wrote. "Likewise, tremendous infectious disease is pouring across the border. The United States has become a dumping ground for Mexico and, in fact, for many other parts of the world."
        - "Shortly before releasing his statement, Trump gave an interview to Business Insider where he described the idea that the Mexican government is deliberately 'pushing the bad ones' to the US as the one element of his position on immigration that hasn't gotten enough attention."

- His campaign has increasingly used, even exploited, high-profile national murders by alleged undocumented immigrants as a way to criticize the Biden administration's immigration policies, stoke fear that waves of criminals are coming into the country, and justify his intended immigration crackdown policies.
    - April 2, 2024, the Republican National Committee also released earlier in the day on April 2 its new official website for documenting "migrant crime" and "illegal alien crime." "BidenBloodbath.com provides the latest data on Biden's border crisis, as well as providing real-time messaging on the crisis to activists who sign up for email updates via the website. Additionally, there are state-specific

BidenBloodbath.com websites with up-to-date facts and figures for battleground states including: Arizona, California, Florida, Georgia, Michigan, Montana, Nevada, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Texas and Wisconsin," according to the RNC's website.

- April 2, 2024, during campaign rallies in Grand Rapids, Michigan, and Green Bay, Wisconsin, Trump discussed the recent high-profile murder of Ruby Garcia, allegedly by a man who had entered the United States illegally after having been deported to Mexico in 2020, to justify his plans to crack down on immigration and "migrant crime," reportedly falsely claiming that he had met with the victim's family. Trump had discussed the death of Garcia the day prior during his radio interview with West Michigan Live radio interview with Justin Barclay, and extended an invite to the Garcia family to attend his rally in Grand Rapids. He also discussed Laken Riley on April 2, a Georgia college student who was allegedly murdered by a Venezuelan migrant in February 2024. Trump has long used the death of Riley to support his campaign efforts, with Riley's family meeting with Trump backstage before his March 9 rally in Rome, GA. Speaking in Grand Rapids, he said that he had vowed to Laken's family that he would "deliver justice." Now he intends to also "deliver justice" for Ruby.
- April 2, 2024, Green Bay, WI, after speaking on the "illegal alien criminal" who allegedly killed Ruby Garcia, Trump went on to say: "We have the worst border. Last week another illegal alien criminal was arrested in Alabama for raping a mentally incapacitated 14-year-old girl. And in Chicago, recently, an illegal alien gang member who was released into our country by crooked Joe Biden was arrested for a drive-by shooting that left a 27-year-old woman riddled with bullet holes all over her body—died. I'm here tonight to declare that Joe Biden's 'border bloodbath.' Remember they used the name 'bloodbath,' I was talking about something entirely different, but this is a 'border bloodbath.' Ends the day I take the oath of office."
- March 2, 2024, Greensboro, NC, the week after Laken Riley was murdered, Trump told crowds that the suspected killer was a "monster[, an] illegal alien migrant who was led into the country and released into our communities by crooked Joe Biden." He later went on to discuss another two murder cases where he described the suspects as, respectively, an "illegal alien animal" and "a savage Biden migrant criminal."

- Miller told the *NYT* that Trump would use coercive diplomacy to induce other countries to assist with his immigration plans, making cooperation a condition of any other bilateral engagement. Trump would rely heavily on Mexico to revive the "Remain in Mexico" policy, though it's unclear whether Mexico would agree. He would also renegotiate deals with Central America, including Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador—and potentially other countries—to send regional migrants there shortly after they arrive in the United States as "safe third countries." Despite previous similar agreements only covering migrants who had previously passed through a third country, federal law does not

require such passing and Trump would seek to make those deals without that requirement, in part as a deterrent.

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II. Day 1 Dictatorship Promise: Energy and the Environment

- Trump's dictator-for-a-day comments are also tied to his energy and environmental policies. Specifically, he has said that on day one he intends to ramp up oil drilling. In tandem with this disregard for reducing fossil fuel extraction, Trump and his senior campaign officials and advisers have also said that on day one he plans to reverse what he calls the "All Electric Car Lunacy" and the Biden "electric vehicle mandate," which would include undoing recently announced EPA regulations limiting gas-powered vehicle tailpipe emissions and repealing provisions in the Inflation Reduction Act aimed at driving electric vehicle manufacturing. Most recently, Trump has said that he will halt offshore wind energy projects "on day one."
    - Dec. 11, 2023: Trump said: "I said I want to be a dictator for one day. You know why I wanted to be a dictator? Because I want a wall, and I want to drill, drill, drill."
    - Dec. 6, 2023, Iowa: Hannity asked Trump whether Trump intended to abuse power or break the law, to which Trump answered "Except for day one. I want to close the border, and I want to drill, drill, drill." Trump then immediately doubled down on the exchange, describing it for the audience using the word "dictator" – "He [Hannity] says, 'You're not going to be a dictator, are you?' I said: 'No, no, no, other than day one. We're closing the border, and we're drilling, drilling, drilling. After that, I'm not a dictator.'"
    - March 11, 2024, Truth Social post: "My first acts as your next President will be to Close the Border, DRILL, BABY, DRILL, and Free the January 6 Hostages being wrongfully imprisoned!"
    - Jan. 23, 2024, NH: "In the first year, they're going to be reduced by 50% because we are going to drill, baby drill, drill, baby drill. Inflation is going to come way down, but in the first year, your energy costs are going down by 50%."
    - Feb. 9, 2024, NRA speech, PA: "We're gonna drill, baby, drill. That's what we're gonna do...We're gonna drill, baby, drill. We're gonna get our prices down."
    - Feb. 4, 2024, "Sunday Morning Futures": In response to a question on the other ways he intends to reduce inflation, Trump said, "Well, among other things, it's drill, drill, drill, yes." Responding to "What else?," Trump said: "It's drill, drill, drill…There is no [sic] else. You have to get the oil."
    - Jan. 27, 2024, Las Vegas: Trump said: "[If I had been president] there wouldn't have been an attack on Ukraine, and we wouldn't have had any inflation. Inflation was caused by energy, by fuel, by oil going to $100 and $110 a barrel." "That's what caused inflation, and we're going to bring it down because we're going to go drill, baby, drill. We drill, baby, drill. We're bringing it way down." "His inflation that

he [Biden] caused and would've been so easy not to. All it was, is energy. Remember this, gasoline, fuel, oil, natural gas went up to a level that it was impossible."

- April 2, 2024, Grand Rapids, MI, Trump said: "The first day – I promise you – I will sign where the electric vehicle mandate is gone." "So we're gonna end that immediately. We're gonna end it day one."
- April 2, 2024, Green Bay, WI, Trump said: "On day one I will terminate crooked Joe's insane electric vehicle mandate. In addition to this job-killing disaster, Joe Biden is also preparing to approve a waiver request from California allowing them to enact a complete and total ban on all gasoline powered cars and trucks. I will terminate that.
- April 2, 2024, Green Bay, WI, Trump said: "We will stop Biden's inflation train wreck and we will 'drill, baby, drill.' We're gonna get your energy prices way down."
- March 20, 2024, Fox News reported: "In a statement to Fox News Digital, the Trump campaign said the climate regulations — unveiled by the White House and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) on Wednesday — would force Americans to buy expensive electric vehicles (EV) and reduce consumer choice. The campaign further vowed that Trump would immediately strike down the regulations if he bests President Biden in their election rematch later this year. 'Joe Biden's extreme electric vehicle mandate will force Americans to buy ultra-expensive cars they do not want and cannot afford while destroying the U.S. auto industry in the process,' Trump campaign national press secretary Karoline Leavitt told Fox News Digital in a statement. 'This radical policy is anti-jobs, anti-consumer and anti-American.' 'It will destroy the livelihoods of countless U.S. autoworkers while sending the U.S. auto industry to China. President Trump will reverse Joe Biden's extreme electric vehicle mandate on Day One.'"
- March 16, 2024, Daytona, OH, Trumps said: "On day one I will terminate crooked Joe Biden's insane electric vehicle mandate."
- Jan. 16, 2024, Laconia, NH, Trump said: "On day one, I will end Crooked Joe Biden's insane electric vehicle mandate."
- March 2, 2024, Greensboro, NC, Trump said: "And we're gonna start drilling. We're gonna start drill, drill, drill, drill, baby, drill. Day one…But you have no idea we're gonna drill." He told the crowd that "I will immediately end Joe Biden's war on American energy."
- May 11, 2024, Wildwood, NJ, Trump said: "So, we're going to terminate the green new scam. We're going to drill, baby, drill. We're gonna get our energy way down. Don't forget that's what caused inflation. He let energy get out of hand and it went to $100 a barrel."
- May 11, 2024, Wildwood, NJ, Trump said: "On day one, I will immediately terminate Joe Biden's insane electric vehicle mandate, and there will be no ban on gas cars and gas trucks in the Garden State. There will be no ban anywhere in the United States of America on gas."

- May 1, 2024, Waukesha, WI, Trump said: “And upon taking office,...we're going to halt his [Joe Biden’s] inflation death spiral, we're going to terminate his green new scam, it's going to be terminated, and we're going to end this war on American energy. We're going to drill, baby, drill, we're going to bring down your energy costs. We're going to bring down your energy costs like you wouldn't believe.”
- April 2024, Mar-a-Lago, while hosting top U.S. oil and gas executives at his Florida estate, Trump promised to immediately “reverse dozens of President Biden’s environmental rules and policies and stop new ones from being enacted,” the *Washington Post* reported. In exchange, some of those in attendance told the Post, Trump asked for $1 billion from the executives to help his return to the White House—a sum that Trump called a “deal” in exchange for his offer to also cut taxes and regulation.
    - Amongst Trump’s promises were to reverse recent restrictions on drilling in the Alaskan Arctic and ramp up new offshore drilling in the Gulf of Mexico. He also said he would introduce speedier drilling permits. “You’ve been waiting on a permit for five years; you’ll get it on Day 1.” He said he would end Biden’s electric vehicles “mandate” and criticized the recent EPA regulations limiting gas-powered vehicle tailpipe emissions. He vowed that on day one in office he would end the Biden administration’s freeze on approvals for pending and future applications to export liquefied natural gas from new projects, reportedly “a top priority for the executives” present. “‘You’ll get it on the first day,’ Trump said, according to the recollection of an attendee.”
        - June 24, 2024, the watchdog group Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington (CREW) filed a criminal bribery complaint, calling on the FBI and DOJ to investigate Trump’s donations “deal” with oil industry executives.
        - May 23, 2024, Democrats on the Senate Budget Committee and the Senate Finance Committee launched a joint investigation into the Mar-a-Lago meeting with oil executives.
- May 11, 2024, Wildwood, NJ, Trump said on wind turbines: “We are going to make sure that that ends on day one. I’m going to write it out in an executive order. It’s going to end on day one.” Trump claimed that wind turbines “destroy everything,” “cause tremendous problems with the fish and the whales” and that whales “come up all the time, dead.” “They destroy everything, they’re horrible, the most expensive energy there is,” Trump said, adding, “They ruin the environment, they kill the birds, they kill the whales.”
    - The *Washington Post* reported that when Trump met with top oil and gas executives at Mar-a-Lago in April 2024 (see above), he doubled down on his attack against renewable wind energy. “I hate wind,” Trump is reported to have said to executives.

        - "'If I were in the offshore wind industry, I would probably be pretty, pretty nervous,' a former Trump administration energy official told the Washington Post."
    - May 22, 2024 Houston, during a fundraising pitch at Houston's Post Oak Hotel, Trump made a host of second-term promises to oil executives, including that he would help fast-track their merger and acquisition deals, easing the Federal Trade Commission's scrutiny of the industry, the *Washington Post* reported. According to an attendee's notes, Trump told the group that he would issue "immediate approvals for energy infrastructure. That's pipelines, power plants." "I approved the Keystone pipeline, and I approved the Dakota Access pipeline," Trump said. He also said he would ramp up drilling, including opening up the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to drilling. He added that he would "lift the natural gas export ban, cancel all unnecessary energy-killing regulations … [and] open up more federal lands" to drilling, as well as reverse the Biden administration's pause on approvals of LNG exports and "end the EV mandate immediately." Unlike at his Mar-a-Lago event the month prior, "Trump did not ask the oil executives for a specific amount of campaign donations … 'Be generous, please,' he said to end his speech."

- Trump plans to violate statutory requirements by using administrative agencies within the executive branch to promulgate rules that prevent oversight and regulation required by Congress.
    - For instance, Congress passed the bipartisan Toxic Substances Control Act in 2016, but Trump's EPA illegally withheld chemical safety studies where public disclosure was required, violated the law's requirements to review new chemicals, and refused to ask companies to disclose data required under the law.
    - He has embraced violating, in similar fashion, the Endangered Species Act, the Clean Water Act, and the Clean Air Act.
    - Trump engaged in "a very aggressive attempt to rewrite our laws and reinterpret the meaning of environmental protections," said Hana V. Vizcarra, a staff attorney at Harvard's Environmental and Energy Law Program.
    - With respect to Trump's Day One Dictator promise, Ed Crooks, Vice Chair for the Americas at Wood Mackenzie, said the comments point to the potential use of executive actions and rule changes "to lighten the regulatory burden on oil and gas companies."

- Trump has called global warming a "hoax."
    - March 21, 2022, *Fox Business*: Trump called climate change a "hoax," explaining, "In my opinion, you have a thing called weather, and you go up, and you go down. If you look into the 1920s, they were talking about a global freezing, okay? In other words, the globe was going to freeze. And then they go global warming. Then they couldn't use that because the temperatures were

actually quite cool. And many different things. So now they just talk about climate change. The climate's always been changing."

- Trump has repeatedly changed his position on climate change and global warming. He has called global warming a "canard," a "make-believe problem," and a "big scam," as well as blaming the Chinese for creating the concept of global warming to hurt American manufacturing. But he has also described climate change as "Nothing's a hoax. It's a very serious subject."
- The Project 2025 agenda calls for a radical reversal on climate change and clean energy policies:
  - "The next Administration should eliminate the Climate Hub Office and withdraw from climate change agreements that are inimical to the prosperity of the United States."
  - "Support repeal of massive spending bills like the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) and Inflation Reduction Act (IRA), which established new programs and are providing hundreds of billions of dollars in subsidies to renewable energy developers, their investors, and special interests, and support the rescinding of all funds not already spent by these programs."
  - "The next conservative Administration should rescind all climate policies from its foreign aid programs."

- Trump has called for dismantling the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
  - March 3, 2016: During the 2016 presidential campaign, Trump said, "Department of Environmental Protection: We are going to get rid of it in almost every form. We're going to have little tidbits left. But we're going to take a tremendous amount out."
  - As *The Guardian* detailed, Trump's 2024 plan includes "systematically dismantling" the EPA, including cutting funding, rolling back regulations, forging closer ties to the fossil-fuel industry, and loosening fuel economy standards.

- The *Washington Post* reported that North Dakota Gov. Doug Burgum (R) is a "key figure leading the Trump campaign's development of its energy policy" and also a "possible contender to lead the Energy Department in a second Trump term." At a fundraiser on May 4, 2024, "Burgum told donors that Trump would halt Biden's 'attack' on fossil fuels" "What would be the No. 1 thing that President Trump could do on Day 1? It's stop the hostile attack against all American energy, and I mean all," Burgum said, adding, "Whether it's baseload electricity, whether it's oil, whether it's gas, whether it's ethanol, there is an attack on liquid fuels."

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III. Day 1 Dictatorship Promise: Release January 6th rioters from prison

- Trump also promises that on day one he will release from prison those charged and convicted for their involvement in the attack on the Capitol on January 6, 2021. He has also promised to on day one pardon "a large portion" of convicted January 6th rioters.
    - May 25, 2024, Libertarian Party National Convention, Washington DC, Trump said: "Right now, the Biden DOJ is trying to put Christians in prison for 11 years for the crime of singing hymns. The moment I win the election, I will appoint a special task force to rapidly review the cases of every political prisoner who has been unjustly persecuted by the Biden administration, so that I can sign their pardons or commutations on day one…As everyone knows it will be my great honor to pardon the peaceful January 6 protesters, or as I often call them, 'the hostages.' They're hostages. There has never been a group of people treated so harshly or unfairly in our country's history. This abuse will be rectified and it will be rectified very quickly."
    - March 11, 2024, Truth Social post: "My first acts as your next President will be to Close the Border, DRILL, BABY, DRILL, and Free the January 6 Hostages being wrongfully imprisoned!"
    - March 16, 2024, Daytona, Ohio, Trump began a MAGA rally by telling the crowd: "You see the spirit from the hostages, and that's what they are is hostages. They've been treated terribly and very unfairly, and you know that and everybody knows that. And we're gonna be working on that … the first day we get into office. We're gonna save our country and we're gonna work with the people to save treat those unbelievable patriots and they we unbelievable patriots, and are." "[I]t's a disgrace in my opinion."
    - June 9, 2024, Las Vegas, NV, Trump said: "So, when we get in, it's gonna go very rapidly. We're gonna do a lot of things. We're gonna look very strongly at J6. Those people, there has never been people treated more horrifically than J6 hostages."
    - April 12, 2024, Time Magazine interview: Asked if he would consider pardoning the more than 800 individuals sentenced for actions on January 6th, Trump said "I would consider that, yes." "Yes, absolutely." "If somebody was evil and bad, I would look at that differently. But many of those people went in, many of those people were ushered in. You see it on tape, the police are ushering them in. They're walking with the police," he added.
    - May 10, 2023, CNN town hall, NH, Trump promised as President to pardon "a large portion" of people convicted in connection with January 6th. "I am inclined to pardon many of them." "I can't say for every single one, because a couple of them, probably they got out of control." "I will most likely – I would say it will be a large portion of them." He also said that rioters "were there proud. They were there with love in their heart. That was an unbelievable – and it was a beautiful day."

    - Sept. 1, 2022, Wendy Bell Radio, Trump said: “I will tell you, I will look very, very favorably about full pardons. If I decide to run and if I win, I will be looking very, very strongly about pardons. Full pardons.” “We’ll be looking very, very seriously at full pardons because we can’t let that happen. … And I mean full pardons with an apology to many.”
    - Feb. 1, 2022, Newsmax interview, Trump said: “I would absolutely give them a pardon, if things don’t work out fairly” and called the punishment “20 times out of proportion. These people are being persecuted.”
    - Jan. 29, 2022, Conroe, TX, “If I run and I win, we will treat those people from Jan. 6 fairly.” “We will treat them fairly.” “And if it requires pardons, we will give them pardons, because they are being treated so unfairly.”

- *POLITICO* reported that during Trump’s final days in office he considered blanket pardons of Capitol rioters. Between Jan. 6 and Joe Biden’s inauguration on Jan. 20, Trump reportedly made multiple calls to advisors to discuss the idea. “Do you think I should pardon them? Do you think it’s a good idea? Do you think I have the power to do it? Trump asked one advisor, who summarized their three conversations. Another advisor said that Trump asked, “Is it everybody that had a Trump sign or everybody who walked into the Capitol” who could be pardoned? Trump “said, ‘Some people think I should pardon them.’ He thought if he could do it, these people would never have to testify or be deposed,” according to that advisor.

- Neither Trump nor his campaign have confirmed who exactly Trump intends to release from prison and/or pardon. Trump campaign spokesperson Karoline Leavitt has made various comments revising and interpreting Trump’s remarks. For instance, in a statement to *NBC* at the end of April 2024, she said, “As President Trump has promised, he will pardon January 6th protestors who are wrongfully imprisoned by Crooked Joe Biden’s Justice Department, and those decisions will be determined on a case-by-case basis when he is back in the White House.” At least one month earlier, the *Washington Post* asked Leavitt about who Trump was referring to as “hostages” and the potential for pardons, to which Leavitt indirectly responded: “President Trump will restore justice for all Americas who have been unfairly treated by Joe Biden’s two-tier system of justice.”

- Analysis by *Just Security* identified that, as of March 13, 2024, Trump likely intended to “get out” of the D.C. Department of Corrections 29 January 6th inmates, 27 of whom had been charged with assaulting law enforcement officers in the U.S. Capitol or on its grounds, as well as committing other crimes.

- Trump continues to hail January 6th rioters, including those incarcerated, as “warriors,” “people who love our country” and “great patriots,” and those incarcerated as “hostages” who are “wrongfully imprisoned.” His solidarity has become more pronounced over recent months, now central to his campaign. The *Washington Post* found that between January through March 23, 2024, Trump’s referencing Jan. 6 “hostages” increased, mentioning the term in every rally during March.

- June 9, 2024, Las Vegas, NV, at Trump's first rally after having been convicted in New York on 34 felonies, he said: "So, when we get in, it's gonna go very rapidly. We're gonna do a lot of things. We're gonna look very strongly at J6. Those people, there has never been people treated more horrifically than J6 hostages." He continued: "Those J6 warriors, they were warriors, but they were really more than anything else, they're victims of what happened. All they were doing is protesting a rigged election. That's what they were doing. And the police say, 'go in, go in, go in, go in…go on in, everybody, go on in.' What a setup that was, what a horrible, horrible thing."
- March 22, 2024, Truth Social, Trump posted on his platform a flyer advertising a nightly vigil for the inmates held by the D.C. Department of Corrections. "Stand in solidarity with our January 6th Political Prisoners in the DC jail as we honor their bravery," the flier reads. "At 9:00pm, everyone stops what they are doing to stand in solidarity as we all sing the National Anthem together." Trump captioned the flyer with his own announcement of the vigil: "The 600th Day of their nightly Vigil outside the DC Jail. From Micki Whitthoeft (Ashli Babbitt's Mother):"
  - Micki Witthoeft, the mother of a January 6th inmate, said at that vigil that had Trump called her earlier that day about "setting these guys free when he gets in," adding that "He said to pass that on to the guys inside that they're on his mind, and when he gets in they'll get out."
- March 16, 2024, Daytona, OH, to introduce Trump to the stage while campaigning for Bernie Merona, Trump played the "Justice for All" recording. The song was preceded by an introduction from an unknown voice: "Ladies and gentleman, please rise for the horribly and unfairly treated January 6th hostages."
  - The same introductory message was played on March 9, 2024 in Rome, Georgia to introduce Trump to the stage at his "Get Out The Vote Rally" speech. Although, as above, the J6 Choir has long been used in Trump rallies, the introductory message appears to have first been introduced in March 2024.
- March 2, 2024, Greensboro, NC, Trump said: "You heard the hostages singing…they're the 'J6 hostages' I call them. Because they are hostages. They're policemen, they're firemen, they're accountants, they're lawyers, in some cases. They're put in jail for extended periods of time, for very long periods of time. They're hostages." He later added: "But when people who protest on January 6th in Washington they become hostages unfairly imprisoned for long periods of time."
- Feb. 24, 2024, CPAC, Trump said: "You heard the J6 hostages, didn't you? You heard that? And, I will tell you, there's never been in the history of our country a group of people treated the way they've been treated. There's never been anything like it."
- Dec. 19, 2023, Durham, NH, Trump said at a campaign rally: "[W]hen people who love our country protest in Washington, they become hostages, unfairly imprisoned for long periods of time."

- Dec. 17, 2023, Reno, NV, Trump told a crowd at a rally: “When people who love our country protest in Washington, they become hostages and prisoners unfairly imprisoned for long periods of time.”
- Nov. 2, 2023, Houston, Trump said, referring to the J6 Choir: “I call them the J6 hostages, not prisoners. I call them the hostages, what’s happened. And it’s a shame.”
- Jan. 13, 2023, Real America's Voice interview, Trump said: “I think it's a disgrace what's been happening, and so many of these people are great patriots.”
- Sept. 1, 2022, Wendy Bell Radio, Trump said that he was “financially supporting people that are incredible.” “And they were in my office actually two days ago. It's very much on my mind. It’s a disgrace what they’ve done to them.”

- Trump has long sympathized with January 6th rioters, making no apologies for his unwavering support of those being held to account by DOJ as well as his support of their actions on January 6. Trump “has also fundraised for them, befriended their families and collaborated on a song that became a surprise iTunes hit.” He also featured on a record with January 6th rioters serving prison sentences, the profits of which are being used to fund rioters’ legal fees. The “Justice for All" record features the self-dubbed “J6 Choir” singing a version of the national anthem with Trump reciting the Pledge of Allegiance over the track. The song has made intermittent appearances in Trump’s rallies as early as March 2023. The *Washington Post* reported that “He routinely plays it on the patio at Mar-a-Lago.”

- According to DOJ data as of May 3, 2024, over 1,424 individuals had been charged for crimes related to the breach of the U.S. Capitol, including approximately 510 charged with assaulting, resisting, or impeding officers or employees, of which approximately 133 had been charged with using deadly or dangerous weapons or causing serious bodily injury to officers. There had been over approximately 1,019 successful convictions: approximately 884 of those convicted had received sentences, of which approximately 541 resulted in prison sentences and many others periods of home detention.

IV. Subverting the Rule of Law to Protect Himself from Prosecution

- Trump has constantly attacked the criminal and civil cases against him. If re-elected, Trump could order the Department of Justice to drop the criminal prosecutions against him in Washington, DC regarding subverting the 2020 presidential election (the January 6th case) and in South Florida regarding the retention of large volumes of government documents (the Mar-a-Lago documents case). As president, Trump could try to dismiss the federal prosecutions during the appeals process even after he was convicted. Further, he could also try to pardon himself and other co-conspirators/potential cooperators. Also, Trump has threatened to interfere with the state prosecutions against him in New York and Georgia by retaliating against state officials involved with those prosecutions, including prosecutors, judges, judicial staff, and witnesses. Reports also

suggest that Trump and his allies intend on cutting the budgets of the FBI and DOJ, including defunding Special Counsel Jack Smith's Office.

- Aug. 4, 2023, Truth Social, Trump wrote the day after pleading not guilty in the January 6th case: “IF YOU GO AFTER ME, I'M COMING AFTER YOU!”
- Sept. 21, 2023, Truth Social, he called for Congress to shut down the federal government in order to “defund these political prosecutions against me and other Patriots.”
- April 5, 2023, Truth Social, Trump wrote: "REPUBLICANS IN CONGRESS SHOULD DEFUND THE DOJ AND FBI UNTIL THEY COME TO THEIR SENSES."
- June 10, 2023, Georgia GOP Convention: Responding to the DOJ’s Mar-a-Lago indictment, Trump said: “This is a sick nest of people that needs to be cleaned out immediately. Get them out.”
- November 14, 2023, Truth Social: Trump reposted that New York Attorney General Letitia James and Judge Arthur Engoron, who is overseeing the New York corporate fraud trial, should be placed under “CITIZENS [sic] ARREST FOR BLATANT ELECTION INTERFERENCE AND HARASSMENT."
- November 10, 2023, Truth Social: Trump posted on social media that NY AG James “should be prosecuted” for bringing the case against him.
- October 17, 2023, Truth Social: Trump said during a video posted on social media that the state of New York should “intercede and stop” the Office of the NY Attorney General’s prosecution of the Trump Organization for fraud.
- October 16, 2023, Truth Social: Trump shared a link of AG James’ home address while accusing her of a “MISCARRIAGE OF JUSTICE AND ELECTION INTERFERENCE ALL WRAPPED UP IN ONE!” Earlier in 2023, James revealed she had received death threats for pursuing the case against Trump.

- Convicted in New York state court on May 30, 2024, on 34 felony counts of falsifying business records to unlawfully influence the 2016 presidential election, Trump and his GOP allies have persistently sought to undermine the justice system as a tool for radical left “lawfare,” “election interference” and “political persecution,” saying that the prosecution and eventual conviction were only possible in a “banana republic” and a “rigged” system. He and allies, some of whom attended trial days, have attacked prosecutors, witnesses, and the judge. GOP support of Trump and rebuke of the judicial system only seem to have grown since Trump’s conviction, which they wasted no time in attacking as a “travesty” and an “injustice,” warning that it will likely backfire.
  - Throughout the trial Trump levied attacks.
    - May 29, 2024, on the morning of closing arguments, Trump wrote on Truth Social: “KANGAROO COURT! A CORRUPT AND CONFLICTED JUDGE. RELIANCE ON COUNSEL (ADVISE OF COUNSEL) NOT ALLOWED BY MERCHAN, A FIRST. HIS RULINGS, ON A CASE THAT SHOULD, ACCORDING TO ALL LEGAL SCHOLARS AND EXPERTS, NEVER HAVE BEEN BROUGHT, HAVE MADE THIS A BIDEN PUSHED

WITCH HUNT. THERE WAS NO CRIME, EXCEPT FOR THE BUM THAT GOT CAUGHT STEALING FROM ME! IN GOD WE TRUST!"

- May 27, 2024, Truth Social: "Can you imagine, a President of the United States, who got more votes than any sitting President in the history of our Country, and who is also the Republican Nominee for President in the upcoming 2024 Election, and leading in all polls against the Democrat Nominee, Joe Biden, is tomorrow going before a Corrupt and Conflicted Democrat Appointed, Acting New York Judge, on a FAKE & MADE UP CASE by a Soros backed failed D.A., and the Judge himself, to see whether or not he will become a common criminal? According to virtually all Legal Scholars and Experts, THERE IS NO CRIME OR CASE against President Trump, and if there was it should have been brought seven years ago, not in the middle of his Campaign for President. Prosecutorial Misconduct. Election Interference!"
- May 26, 2024, Truth Social: "The reason the Radical, highly Conflicted Judge Juan Merchan had to come up with three FAKE options for the jury to choose from, without requiring them to be unanimous, which is completely UNAMERICAN AND UNCONSTITUTIONAL, is because the Corrupt, Soros backed D.A., Alvin Bragg, couldn't come close to proving that any crime was committed. THERE WAS NO CRIME. Legal Expense paid to a lawyer was marked, by a bookkeeper using a dropdown menu in a computer program, as Legal Expense paid to a lawyer. WHAT ELSE COULD YOU CALL IT? There is NO CASE, just a Democrat Persecutor controlled by Crooked Joe Biden's White House, a Democrat Judge, and a biased venue. This is nothing but an Election Interfering Witch Hunt, and the American People know it! MAGA2024."
- May 26, 2024, Truth Social: "Can anyone believe that Soros backed D.A., Alvin Bragg, was able to get a DELAY of 7 days to his Corrupt and Unconstitutional Case against me, with no sequester? Legal Expense = Legal Expense! The only thing Bragg has going for him is the Corrupt and highly Conflicted Judge - Which is a lot!!!"
- May 25, 2024, Truth Social: "I HAVE A GREAT CASE, BUT WITH A RIGGED AND CONFLICTED JUDGE. HISTORY PROVES, HOWEVER, THAT I WOULD BE FAR BETTER OFF WITH A BAD CASE AND A GREAT, FAIR, AND HONEST JUDGE!!!"
- May 24, 2024, Truth Social: "The Worst FBI Director in History, who I inherited from the Obama Administration, but fired almost immediately into ours, along with many other Corrupt Actors in the DOJ and FBI (The start of DRAIN THE SWAMP!), is going around LYING about the SCAM brought by Soros backed D.A. Alvin Bragg, and perpetuated by the Highly Conflicted, Democrat Appointed Judge, Juan Merchan. If you want to see the real story on Comey, read the Report put out by Inspector General Michael Horowitz, that gives you all the Horrors of Comey, in great detail. If Comey had any respect for our System of Justice, which is being

DESTROYED before our eyes, he would be fighting against the Crooked Joe Biden inspired Witch Hunts, instead of spreading LIES!"

- May 24, 2024, Truth Social: "When the Disgraceful District Attorney and his Thugs, WITH FULL APPROVAL, I assume, by the Highly Conflicted Judge, Juan Merchan, and the Crooked Joe Biden Administration, who are leading the Trial for ELECTION INTERFERENCE purpose, keep talking about the 'bookkeeping error' or 'crime,' they are referring to the fact that a bookkeeper, with zero influence from or discussion with me, correctly called the payment of a Legal Expense to a lawyer - a Legal Expense. In other words, I am being prosecuted because a bookkeeper, who I had no contact with, marked down, from a dropdown menu in the ledger, a Legal Expense to a lawyer as 'Legal Expense.' What the hell is wrong with that? And, what else would you call it?…."
- May 24, 2024, Truth Social: "….For this ridiculous charge, Millions of Dollars have been spent on the PERSECUTION of a Popular President (Got more Votes than any sitting President in History!), and the current Leader in the Polls against his Democrat Opponent, Crooked Joe Biden, without whom NO CASE WOULD HAVE BEEN CHARGED. Any other Judge would not have allowed this SCAM to proceed, and neither did D.A. Bragg, nor any other Agency in Government, want to bring it. We are fighting against a Rigged New York System of "Justice." WITCH HUNT!"
- May 24, 2024, Truth Social: "Corrupt, Deeply Conflicted, Democrat Appointed Acting Judge Juan Merchan is doing all he can to even further RIG the Manhattan Sham "Trial." He is denying me the opportunity to put on a Highly Respected Election Law Expert who will say, once again, that THERE WAS NO CRIME. This Judge, whose conflicts are completely disqualifying, isn't even requiring a unanimous decision by the jury on key portions of this Criminal Hoax, which is UNCONSTITUTIONAL AND UNAMERICAN. The whole Case should be ENDED IMMEDIATELY, and all the charges THROWN OUT, because everything was done right, with Legal Expenses being reported as Legal Expenses! The Judge CANNOT be allowed to do further damage to Justice in New York and our Nation, and every Legal Scholar and Expert agrees with this. The whole Sham is a disgusting Political Witch Hunt by Crooked Joe Biden's White House. ELECTION INTERFERENCE!"
- May 21, 2024, Truth Social: "Judge Juan Merchan, who has thus far been the exact Conflicted Democrat Operative his Comrades expected, has a chance to take a real step toward rehabilitating both his Reputation and the Justice System of New York by dismissing the Biden Election Interference Witch Hunt brought by Soros funded D.A. Alvin Bragg. Every serious Legal Expert and Scholar is unequivocally stating that the 'prosecutors' have not come close to putting on a case, THERE IS NO CRIME, which means that the right thing to do is to END THIS SCAM NOW AND FOREVERMORE. It would be a Big, Bold, Beautiful, but

Highly Unexpected, yet BRILLIANT, step toward Justice in New York, and our Nation as a whole!"

- May 17, 2024, Truth Social: "Wow! Even MSDNC & Fake News CNN, home of the First Presidential Debate in June, now feel the Soros backed D.A., Alvin Bragg, 'Case' against me SHOULD BE DROPPED IN THAT IT IS NOT WINNABLE, AND SHOULD NEVER HAVE BEEN BROUGHT IN THE FIRST PLACE!!! The only thing they have going for them is a HIGHLY CONFLICTED JUDGE who has done everything within his power to help Crooked Joe Biden win a Presidential Election that he has, based on performance, no right to win. He is systematically destroying America, and is a true THREAT TO DEMOCRACY!!!"
- May 16, 2024, Truth Social: "People are thinking that Soros backed D.A., Alvin Bragg, who never wanted to bring the Witch Hunt against me in the first place, is going to drop this ridiculous and very unpatriotic 'CASE' in order to save lots of money, and also the self respect of his once revered Office. He would then be able to focus on Violent Crime, which is running rampant and totally out of control in New York. The dilemma is, and always has been, the Trump Hating (APPOINTED IN 2009 & STILL ACTING!) Judge, Juan Merchan, who would be confronted with the problem of how he would explain this TRUMP loss, to the Radical Left Democrats, to whom he owes so much? Bring back 'Justice in America.' ELECTION INTERFERENCE!!!"
- April 27, 2024, Time Magazine interview: Trump said, "I think we're becoming less of a democracy when I look at the weaponization of the Justice Department, the FBI. When you look at what happened with FISA. When you look at all the things that have happened, we're becoming less and less of a democracy. But with democracy, if it's a properly-run democracy, which it will be, if and when I get back into office, it'll be a very proper democracy, not like what we have right now. I don't even think what we have right now is, where a presidential candidate has to spend eight hours a day in court instead of campaigning over nothing. Over zero. Over nonsense. And all speared and all spread out and—and really done by the Biden administration. And I think that's no longer democracy. I think that's third-world country stuff."

- Following conviction Trump has continued his attack.
  - May 31, 2024, Trump Tower, Trump attacked Justice Merchan as a "devil" and "tyrant." "The judge was a tyrant." "[Merchan] looks like an angel but he's really a devil." He continued, "We're losing our country, and I really think that this is an event what took place yesterday with this judge that we have conflicted, but he's a crooked judge, and you'll understand that. And I say that knowing that is very dangerous for me to say that, and I don't mind because I'm willing to do whatever I have to do to save our country and to save our constitution. I don't mind."

        - May 30, 2024, Trump said outside Manhattan court: “I’ve gone through two of these trials already. It’s a very, with the same kind of a judge. It’s all worked, it’s all rigged, the whole thing, the whole system is rigged.”
    - Following Trump’s conviction, his allies have continued in their marked attacks on the justice system as well as on those who have spoken favorably of the verdict.
        - Speaker of the House Mike Johnson:
            - May 30, 2024, 5:10pm on X, within minutes of the verdict, Johnson issued a statement:

              “My statement on President Trump trial verdict:

              Today is a shameful day in American history. Democrats cheered as they convicted the leader of the opposing party on ridiculous charges, predicated on the testimony of a disbarred, convicted felon. This was a purely political exercise, not a legal one.

              The weaponization of our justice system has been a hallmark of the Biden Administration, and the decision today is further evidence that Democrats will stop at nothing to silence dissent and crush their political opponents.

              The American people see this as lawfare, and they know it is wrong—and dangerous. President Trump will rightfully appeal this absurd verdict—and he WILL WIN!”
            - May 31, 2024, Hugh Hewitt interview, Johnson said, “You know, I mean, there’s so many grounds for appeal here. I think it’s a certainty that it will be overturned. It’s just going to take us some months to do that, I’m afraid. And that’s the peril of all this, and that’s, of course, what they knew and what they wanted all along.”
            - May 31, 2024, Fox News’ “Fox and Friends,” Johnson called for the Supreme Court to “step in” on Trump's appeal to “set this straight.”

        - Jim Jordan
            - House Judiciary Committee Chair Jim Jordan sent letters on May 31 to DA Alvin Bragg and senior counsel Mathhew Colangelo requesting their appearance on June 13 before the committee’s subcommittee on the weaponization of the federal government.
        - Ron DeSantis
            - May 30, 2024, X post: “Today’s verdict represents the culmination of a legal process that has been bent to the political will of the actors involved: a leftist prosecutor, a partisan judge and a jury reflective of one of the most liberal enclaves in America—all in an

effort to “get” Donald Trump. That this case—involving alleged misdemeanor business records violations from nearly a decade ago—was even brought is a testament to the political debasement of the justice system in places like New York City. This is especially true considering this same district attorney routinely excuses criminal conduct in a way that has endangered law-abiding citizens in his jurisdiction. It is often said that no one is above the law, but it is also true that no one is below the law. If the defendant were not Donald Trump, this case would never have been brought, the judge would have never issued similar rulings, and the jury would have never returned a guilty verdict. In America, the rule of law should be applied in a dispassionate, even-handed manner, not become captive to the political agenda of some kangaroo court.”

- Seven Maryland state delegates—Kathy Szeliga, Matt Morgan, Lauren Arikan, Robin Grammer, Mark Fisher, Brian Chisholm, and Ryan Nawrocki—released a signed statement expressing their vehement opposition to the conviction, calling it “political persecution” from a “kangaroo court” and a “left-leaning prosecutor,” which is turning the US justice system into a “third world parody of law and order.”
- Rep. Andy Harris (R-MD-01) called the verdict “a travesty of justice and a blatant attempt by the Biden Justice Department to jail a political opponent in the middle of an election year.”
- The delegates Maryland Republican Party Chairwoman Nicole Beus Harris released a statement on the state GOP’s X account that said, “Americans are sick of a two-tiered justice system which is broken and corrupt.”
- National Republican Senatorial Campaign Committee Chair Steve Daines (R-Mont.) said in a Fox News interview as news of the verdict broke: “I thought that the trial was a complete sham.”
- Trump allies recently denounced Larry Hogan, Maryland’s Republican Senate nominee, for his call to “respect the verdict.”
    - June 2, 2024, Lara Trump told CNN’s Kasie Hunt on “State of the Union,” that Hogan “should have thought long and hard” before releasing his statement. “I’ll tell you one thing, I don’t support what he just said there. I think it’s ridiculous.” “He doesn’t deserve the respect of anyone in the Republican Party at this point, and quite frankly, anybody in America, if that’s the way you feel. That’s very upsetting to hear that.”
    - Chris LaCivita, a senior adviser to the Trump campaign, in a post on X, just moments after Hogan’s statement, said in a post on X, “You just ended your campaign.” The *Washington Post* reported that the following day LaCivita said in an interview: “There are a lot of Republicans who are going to be upset with him for making

that comment, and he needs all the Republicans he can get to win." "From a political standpoint, it makes no sense to issue a statement that can be considered by us to be a criticism. It was stupid," LaCivita said, adding, "He didn't have to say anything. Say, 'It's a sad day in America.' But no, he had to make a point. If he's going to make his point, we're going to make our point. You take a shot, you're going to get a shot back. That's how it works in politics."

- June 2, 2024, "Fox and Friends" interview, Trump has warned of a public "breaking point" if he is sentenced to home detention or incarceration for his New York falsifying business records conviction. Trump said he was "OK with it," but added, "I don't know that the public would stand it, you know? I don't — I'm not sure the public would stand for it." "I think it'd be tough for the public to take. You know, at a certain point, there's a breaking point."

- Trump considered pardoning himself during his first term and has not ruled out doing so if re-elected.
    - Sept. 14, 2023, "Meet the Press": Trump said it's "very unlikely" he would pardon himself if he won a second term in 2024 but declined to rule out a personal pardon if re-elected.
    - Trump discussed pardoning himself in the final days of his presidency, stating, "I could've pardoned myself" but that he decided against it. He claims he said, "The last thing I'd ever do is give myself a pardon," but other accounts suggest that several attorneys, including White House counsel Pat Cipollone and Attorney General Bill Barr, dissuaded Trump from pardoning himself after he brought it up several times.
    - At the end of his first term, Trump considered granting pardons to his three oldest children—Don Jr., Ivanka, and Eric Trump—as well as his son-in-law Jared Kushner.

- Trump has argued that he is above the law as president and has claimed complete immunity from prosecution.
    - April 22, 2024, Truth Social, Trump wrote: "IF A PRESIDENT DOES NOT HAVE IMMUNITY, THE COURT WILL BE 'OPENING THE FLOODGATES' TO PROSECUTING FORMER PRESIDENTS. AN OPPOSING HOSTILE PARTY WILL BE DOING IT FOR ANY REASON, ALL OF THE TIME. THIS IS NOT WHAT THE FOUNDERS HAD IN MIND!"
    - April 22, 2024, Truth Social, Trump wrote: "Page Two: No Immunity for a President would make it very difficult for him or her to do the job of protecting our Country. A current President would always be thinking, with every move made, whether or not there would be a Criminal Prosecution after leaving Office!"
    - April 22, 2024, Truth Social, Trump wrote: "A key Constitutional issue is whether or not a President should have Immunity. The answer is YES! During the hearing

in the D.C. Circuit, the other side actually conceded two very important points, either of which would give the critical Immunity argument to us. If for any reason it were held that a President doesn't have Immunity, then Crooked Joe Biden, after he leaves Office, could be charged for the horrible and dangerous job he is doing on the Southern Border, the Afghanistan Disaster with all of its Death, Destruction, and 'Surrender,' or his quid pro quo on Ukraine, where he said, on tape, that if they don't get rid of an Unfriendly Prosecutor, they don't get the $1 Billion in Funding from the United States (He then clapped his hands, and said, in effect, 'I won!')….."

- April 22, 2024, Truth Social, Trump wrote: "WITHOUT IMMUNITY, IT WOULD BE VERY HARD FOR A PRESIDENT TO ENJOY HIS OR HER 'GOLDEN YEARS' OF RETIREMENT. THEY WOULD BE UNDER SIEGE BY RADICAL, OUT OF CONTROL PROSECUTORS, MUCH LIKE I AM (BUT WITHOUT THE 'RETIREMENT' WORD!)."
- April 22, 2024, Truth Social, Trump wrote: "A PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES MUST HAVE FULL IMMUNITY, WITHOUT WHICH IT WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE FOR HIM/HER TO PROPERLY FUNCTION. ANY MISTAKE, EVEN IF WELL INTENDED, WOULD BE MET WITH ALMOST CERTAIN INDICTMENT BY THE OPPOSING PARTY AT TERM END. EVEN EVENTS THAT "CROSS THE LINE" MUST FALL UNDER TOTAL IMMUNITY, OR IT WILL BE YEARS OF TRAUMA TRYING TO DETERMINE GOOD FROM BAD. THERE MUST BE CERTAINTY. EXAMPLE: YOU CAN'T STOP POLICE FROM DOING THE JOB OF STRONG & EFFECTIVE CRIME PREVENTION BECAUSE YOU WANT TO GUARD AGAINST THE SELDOM SEEN 'ROGUE COP.' SOMETIMES YOU JUST HAVE TO LIVE WITH 'GREAT BUT SLIGHTLY IMPERFECT.' ALL PRESIDENTS MUST HAVE COMPLETE & TOTAL PRESIDENTIAL IMMUNITY, OR THE AUTHORITY & DECISIVENESS OF A PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES WILL BE STRIPPED & GONE FOREVER. HOPEFULLY THIS WILL BE AN EASY DECISION. GOD BLESS THE SUPREME COURT!"
- April 22, 2024, Truth Social, Trump wrote: "The Supreme Court will address the historic question of Presidential Immunity on Thursday, but unfortunately, I will not be able to attend. The Highly Conflicted Judge in the Manhattan D.A. 'case' (Soros-backed Alvin Bragg) has prohibited me from attending. Without Presidential Immunity, the President cannot function, as his Political Opponents will blackmail and extort him with the threat of wrongful prosecution at every turn. We look forward to presenting our case to the Supreme Court."
- April 22, 2024, Truth Social, Trump wrote: "Without Immunity, the Presidency, as we know it, will no longer exist. Many actions for the benefit of our Country will not be taken. This is in no way what the Founders had in mind. Legal Experts and Scholars have stated that the President must have Full Presidential Immunity. A President must be free to make proper decisions. His mind must be clear, and he must not be guided by fear of retribution!"

- April 20, 2024, Truth Social: Trump wrote, “Of course I was entitled, as President of the United States and Commander in Chief, to Immunity. I wasn’t campaigning, the Election was long over. I was looking for voter fraud, and finding it, which is my obligation to do, and otherwise running our Country. If I don’t get Immunity, then Crooked Joe Biden doesn’t get Immunity, and with the Border Invasion and Afghanistan Surrender, alone, not to mention the Millions of dollars that went into his “‘pockets’” with money from foreign countries, Joe would be ripe for Indictment. By weaponizing the DOJ against his Political Opponent, ME, Joe has opened a giant Pandora’s Box. As President, I was protecting our Country, and doing a great job of doing so - Just look around at the complete mess that Crooked Joe Biden has caused. The least I am entitled to is Presidential Immunity on Fake Biden Indictments!”
- April 20, 2024 Truth Social, Trump wrote: “Legal Scholars are extremely thankful for the Supreme Court’s Decision to take up Presidential Immunity. Without Presidential Immunity, a President will not be able to properly function, or make decisions, in the best interest of the United States of America. Presidents will always be concerned, and even paralyzed, by the prospect of wrongful prosecution and retaliation after they leave office. This could actually lead to the extortion and blackmail of a President. The other side would say, ‘If you don’t do something, just the way we want it, we are going to go after you when you leave office, or perhaps even sooner.’”
- April 20, 2024 Truth Social, Trump wrote: “Page 2: A President has to be free to determine what is right for our Country without undue pressure. If there is no Immunity, the Presidency, as we know it, will ‘no longer exist.’ Many actions for the benefit of our Country will not be taken. This is in no way what the Founders had in mind. Legal Experts and Scholars have stated that the President must have Full Presidential Immunity. A President must be free to make proper decisions. His mind must be clear, and he must not be guided by the fear of retribution!”
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- April 20, 2024, Truth Social, Trump wrote: “A President of the United States must have Full Immunity in order to properly function and do what has to be done for the good of our Country. A Nation-destroying ruling like the one handed down by the D.C. Circuit cannot be allowed to stand. If not overturned, as it should be, this decision would terribly injure not only the Presidency, but the Life, Breath, and Success of our Country. A President will be afraid to act for fear of the opposite Party’s Vicious Retribution after leaving Office. I know from personal experience because I am going through it right now. It will become a Political Weapon used for Election Interference. Our Elections will be corrupted and under siege. So bad, and so dangerous for our Nation. SAVE PRESIDENTIAL IMMUNITY!”
- April 20, 2024, Truth Social, Trump wrote: “WITHOUT PRESIDENTIAL IMMUNITY, IT WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE FOR A PRESIDENT TO PROPERLY FUNCTION, PUTTING THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA IN GREAT AND EVERLASTING DANGER!”
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- Jan. 18, 2024, Truth Social: Trump wrote, “A PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES MUST HAVE FULL IMMUNITY, WITHOUT WHICH IT WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE FOR HIM/HER TO PROPERLY FUNCTION. ANY MISTAKE, EVEN IF WELL INTENDED, WOULD BE MET WITH ALMOST CERTAIN INDICTMENT BY THE OPPOSING PARTY AT TERM END. EVEN EVENTS THAT “CROSS THE LINE” MUST FALL UNDER TOTAL IMMUNITY, OR IT WILL BE YEARS OF TRAUMA TRYING TO DETERMINE GOOD FROM BAD…ALL PRESIDENTS MUST HAVE COMPLETE & TOTAL PRESIDENTIAL IMMUNITY, OR THE AUTHORITY & DECISIVENESS OF A PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES WILL BE STRIPPED & GONE FOREVER.”
- Jan. 27, 2024, Truth Social: Trump wrote, “IF IMMUNITY IS NOT GRANTED TO A PRESIDENT, EVERY PRESIDENT THAT LEAVES OFFICE WILL BE IMMEDIATELY INDICTED BY THE OPPOSING PARTY. WITHOUT COMPLETE IMMUNITY, A PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO PROPERLY FUNCTION!”
- Jan. 9, 2024, Truth Social: Trump wrote, “IF A PRESIDENT DOES NOT HAVE IMMUNITY, THE COURT WILL BE ‘OPENING THE FLOODGATES’ TO PROSECUTING FORMER PRESIDENTS. AN OPPOSING HOSTILE PARTY WILL BE DOING IT FOR ANY REASON, ALL OF THE TIME!”
- Jan. 9, 2024, Washington, DC: Shortly after oral argument in his immunity appeal in the DC Circuit, Trump told the press, “I feel that as a president, you have to

have immunity, very simple." "You can't have a president without immunity." "You have to have, as a president, you have to be able to do your job."

- Jan. 9, 2024: Trump's legal team argued before the DC Court of Appeals that a president could direct SEAL Team Six to assassinate his political opponent and be immune from prosecution.
  - April 12, 2024, Time Magazine interview, Trump later said that he understood this argument differently and equivocated on its validity: "Well, I understood it differently. I thought it was a political rival from another country. I think I understood it differently, and I'm not sure. And John Sauer also said that first you go through an impeachment and then you make that determination based on impeachment. But a president, if you don't don't have immunity from prosecution, fairly strong immunity from prosecution. Now, if you do something just overtly very bad and very stupid, that's a different situation. That may be one of those cases."
  - April 25, 2024, during oral argument before the US Supreme Court, Trump counsel John Sauer doubled down on arguments before the DC Circuit. Justice Sotomayor asked, "Now I think -- and -- and your answer below, I'm going to give you a chance to say if you stay by it. If the president decides that his rival is a corrupt person and he orders the military or orders someone to assassinate him, is that within his official acts for which he can get immunity?" Sauer replied: "It would depend on the hypothetical. We can see that could well be an official act."
    - Trump counsel later told the justices that ordering the military to stage a coup "could well be" an official act:

> JUSTICE KAGAN: How about if a president orders the military to stage a coup?
>
> MR. SAUER: I think that, as the Chief Justice pointed out earlier, where there's a whole series of, you know, sort of guidelines against that, so to speak, like the UCMJ prohibits the military from following a plainfully unlawful act, if one adopted Justice Alito's test, that would fall outside. Now, if one adopts, for example, the Fitzgerald test that we advance, that might well be an official act and he would have to be, as I'll say in response to all these kinds of hypotheticals, has to be impeached and convicted before he can be criminally prosecuted. But I emphasize to the Court that –
>
> JUSTICE KAGAN: Well, he's gone. Let's say this president who ordered the military to stage a coup, he's no longer president, he wasn't impeached, he couldn't be

impeached. But -- but he ordered the military to stage a coup. And you're saying that's an official act?

MR. SAUER: I think it would depend on --

JUSTICE KAGAN: That's immune?

MR. SAUER: I think it would depend on the circumstances whether it was an official act. If it were an official act, again, he would have to be impeached and convicted.

JUSTICE KAGAN: Well, what does that mean, depend on the circumstances? He was the president. He is the commander in chief. He talks to his generals all the time. And he told the generals: I don't feel like leaving office, I want to stage a coup. Is -- is -- is that immune?

MR. SAUER: If -- if it's an official act, there needs to be impeachment and conviction beforehand because the Framers viewed the risk -- that -- that kind of very low risk --

JUSTICE KAGAN: If it's an official act, is it an official act?

MR. SAUER: If it's an official act, it's impeaching --

JUSTICE KAGAN: Is it an official act?

MR. SAUER: On -- on the way you described that hypothetical, it could well be. I -- I just don't know. You'd have to -- again, it's a fact-specific, context-specific determination that it's contemplating.

JUSTICE KAGAN: That answer sounds to me as though it's like, yeah, under my test, it's an official act, but that sure sounds bad, doesn't it?

MR. SAUER: Well, it certainly sounds very bad ..."

- Jan. 8, 2024, Truth Social: Trump wrote, "Of course I was entitled, as President of the United States and Commander in Chief, to Immunity."
- March 9, 2024, Truth Social, Trump, reposting news that the US Supreme Court had scheduled oral argument in his immunity appeal, said: "If a President doesn't have IMMUNITY, he/she will be nothing more than a 'Ceremonial' President,

rarely having the courage to do what has to be done for our Country. This is not what the Founders had in mind!"

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V. Persecuting his Perceived Political Enemies

- Trump has said he will use the Justice Department to investigate and criminally punish President Biden and his family, though he has, at times, been more or less overt.
    - June 27, 2024, CNN presidential debate, Trump signaled retaliatory prosecution of Biden, saying: "But he could be a convicted felon as soon as he gets out of office. Joe could be a convicted felon with all of the things that he's done. He's done horrible things. All of the death caused at the border, telling the Ukrainian people that we're going to want a billion dollars or you change the prosecutor, otherwise, you're not getting a billion dollars." It was in answer to the question: "After a jury convicted you of 34 felonies last month, you said if reelected you would, quote, 'have every right to go after,' unquote, your political opponents. You just talked about members of the Select Committee on January 6th going to jail. Your main political opponent is standing on stage with you tonight. Can you clarify exactly what it means about you feeling you have every right to go after your political opponents?"
    - Nov. 8 , 2023, Hialeah, FL, Trump said: "We will start by exposing every last crime committed by crooked Joe Biden. Because now that he indicted me, we're allowed to look at him. But he did real bad things."
    - Jan. 8, 2024, Truth Social: "If I don't get Immunity, then Crooked Joe Biden doesn't get Immunity […] Joe would be ripe for Indictment. By weaponizing the DOJ against his Political Opponent, ME, Joe has opened a giant Pandora's Box."
    - Aug. 15, 2023: Trump said, "[A]s soon as I am reelected, I will appoint a real special counsel, or maybe you'll call him a special prosecutor, whatever you want to call it ... to look at all of these bribes, kickbacks, and other crimes, as well as the shameless attempt at a coverup. Justice will be done. The Biden crime family will be looked at. We have to get there first, we have to win the election. They're trying to step in my way at every path because the one person they don't want to run is Donald Trump. But when we get there, the Biden crime family will pay a price like other people are being forced to pay. And that price will be very, very substantial."
    - Aug. 5, 2023, South Carolina GOP event, Trump said: "From the first day in office, I will appoint a special prosecutor to study each and every one of the many claims being brought forth by Congress concerning all of the crooked acts, including the bribes from China and many other countries, that go into the coffers of the Biden crime family."
    - June 13, 2023, Bedminister, NJ: "I will appoint a real special prosecutor to go after the most corrupt president in the history of the United States of America, Joe Biden, and the entire Biden crime family."

        - June 27, 2023, Concord, NH, Trump said: “I will appoint a real special prosecutor to investigate the Biden bribery and crime ring.”
        - Jan. 9, 2024, Washington, DC: “I feel that as a president, you have to have immunity, very simple...It’s the opening of a Pandora’s box and it’s a very, very sad thing that’s happened with this whole situation.”
    - June 5, 2024, Fox News, Trump said that while he would not go after his political enemies, he would have “every right” to do so, including Biden for “all the criminality.” Asked by Sean Hannity whether Trump wants “retribution” and would “use the system of justice to go after” his “political enemies,” Trump said: “So, number one, they're wrong. It has to stop, because otherwise we're not gonna have a country. Look, when this election is over, based on what they’ve done, I would have every right to go after them, and it’s easy, because it’s Joe Biden and you see all the criminality, all of the money that’s going into the family and him, all of this money from China, from Russia, from Ukraine.”
    - April 22, 2024, Truth Social, Trump wrote: “A key Constitutional issue is whether or not a President should have Immunity. The answer is YES! During the hearing in the D.C. Circuit, the other side actually conceded two very important points, either of which would give the critical Immunity argument to us. If for any reason it were held that a President doesn’t have Immunity, then Crooked Joe Biden, after he leaves Office, could be charged for the horrible and dangerous job he is doing on the Southern Border, the Afghanistan Disaster with all of its Death, Destruction, and ‘Surrender,’ or his quid pro quo on Ukraine, where he said, on tape, that if they don’t get rid of an Unfriendly Prosecutor, they don’t get the $1 Billion in Funding from the United States (He then clapped his hands, and said, in effect, ‘I won!’)…..”
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- April 12, 2024, Time Magazine interview: Asked if he would "appoint a real special prosecutor to go after Biden and his family," Trump equivocated, saying, "Well, it depends what happens with the Supreme Court. Look, a president should have immunity. That includes Biden. If they've ruled that they don't have immunity, Biden, probably nothing to do with me, he would be prosecuted for 20 different acts, because he's created such. You take a look at not only his criminal acts of taking a lot of money and being a Manchurian Candidate. Look at what

happened in Afghanistan. Look at what happened throughout the world. Look at what happened with him allowing Russia to do that with Ukraine. That would have never happened with me, and it didn't happen. And I knew Putin very well." Trump added, "Wait a minute, I haven't had a chance to do it to them. I would be inclined not to do it. I don't want to do it to them. But a lot of that's going to have to do with the Supreme Court. Look, we are going in another two weeks to the Supreme Court. And they're going to make a ruling on presidential immunity. If they said that a president doesn't get immunity, then Biden, I am sure, will be prosecuted for all of his crimes, because he's committed many crimes. If they say, on the other hand, that a president has immunity, and I happen to think a president has to have immunity, because otherwise it's going to be just a ceremonial position. But Biden has done so many things so badly. And I'm not even talking the overt crime. I'm talking about the border, allowing all of the death and destruction at the border—"

    - More recently Trump has suggested that he did not want to "hurt" Biden and would only seek "retribution" through his great successes in office.
        - April 12, 2024, Time Magazine interview, after first suggesting that he will go after Biden, he later seemed to pull back: "No, I don't, I wouldn't want to, I wouldn't want to do anything having to do with. I wouldn't want to hurt Biden. I'm not looking to hurt Biden. I wouldn't want to hurt him. I have too much respect for the office. But he is willing to hurt a former President who is very popular, who got 75 million votes. I got more votes than any other sitting president in history. And I have probably eight cases right now that are all inspired by them, including my civil case."
        - May 1, 2024, Waukesha, WI, speaking on the "enemy from within," Trump said, "we will take care of business. We're gonna to do the right job. We're gonna be fair to everybody. We're going to do the right job and our revenge. You know, they say, 'Oh, this is a revenge tour for Trump.' It's not a revenge tour. Revenge is going to be our great success. What we're going to do is, success, we're gonna have such success that's it's going to turn that word 'revenge.' There's not going to be any revenge. We're gonna make this country so successful again, it's gonna to be so successful. That will be our revenge, that's going to be our revenge"

- Trump has talked about investigating and removing federal, state, and local prosecutors, though recently walked back on earlier comments that he would use the DOJ to investigate "radical" prosecutors. He has mentioned investigating "every radical out of control prosecutor" at least five times.
    - June 4, 2024, Newsmax interview, Trump warned that his felony conviction in New York the week prior had set "a terrible precedent," in which "it's very possible that it's going to have to happen to them." Speaking to "Greg Kelly Reports," Trump said:
        - "It's a terrible precedent for our country. Does that mean the next president does it to them? That's really the question. You know, I said on

a recent show…when I'd mentioned Hillary's name, they'd all scream, '...Lock her up, lock her up,' and everybody got a kick out of it and all."

- "And I said, 'Wouldn't it really be bad?' You know, with — like as an example — Hillary, with the hammering of her cell phones and all of the things she did, but wouldn't it be terrible to throw the president's wife and the former secretary of state — think of it, the former secretary of state — but the president's wife into jail? Wouldn't that be a terrible thing? But they want to do it. So, you know, it's a terrible, terrible path that they're leading us to, and it's very possible that it's going to have to happen to them…I got a lot of credit from a lot of people, and some people said I should have done it, but, you know, could have, would have been very easy to do it, but I thought it would be a terrible precedent for our country." "And now, whoever it may be, you're gonna have to view it very much differently. This is a bad, bad road that they're leading us down to as a country."

- June 2, 2024, Fox and Friends, asked just days after being convicted in New York on 34 felony counts whether he would seek revenge in a second term against his opponents and prosecutors, Trump said, "It's a really tough question in one way because these are bad people. These people are sick. And they do things that are so destructive…Look, it's a very interesting question. And I say it and it sounds beautiful, right, you know, 'My revenge will be success,' and I mean that. But it's awfully hard when you see what they've done, these people are so evil."
- March 2, 2024, Greensboro, NC, Trump said that Jack Smith is "a deranged person who wants to hurt people, and we, we're hurting him. I'll tell you, we're hurting him. … Being a fair and good prosecutor is a very important thing but some of these animals, I mean, they are bad."
- March 2, 2024, Greensboro, NC, Trump said: "We will restore law and order in our country. And I will direct a completely overhauled DOJ to investigate every radical out-of-control prosecutor in America, for their illegal, racist-in-reverse enforcement of the law. There is no law."
- As above, Trump has recently tried to pull back from previous statements to use the DOJ to prosecute Biden and other prosecutors.
  - April 12, 2024, Time Magazine interview, when asked if he would request the Attorney General to prosecute state officials like Manhattan DA Alvin Bragg, Trump said: "Well, we're gonna look at a lot of things like they're looking. What they've done is a terrible thing. No, I don't want to do that. I was not happy looking at Clinton. I was not happy. I think it's a terrible thing. But unfortunately, what they've done is they've lifted up the lid and they've—what they've done to me is incredible. Over nothing." Asked further about using his AG to prosecute Bragg, Trump said, "We are going to have great retribution through success. We're going to make our country successful again. Our retribution is going to be through success of our country."

    - Oct. 29, 2023, Sioux City, Iowa, Trump said: “To stop the Marxist prosecutors who release rapists and murderers while persecuting Republicans, conservatives and people of faith like you, I will direct a completely overhauled DOJ to investigate every radical DA and AG in America for their illegal, racist-in-reverse enforcement of the law.”
    - Aug. 7, 2023, Alabama GOP dinner, Trump said: “I will direct a completely overhauled DOJ to investigate every radical DA and AG in America for their illegal, racist-in-reverse enforcement of the law.”
    - Aug. 5, 2023, South Carolina GOP event, Trump said: “But to investigate every radical DA and AG, and they all coordinate, you know, the Democrats. They all coordinate with the DOJ. But we're gonna investigate every single one in America for their illegal racist-in-reverse enforcement of the law.”
    - June 10, 2023, GOP Convention, GA, Trump called Jack Smith and others at the Justice Department “a sick nest of people that needs to be cleaned out immediately.”
    - April 27, 2023, Manchester, NH, Trump promised to use the Justice Department to investigate local prosecutors and attorneys general: “On Day One of my new administration, I will direct the D.O.J. to investigate every radical district attorney and attorney general in America for their illegal, racist-in-reverse enforcement of the law.”

- Trump has called for members of the January 6th Select Committee, to be prosecuted and imprisoned.
    - June 30, 2024, Truth Social, Trump “ReTruthed” a post that featured a meme with photos of 15 former and current elected officials who allegedly “HID THE J6 FOOTAGE,” according to the meme, and “SHOULD BE GOING TO JAIL ON MONDAY NOT STEVE BANNON!,” according to the post. The officials in the post include President Biden, Vice President Harris, Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell, former House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, former Vice President Mike Pence, and members of the January 6th Committee.
    - June 30, 2024, Truth Social, Trump “ReTruthed” a meme alleging former Rep. Liz Cheney (R-Wyo.) committed “treason” and suggesting she be prosecuted in a televised military tribunal. The meme read: “ELIZABETH LYNNE CHENEY IS GUILTY OF TREASON[.] RETRUTH IF YOU WANT TELEVISED MILITARY TRIBUNALS”
        - The suggestion to prosecute Cheney through the US military justice system for treason, a charge seldom brought, and to televise those proceedings, indicates Trump’s willingness to eschew standard legal frameworks and procedures as well as promote actions contrary to law, mirroring tactics used in authoritarian regimes to employ extraordinary measures against political opponents
        - A Trump campaign spokesperson refused to address the post directly in a statement, “instead repeating allegations of misconduct by members of

the committee, saying 'Liz Cheney and the sham January 6th committee banned key witnesses, shielded important evidence, and destroyed documents' related to their investigation," the New York Times reported.

- June 6, 2024, Truth Social, Trump called for members of the January 6th House Select Committee to be indicted for allegedly deleting and destroying evidence. Trump made the post shortly after news that his chief strategist Steve Bannon had been sentenced to four months imprisonment for denying a committee subpoena. The post read: "It is a Total and Complete American Tragedy that the Crooked Joe Biden Department of Injustice is so desperate to jail Steve Bannon, and every other Republican, for that matter, for not SUBMITTING to the Unselect Committee of Political Thugs, made up of all Democrats, and two CRAZED FORMER REPUBLICAN LUNATICS, Cryin' Adam Kinzinger, and Liz 'Out of Her Mind' Cheney. It has been irrefutably proven that it was the Unselects who committed actual crimes when they deleted and destroyed all material evidence, in a pathetic attempt to protect Crazy Nancy Pelosi and other Democrats from the TRUTH — THAT I DID ABSOLUTELY NOTHING WRONG. The unAmerican Weaponization of our Law Enforcement has reached levels of Illegality never thought possible before. INDICT THE UNSELECT J6 COMMITTEE FOR ILLEGALLY DELETING AND DESTROYING ALL OF THEIR 'FINDINGS!' MAGA2024"
- March 17, 2024, Truth Social, Trump reshared an article by Just The News titled, "Democrats' Jan. 6 panel withheld crucial evidence, including denial from Trump driver: new report," with his own caption reading: "She should go to Jail along with the rest of the Unselect Committee!"

- Trump has suggested prosecuting his political opponents as well as those "who have become critical of his time in office."
  - June 6, 2024, Dr. Phil McGraw interview, Trump suggested that he could seek revenge as "sometimes revenge can be justified." In response to McGraw's suggestion that if Trump returns to the Oval Office he would likely have "so much to do" to repair the country that he wouldn't "have time to get even," Trump said: "Well, revenge does take time. I will say that." "And sometimes revenge can be justified, Phil. I have to be honest. Sometimes it can."
  - June 5, 2024, Fox News, Trump said that while he would not go after his political enemies, he would have "every right" to do so. Asked by Sean Hannity whether Trump wants "retribution" and would "use the system of justice to go after" his "political enemies," Trump said: "So, number one, they're wrong. It has to stop, because otherwise we're not gonna have a country. Look, when this election is over, based on what they've done, I would have every right to go after them, and it's easy, because it's Joe Biden and you see all the criminality, all of the money that's going into the family and him, all of this money from China, from Russia, from Ukraine."
  - June 2, 2024, "Fox and Friends" interview, Trump falsely claimed that he had never called for Hilary Clinton to be imprisoned, despite the fact he "could have

done it." Trump said: "They always said, 'lock her up,' and I felt — and I could have done it, but I felt it would have been a terrible thing." "And then this happened to me, and so I may feel differently about it."
    - Trump made similar comments two days later during a Newsmax interview (see above).
- March 2, 2024, Richmond, VA, Trump said: "But until then, Republicans must win. We have to win to get it done. And we won a landslide that is 'too big to rig, too big to rig.' That's what we need. Because they're going to be cheating and they're cheaters and we're gonna be watching them and we're gonna prosecute. We're gonna, if we get in, we're gonna catch them and we're gonna to do things that were never done before."
- November 2023, during a Univision interview at Mar-a-Lago, Trump said in response to whether he would weaponize the DOJ and FBI: "Well, he's [Joe Biden] unleashed something that everybody we've all known about this for a hundred years. We've watched other countries do it and, in some cases, effective and in other cases, the country's overthrown or it's been totally ineffective. But we've watched this for a long time, and it's not unique, but it's unique for the United States. Yeah, if they do this and they've already done it, but if they want to follow through on this, yeah, it could certainly happen in reverse. It could certainly happen in reverse. What they've done is they've released the genie out of the box. You understand that." Trump added: "If I happen to be president and I see somebody who's doing well and beating me very badly, I say, 'go down and indict them.' Mostly, that would be, you know, they would be out of business. They'd be out. They'd be out of the election."
- Oct. 9, 2023, Wolfeboro, NH: Trump said, "This is third-world-country stuff, 'arrest your opponent.' And that means I can do that, too."
- September 2023, Rapid City, SD, Trump said: "If I win and somebody wants to run against me, I call my attorney general. I say, 'listen, indict him.' 'Well, he hasn't done anything wrong that we know of.' 'I don't know, indict him on income tax evasion, you'll figure it out.'"
- June 13, 2023, the "Howie Carr Show": Trump warned that charges against him have "opened Pandora's box" in terms of political investigations, ominously adding, "You will see what happens."
- As President, Trump repeatedly told his Chief of Staff John Kelly that he wanted the IRS to investigate several of his perceived political enemies, including former FBI director James Comey and deputy director Andrew McCabe. Both Comey and McCabe were subsequently subjected to a rare, intensive IRS audit that affects only one out of every 30,600 tax filers.
- On Nov. 10, 2023, Trump suggested Special Counsel Jack Smith and other current and former senior Justice Department officials will end up in a mental institution by the end of his second term (note: use of mental institutions for perceived enemies by autocrats)

- Trump has claimed that his political opponents as well as those from “within” pose a greater threat to America than foreign adversaries like Russia and China.
    - Nov. 15, 2022, Mar-a-Lago, while announcing his 2024 presidential bid, Trump said, “the gravest threats to our civilization are not from abroad, but from within.”
    - Veterans Day 2023, Claremont, NH, during a rally, Trump said he would “root out” political opponents who “live like vermin within the confines of our country” warning that the greatest threats come "from within” (words that according to ABC News and others “echoed those of past fascist dictators like Hitler and Benito Mussolini,” and alarmed historians).
    - March 2, 2024, Greensboro, NC, Trump said: “Together we're taking on some of the most menacing forces and vicious opponents our people have ever seen. But no matter how hateful and corrupt the communist and criminals are, and they are hateful. We are fighting against some of the most vicious people in the world and they’re not outside, they're inside…We can handle China, we can handle Russia, we can handle all of them.”
    - April 27, 2024, Time Magazine interview: Trump said, “They have broken the Constitution. They have gotten very far astray from our Constitution. I'm talking about the fascists and the people in our government right now, because I consider them, you know, we talk about the enemy from within. I think the enemy from within, in many cases, is much more dangerous for our country than the outside enemies of China, Russia, and various others that would be called enemies depending on who the president is, frankly.”
        - He later said, “Because if you have the proper president, you'll be able to handle them very smartly, and everybody will be very satisfied. But if you don't have the proper president, I agree they would be strong enemies. But the enemy from within is a bigger danger to this country than the outside enemy, on the basis of having a president that knows what he's doing. Because if a President is good, solid, the proper person, and you're not gonna have a big problem with China, Russia or others, but you still have a problem from the sick people inside our country.”
    - May 11, 2024, Wildwood, NJ, Trump said: “I always talk about we have enemies on the outside and we have enemies from within. The enemies from within are more dangerous to me than the enemies of the outside. Russia and China, we can handle, but these lunatics within our government that are going to destroy our country, and probably want to, we have to get it stopped.”
    - May 1, 2024, Waukesha, WI, alleging that there are plenty of “communists,” “fascists,” and “criminals,” in the US government, Trump said: “I say the enemy from within and the enemy on the outside. I think that, frankly, the enemy from within is more dangerous to our country than China and Russia and others. I feel that, because if you have a president that knows what he’s doing, he can handle China and Russia. But these people are crazy. And the enemy from within is very dangerous, criminals that nobody can believe and we will take care of business.”

- Trump has expressed support for executing high-ranking American government officials, and while in office he used the levers of government to harass and intimidate his political opponents.
    - On Jan. 6, 2021, Trump expressed support for the January 6th rioters who were chanting, "hang Mike Pence," including commenting that Pence "deserve[d]" it.
    - Trump rebuked Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Mark Milley's proper attempts to quell potential conflict between the U.S. and China as "treasonous" and once punishable by death.
        - Sept. 23, 2023, Truth Social, in response to intelligence suggesting that China believed the U.S. planned to attack it, Chairman Milley made two backchannel phone calls, in October 2020 and on Jan. 8, 2021, to China's top general, Li Zuocheng, attempting to offer reassurances. Trump later posted about Milley, "This guy turned out to be a Woke train wreck who, if the Fake News reporting is correct, was actually dealing with China to give them a heads up on the thinking of the President of the United States. This is an act so egregious that, in times gone by, the punishment would have been DEATH! A war between China and the United States could have been the result of this treasonous act.

- Trump's words and actions suggest he would interfere with or stop prosecutions of his political allies, as well as pardon others.
    - As we detail above, one of Trump's day one promises is to release from prison January 6th rioters sentenced to prison terms for their involvement in the Capitol Attack. He views many as "hostages" and "wrongfully imprisoned" and has said that he will also pardon many of them.
    - May 25, 2024, Libertarian Party National Convention, Washington DC, Trump said: "Right now, the Biden DOJ is trying to put Christians in prison for 11 years for the crime of singing hymns. The moment I win the election, I will appoint a special task force to rapidly review the cases of every political prisoner who has been unjustly persecuted by the Biden administration, so that I can sign their pardons or commutations on day one."
    - Trump harshly criticized the prosecutions of political allies Paul Manafort, his former campaign chairman, and campaign adviser Roger Stone. He later pardoned Manafort for bank and tax fraud, and he commuted Stone's sentence for lying to Congress, obstruction of justice, and witness tampering, to name just a few examples.

- As president, Trump tried to influence DOJ investigations despite knowing that he was not supposed to do so.
    - He publicly demanded the DOJ investigate the FBI for its investigation into his campaign's contacts with Russia.
        - May 20, 2018, Twitter: "I hereby demand, and will do so officially tomorrow, that the Department of Justice look into whether or not the FBI/DOJ infiltrated or surveilled the Trump Campaign for Political

Purposes - and if any such demands or requests were made by people within the Obama Administration!"

- He publicly called for an investigation into Nancy Pelosi and her alleged links to Russia.
  - March 3, 2017, Twitter: "I hereby demand a second investigation, after Schumer, of Pelosi for her close ties to Russia, and lying about it."
- In March 2017, he publicly ridiculed Attorney General Jeff Sessions for recusing himself from the Russia investigation and asked him to reverse his decision.
- In the summer of 2017, Trump asked Sessions to "reverse his recusal so that Sessions could direct the Department of Justice to investigate and prosecute Hillary Clinton" (Mueller Report).
- He claimed the Mueller investigation was "an illegal investigation" and that "there never should have been a special counsel."
- He called for the Justice Department to investigate Hillary Clinton for "all of the dishonesty."
  - Nov. 3, 2017, Twitter, Trump said: "Everybody is asking why the Justice Department (and FBI) isn't looking into all of the dishonesty going on with Crooked Hillary & the Dems. New Donna B book says she paid for and stole the Dem Primary." "At some point the Justice Department, and the FBI, must do what is right and proper. The American public deserves it!"
  - In April 2018, Trump told White House counsel Donald McGahn that he wanted the Justice Department to prosecute Clinton.
- He urged FBI Director James Comey to drop an investigation into Michael Flynn, his first National Security Advisor and staunch political ally.
- Trump understood he was not supposed to get involved with Justice Department investigations: "[B]ecause I am the President of the United States, I am not supposed to be involved with the Justice Department. I'm not supposed to be involved with the FBI. I'm not supposed to be doing the kind of things I would love to be doing and I am very frustrated by it."

- Trump claimed in an interview with the *New York Times* in December 2017 to have "an absolute right to do what I want with the Justice Department."

- Trump has signaled he would curb the independence of the Department of Justice and FBI. (See below at Part VIII on Purging Federal Employees and Attacking Federal Agencies)
- Trump has also said he would consider firing a U.S. Attorney that does not follow his orders to prosecute a particular person.
  - April 12, 2024, Time Magazine interview: Asked if he would fire a U.S. Attorney for not following orders to prosecute someone, Trump said, "It depends on the situation, honestly."

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VI. Draconian Abortion Access Crackdown

- Trump has previously signaled his support for a national abortion ban.
    - Feb. 16, 2024: Trump reportedly said in a private conversation that such a ban would prohibit abortions starting at 16 weeks, “Know what I like about 16? It’s even. It’s four months.”

- In a 4 minute video posted on Truth Social at the beginning of April, Trump said that abortion restrictions should be left to the states to decide.
    - April 8, 2024: “Under my leadership, the Republican Party will always support the creation of strong, thriving and healthy American families. We want to make it easier for mothers and families to have babies, not harder. That includes supporting the availability of fertility treatments like IVF in every state in America. Like the overwhelming majority of Americans, including the vast majority of Republicans, conservatives, Christians and pro-life Americans, I strongly support the availability of IVF for couples who are trying to have a precious baby. What could be more beautiful or better than that. Today I’m pleased that the Alabama Legislature has acted very quickly and passed legislation that preserves the availability of IVF in Alabama. They really did a great and fast job. The Republican Party should always be on the side of the miracle of life and the side of mothers, fathers, their beautiful babies, and that’s what we are. IVF is an important part of that, and our great Republican Party will always be with you in your quest for the ultimate joy in life. Many people have asked me what my position is on abortion and abortion rights, especially since I was proudly the person responsible for the ending of something that all legal scholars, both sides, wanted and, in fact, demanded be ended: Roe v. Wade. They wanted it ended. It must be remembered that the Democrats are the radical ones on this position because they support abortion up to and even beyond the ninth month. The concept of having an abortion in the later months, and even execution after birth — and that’s exactly what it is. The baby is born, the baby is executed after birth — is unacceptable, and almost everyone agrees with that. My view is now that we have abortion where everybody wanted it from a legal standpoint. The states will determine by vote or legislation or perhaps both, and whatever they decide must be the law of the land. In this case, the law of the state. Many states will be different. Many will have a different number of weeks or some will have more conservative than others, and that’s what they will be. At the end of the day this is all about the will of the people. You must follow your heart, or in many cases your religion or your faith. Do what’s right for your family and do what’s right for yourself, do what’s for your children, do what’s right for our country, and vote. So important to vote. At the end of the day it’s all about will of the people. That’s where we are right now, and that’s what we want. The will of the people. I want to thank the six justices — Chief Justice John Roberts, Clarence Thomas, Samuel Alito, Brett Kavanaugh, Amy Coney Barrett and Neil Gorsuch — incredible people, for having the courage to allow this long-term, hard-fought battle to finally

end. This 50 year battle over Roe v. Wade took it out of the federal hands and brought it into the hearts, minds and vote of the people in each state. It was really something. Now it's up to the states to do the right thing. Like Ronald Reagan, I am strongly in favor of exceptions for rape, incest and life of the mother. You must follow your heart on this issue, but remember, you must also win elections to restore our culture and in fact to have our country, which is currently and very sadly a nation in decline. Our nation needs help. It needs unity, it needs all of us to work closely together. Democrat, Republican, liberal, conservative, everyone. We have to work together. We have to bring our nation back from the brink, and that's where it is. It's at the brink. And we will. We will do it. I promise you, we will do it. Always go by your heart, but we must win. We have to win. We are a failing nation, but we can be a failing nation no longer. We will make our nation great. We will make our nation greater than ever before. Thank you very much."

- Trump refused to say he would veto federal abortion restrictions.
    - April 12, 2024, Time Magazine interview: When asked about if he would commit to vetoing a bill restricting abortion Trump said, But you have to remember this: There will never be that chance because it won't happen. You're never going to have 60 votes. You're not going to have it for many, many years, whether it be Democrat or Republican. Right now, it's essentially 50-50. I think we have a chance to pick up a couple, but a couple means we're at 51 or 52. We have a long way to go. So it's not gonna happen, because you won't have that. Okay. But with all of that being said, it's all about the states, it's about state rights. States' rights. States are going to make their own determination.
    - April 12, 2024, Time Magazine interview: Trump also said "I won't have to commit to it because it'll never—number one, it'll never happen. Number two, it's about states' rights. You don't want to go back into the federal government. This was all about getting out of the federal government. And this was done, Eric, because of—this was done, this issue, has been simplified greatly over the last one week. This is about and was originally about getting out of the federal government. The last thing you want to do is go back into the federal government. And the states are just working their way through it. Look at Ohio. Ohio passed something that people were a little surprised at. Kansas, I mean, places that are conservative and big Trump states, I mean, Ohio and way up Kansas, all these states, but they passed what they want to pass. It's about states rights."

- *The New York Times* has assessed that "Allies of former President Donald J. Trump and officials who served in his administration are planning ways to restrict abortion rights if he returns to power that would go far beyond proposals for a national ban or the laws enacted in conservative states across the country."
    - According to the *New York Times*, "Some of their proposals would rely on enforcing the Comstock Act." Leaders of the effort include "Jonathan F. Mitchell, the legal force behind a 2021 Texas law that found a way to effectively ban abortion in the state." Mitchell, who represented Mr. Trump before the Supreme

Court in the Colorado ballot case, "indicated that anti-abortion strategists had purposefully been quiet about their more advanced plans, given the political liability the issue has become for Republicans."

- "[T]he plans described by former Trump administration officials, allies and supporters propose circumventing Congress and leveraging the regulatory powers of federal institutions, including the Department of Health and Human Services, the Food and Drug Administration, the Department of Justice and the National Institutes of Health."

- The Project 2025 agenda would roll back abortion access expansions under the Biden administration and go even further by restricting abortion medication.
  - Project 2025 also proposes using the Comstock Act of 1873 to ban mail delivery of abortion pills.
  - Project 2025 proposes holding doctors criminally liable for sending abortion pills and patients criminally liable for using the pills.
  - Project 2025 proposes an executive order that would roll back a Biden-era policy allowing some VA hospitals to offer the procedure.
  - Project 2025 proposes rolling back the expansion of HIPAA privacy rules to cover abortions.

- Trump took credit for overturning *Roe v. Wade* and helping states institute abortion bans.
  - May 17, 2023, Truth Social: "After 50 years of failure, with nobody coming even close, I was able to kill Roe v. Wade, much to the "shock" of everyone, and for the first time put the Pro Life movement in a strong negotiating position over the Radicals that are willing to kill babies even into their 9th month, and beyond. Without me there would be no 6 weeks, 10 weeks, 15 weeks, or whatever is finally agreed to. Without me the pro Life movement would have just kept losing. Thank you President TRUMP!!!"

- Anti-abortion groups with ties to Trump and the conservative movement have plans to use the presidency to limit abortion access.
  - Anti-abortion group Students for Life wants the EPA to label abortion pill mifepristone as a "forever chemical" to increase rules around its use.

- Trump has expressed support for punishing women that receive abortions, though he later walked back his comments.
  - March 30, 2016: Trump said in an interview that "there has to be some form of punishment" for women who receive abortions if it is banned.

- Trump would allow states to prosecute women for violating abortion bans.
  - April 12, 2024, Time Magazine interview: When asked if he was comfortable with women being prosecuted for violating abortion bans, Trump said, "The states are going to say. It's irrelevant whether I'm comfortable or not. It's totally irrelevant,

because the states are going to make those decisions. And by the way, Texas is going to be different than Ohio. And Ohio is going to be different than Michigan. I see what's happening."

- Trump would allow states to monitor women's pregnancies to determine if they have received an abortion after a ban.
    - April 12, 2024, Time Magazine interview: Asked if states should monitor women's pregnancies, Trump replied, "I think they might do that. Again, you'll have to speak to the individual states. Look, Roe v. Wade was all about bringing it back to the states. And that was a legal, as well as possibly in the hearts of some, in the minds of some, a moral decision. But it was largely a legal decision. Every legal scholar, Democrat, Republican, and other wanted that issue back at the states. You know, Roe v. Wade was always considered very bad law. Very bad. It was a very bad issue from a legal standpoint. People were amazed it lasted as long as it did. And what I was able to do is through the choice of some very good people who frankly were very courageous, the justices it turned out to be you know, the Republican—"

- Trump has signaled that his administration may support restrictions on birth control/ contraception.
    - May 21, 2024, KDKA-TV, asked if he supports "any restrictions on a person's right to contraception," Trumps said, "Well, we're looking at that and I'm going to have a policy on that very shortly. And I think it's something that you'll find interesting. And I'd see — it's another issue that's very interesting." he went on to say, "Things really do have a lot to do with the states, and some states are going to have different policy than others," before again stating that he would soon release "a very comprehensive policy" on the issue.
        - Later that evening in a post on Truth Social, Trump went back on his statement to interviewer XX: "I HAVE NEVER, AND WILL NEVER ADVOCATE IMPOSING RESTRICTIONS ON BIRTH CONTROL, or other contraceptives. This is a Democrat fabricated lie, MISINFORMATION/DISINFORMATION, because they have nothing else to run on except FAILURE, POVERTY, AND DEATH. I DO NOT SUPPORT A BAN ON BIRTH CONTROL, AND NEITHER WILL THE REPUBLICAN PARTY!"

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VII. Purging Federal Employees and Attacking Federal Agencies

- As Democracy Forward explains, "Our nation's career civil servants — federal employees who serve the public regardless of the political affiliation of the President or partisan divides in Congress — are foundational to American democracy… Anti-

democratic, far-right organizations and activists have voiced increasingly alarming threats against the civil service — ultimately threatening democracy itself."

- Trump's Agenda47 plan has been described as a "continuation of the fascist and other authoritarian policies Trump put in place during his first regime but now made even more extreme and cruel." While not all explicitly stated on his campaign website, Trump's Agenda47 promises are a clear "declaration of war on the federal government—a vow to transform its size and scope and make it more beholden to Trump's whims and worldview." Those promises include:
    - Gutting the federal bureaucracy and consolidating federal power under his direct control, Trump and his advisors plan to centralize the distributed powers of government agencies by installing loyalists in leadership positions using ideological pre-screening, reclassifying tens of thousands of civil service employees as political appointees, purging civil servants within the national security and intelligence apparatus, and subjecting independent agency actions to presidential review.
    - Having fewer cabinet level agencies means fewer congressionally-confirmed secretaries and more space for the informal circle of loyalists. (note: the authoritarian playbook of creating an "inner sanctum")

- Trump has promised to attack the so-called "deep state" and dismantle the "administrative state" by ending the independence of federal agencies. He has said he would "obliterate the deep state" at least five times.
    - May 25, 2024, Libertarian Party National Convention, Washington DC, Trump vowed to "root out the sickness that has taken over our Justice Department, our FBI, and other agencies."
    - May 11, 2024, Wildwood, NJ, Trump said: "With you at my side, we will demolish the deep state,…we will drain the swamp."
    - May 1, 2024, Waukesha, WI, Trump said: "We will demolish the deep state."
    - April 12, 2024, Time Magazine interview, asked to clarify what he means by obliterating the deep state, Trump said, "It means we want to get rid of bad people, people that have not done a good job in government. And we look at people like a company would look at people. You know, when you buy a company, you go in and you look at, how do you like the job? Job performance. They have job performance standards. And yeah, we would like to get rid of people that haven't done a good job. And there are plenty of them."
    - June 25, 2023, Michigan, Trump said: "We will demolish the deep state. We will expel the warmongers from our government. We will drive out the globalists. We will cast out the communists, Marxists and fascists. And we will throw off the sick political class that hates our country."
    - Jan. 28, 2023, New Hampshire Annual GOP Meeting: Trump said, "We will root out the deep state and stop the weaponization of federal agencies because there's a weaponization like nobody's ever seen. We will use every tool at our disposal."

- Nov. 15, 2022, Mar-a-Lago: In reference to the FBI and DOJ, Trump said, “We must conduct a top to bottom overhaul to clean out the festering rot and corruption of Washington DC.”
- March 12, 2022, SC, Trump said: “The deep state must and will be brought to heel.”
- March 3, 2022, Florence, SC, Trump said: "The deep state must and will be brought to heel."
- March 2, 2024, Greensboro, NC, Trump said: “And as we clean up our capital, we’ll clean up and clean out our deep state…But that is a deep swamp.”He later added: “With you at my side, we will demolish the deep state, we will expel the warmongers from our government that is so poorly run, we will drive out the globalists, we will cast out the communists, Marxist and fascists and we will throw off the sick political class that hates our country….We will drain the swamp and we will liberate our country from these tyrants and villains once and for all.”
- May 31, 2024, Hugh Hewitt interview: Speaker of the House Mike Johnson, commenting on the guilty verdict in Trump’s Manhattan trial the day prior, said, “There’s no way that that should ever have been allowed, and I think everybody sees that double standard. And I think it’s going to work to President Trump’s benefit in the election. And all of us, by the way, Hugh, last night, our Republican fundraising platforms broke records. The NRCC, the RNC, I mean, there is a zeal out there in the base, and enthusiasm, a motivation, and I made the comment in another interview this morning that President Trump is no longer just an individual. He is now a symbol. He is a symbol of fighting back against this corruption of our system and the deep state and all the rest. It’s true. That’s happening in real time. And we’re all going to watch it play out over the next few months.”
- In August 2023, the *AP* reported Russ Vought as saying: “The president Day One will be a wrecking ball for the administrative state.”

- Trump has said he plans to reissue “Schedule F,” the 2020 executive order that gave him the authority to fire tens of thousands of federal employees, and in a March 2023 video promised to “wield that power very aggressively.” (note: Trump’s October 2020 order “had little impact because he issued it in the final months of his term, and President Joe Biden rescinded it as soon as he took office.”)
  - March 21, 2023, Agenda47’s first promise of its “ten-point plan to dismantle the deep state and reclaim our democracy from Washington corruption” states that on “On Day One,” Trump will “re-issue [his] 2020 executive order restoring the president’s authority to fire rogue bureaucrats.” In an accompanying video, Trump said: “I will immediately reissue my 2020 executive order restoring the president’s authority to remove rogue bureaucrats. And I will wield that power very aggressively.”
  - March 12, 2022, SC, Trump said at a campaign rally: “We will pass critical reforms making every executive branch employee fireable by the president of the United States.”

    - March 20, 2023, CPAC: Trump said, “I will fire the unelected bureaucrats and shadow forces who have weaponized our justice system like it has never been weaponized before.”
    - March 21, 2023, Agenda47’s second promise in its ten-point plan against the deep state is to “Overhaul federal departments and agencies, firing all of the corrupt actors in our National Security and Intelligence apparatus.” In an accompanying video, Trump said: “We will clean out all of the corrupt actors in our National Security and Intelligence apparatus, and there are plenty of them. The departments and agencies that have been weaponized will be completely overhauled so that faceless bureaucrats will never again be able to target and persecute conservatives, Christians, or the left’s political enemies.”
    - As noted by Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington, “Trump, Florida Governor Ron DeSantis and various prominent Republicans have all endorsed reviving the Schedule F initiative if elected in 2024, and in their recently released Project 2025 report, the Heritage Foundation identified Schedule F as a key piece of a future presidential transition effort.”
    - While, as above, Trump’s Schedule F executive order was rescinded before it could impact employees, records show that Russ Vought, as Trump’s former director of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), sought to stretch the executive order’s target beyond a policy-related position to instead “cover the vast majority of the OMB workforce, from attorneys to GS-09 assistants and specialists who have nothing to do with setting government policy.”
        - Vought is reported as a key figure in renewing Schedule F, and in a video last year for the Heritage Foundation said: “Well, I think one that’s gotten a lot of press is Schedule F. And Schedule F was something that materialized at the end of the administration that the president did to be able to say that if you’re working on policy for the president, you’re an at will employee. And we implemented it or we’re on the cusp of implementing it. And it was like, the level of discord within our agency was high, but it’s going to be groundbreaking. And to basically put this with the imprimatur of Heritage, say, ‘This is an expectation that we have,’ is going to be big.”

- As part of the Agenda47 plan against the “deep state,” Trump has promised to create a Truth and Reconciliation Commission “to shed sunlight on every dark and rotten corner of Washington DC.”
    - Oct. 29, 2023, Sioux City, Iowa, Trump said that he will be establishing a “Truth and Reconciliation Commission to shed sunlight on every dark and rotten corner of Washington DC, starting with crooked Joe Biden.”
    - March 21, 2023, Agenda47, states that as part of it’s 10-point plan to “clean out the deep state,” Trump will “[e]stablish a Truth and Reconciliation Commission to declassify and publish all documents on Deep State spying, censorship, and abuses of power. In an accompanying video, Trumps said: “Fourth, to expose the hoaxes and abuses of power that have been tearing our country apart, we

will establish a Truth and Reconciliation Commission to declassify and publish all documents on Deep State spying, censorship, and corruption, and there are plenty of them."

- Trump allies are already employing ideological purity and loyalty pre-screening, including these vetting questions, in preparation for the 2025 administration.
    - In 2020, the Presidential Personnel Office, under the leadership of Trump aide John McEntee, began conducting "loyalty tests," including one-on-one interviews with "hundreds of ... political appointees across federal agencies" in order to "root out threats of leaks and other potentially subversive acts."
    - Trump has tasked John McEntee with serving as the head of vetting for "Project 2025," the Trump Campaign transition team, and pre-vetting all political appointees to confirm that they are loyal to Trump.
    - April 12, 2024, Time Magazine interview: Trump was asked whether he would screen job applicants by questioning if they think the 2020 election was stolen, to which he responded, "I wouldn't feel good about it, because I think anybody that doesn't see that that election was stolen. It just—you look at the proof. It's so vast, state legislatures where they didn't go through the legislature. They had to go through the legislature. You look at it, it's so vast, all of the different things. I could give you report after report on state after state of all of the fraud that was committed in the election, and if you had a really open mind, you would say I was right."

- Installing temporary "acting" officials in senior government roles to avoid Senate confirmation. During Trump's presidency, he made unprecedented use of the "acting" designation, and has made at least one statement that indicates he may do so again.
    - Jan. 6, 2019, "I have acting, and my actings are doing really great. ... I sort of like acting. It gives me more flexibility, do you understand that?"

- Trump has vowed to clamp down on federal regulations and subject independent agency action to presidential review.
    - April 16, 2023, Agenda47, "President Trump vowed to restore his successful executive order requiring that for every one NEW regulation, two OLD regulations currently on the books must be eliminated."
    - April 14, 2023: Trump said, "Next, I will bring the independent regulatory agencies, such as the FCC and the FTC, back under Presidential authority, as the Constitution demands. These agencies do not get to become a fourth branch of government, issuing rules and edicts all by themselves. And that's what they've been doing. We will require that they submit any regulations they are considering for White House review."
        - April 16, 2023, Agenda47, Trump repeated the same promise.

- Trump plans to reclaim presidential "impoundment authority," withholding congressionally appropriated funds without Congress' approval, to supposedly reduce

budget deficits, rolling back impoundment provisions of 1974 Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act (the Impoundment Act).

- Agenda47, June 20, 2023 promised to "restore executive branch impoundment authority to cut waste, stop inflation, and crush the Deep State." Agenda47 states that "impoundment is an inherent power of the president" that allows the president to impound funds "to enforce the law more effectively and efficiently." As such, on Day One, Trump would "direct federal agencies to identify portions of their budgets where massive savings are possible through the Impoundment Power, while maintaining the same level of funding for defense, Social Security, and Medicare." Trump would also take "action to challenge the constitutionality of limits placed on the" Impoundment Act, "the source of Congress's usurpation of Executive Branch powers." In an accompanying video, Trump said:
  - "When I return to the White House, I will do everything I can to challenge the Impoundment Control Act in court, and if necessary, get Congress to overturn it. We will overturn it."
  - "I will then use the president's long-recognized Impoundment Power to squeeze the bloated federal bureaucracy for massive savings. This will be in the form of tax reductions for you. This will help quickly to stop inflation and slash the deficit."
  - "To prepare for this eventuality, on Day One, I will order every federal agency to begin identifying large chunks of their budgets that can be saved through efficiencies and waste reduction using Impoundment."
- May 1, 2024, Waukesha, WI, Trump said: "To further crack down on rampant waste in the federal government, we're going to bring back presidential impoundment authority, which nobody knows what it is. But it allows the president to go out and cut things and save a fortune for our country, things that make no sense. And there's so many of them. We have so much waste."
- Trump spokesman Jason Miller said in a statement to the *Washington Post*: "As many legal and constitutional scholars have argued, executive impoundment authority is an important tool that American presidents used throughout history to rein in unnecessary and wasteful spending." "President Trump agrees with the experts that this power has been wrongly curtailed in recent decades. As he works to curb Joe Biden's colossal spending binge that triggered uncontrolled inflation, President Trump will seek to reassert impoundment authority to cut waste and restore the proper balance to spending negotiations with Congress."
- Russ Vought has also openly criticized the Impoundment Act.
  - In a letter dated the day before Trump left office in 2021, Russell Vought, then Trump's budget director, criticized the "onerous" Impoundment Act as promoting "the very opposite of what good government should be" and fostering a culture of "wasteful and inefficient spending."
  - "Presidents had the ability to impound funds for 200 years until a bad law got passed that we think is unconstitutional under President Nixon," Vought said on Stephen Bannon's podcast last year, adding, "We want to go back in a different direction."

    - *POLITICO* reported that Trump's former chief of staff at the Environmental Protection Agency, Mandy Gunasekara, warned that on day one Trump would likely halt all pending grant approvals and applications until his administration reviewed them. "Anything that has not yet left the door is going to be paused and then reviewed and then acted upon," Gunasekara said.

- Trump has signaled he would curtail the independence of the Department of Justice and the FBI. Reports suggest that significant steps toward overhauling the DOJ could be put into effect on Trump's first day in office. Notably, however, Trump and his campaign have yet to publicly offer specific proposals and measures on how they plan to do this. That said, Trump and his team are reported to be "in frequent contact with outside groups" on issues including overhauling the Justice Department.
    - Trump's attack on the "deep state" has frequently been directed at the Justice Department and FBI.
        - May 25, 2024, Libertarian Party National Convention, Washington DC, Trump vowed to "root out the sickness that has taken over our Justice Department, our FBI, and other agencies."
        - Aug. 7, 2023, Alabama GOP dinner, Trump said: "We are a nation in decline. And now these radical left lunatics want to interfere with our elections by using law enforcement, the DOJ and the FBI. It's totally corrupt, and we can't let it happen to our country. 2024 is our final battle. It's our final and biggest battle ever. With you at my side, we will demolish that horrible deep state."
        - Nov. 15, 2022, Mar-a-Lago, in reference to the FBI and DOJ, Trump said while announcing his campaign: "We must conduct a top to bottom overhaul to clean out the festering rot and corruption of Washington DC."
    - Two of the key figures in this effort to overhaul the DOJ and FBI work for the Center for Renewing America and offer "a legal rationale that would fundamentally change the way presidents interact with the Justice Department."
        - Russell Vought is Founder and President of the Center for Renewing America. He is a potential White House chief of staff in a second Trump administration and was recently appointed as policy director for the 2024 Republican National Convention's Committee on the Platform.
            - Firstly, it is important to note that Vought has a long history of supporting Trump and his objectives, and he is expected to remain a key figure if Trump wins the election. Top of Vought's agenda is to implement "Radical Constitutionalism" to upend current unconstitutional federal bureaucratic practices.
                - In addition to helping implement "Schedule F" (see above), as the *Washington Post* neatly captures, "When Congress blocked additional funding for Trump's border wall, the budget office in early 2020 redirected billions of dollars from the Pentagon to what became one of the most expensive federal infrastructure projects in U.S. history.

And it was Vought's office that held up military aid to Ukraine as Trump pressed the government to dig up dirt on Joe Biden, prompting the president's first impeachment. Vought defied a congressional subpoena during the impeachment inquiry, which he mocked as a '#shamprocess.' The Government Accountability Office concluded that his office broke the law, a claim Vought disputed…After the 2020 election, as Trump refused to concede, Biden officials complained that Vought was impeding the transition. Vought rejected that accusation — but wrote that his office would not 'dismantle this Administration's work.' He was already planning ahead; bylaws for what would become the Center for Renewing America were adopted on the day of Biden's inauguration, records show."

- In a 2022 essay, Vought wrote, "we are living in a post-Constitutional time," which necessitates his political strategy of "Radical Constitutionalism." As the left has upended the Constitution, Vought argues, conservatives must fight every day to take power from the federal bureaucracy and centralize authority in the Oval Office. "Our need is not just to win congressional majorities that blame the other side or fill seats on court benches to meddle at the margins." "It is to cast ourselves as dissidents of the current regime and to put on our shoulders the full weight of envisioning, articulating, and defending what a Radical Constitutionalism requires in the late hour that our country finds itself in, and then to do it."
- Vought drafted a key chapter of the Heritage Foundation's "Project 2025" mandate, titled "Executive Office of the President of the United States," which advances a case for unleashing unchecked presidential power. According to Vought, a "sprawling federal bureaucracy," contrary to the intent of the Constitution, "is carrying out its own policy plans and preferences—or, worse yet, the policy plans and preferences of a radical, supposedly 'woke' faction of the country." "The modern conservative President's task is to limit, control, and direct the executive branch on behalf of the American people." Accordingly, "it is the President's agenda that should matter to the departments and agencies," not their own.
- He is reportedly developing the Heritage Foundation's playbook for the first 180 days in a new Trump office.

- The *Washington Post* reported in June 2024 that, based on "interviews with people involved in the planning, a review of Vought's public remarks and writings, and Center for Renewing America correspondence obtained by The Post," Vought has helped draft proposals to seize more control over the Justice Department (giving the president more oversight) and "gut the FBI." Vought wrote in a 2023 statement to the *New York Times* that the Justice Department was "ground zero for the weaponization of the government against the American people." He added, "Conservatives are waking up to the fact that federal law enforcement is weaponized against them and as a result are embracing paradigm-shifting policies to reverse that trend."
- At a Heritage Foundation event in 2023, Vought is reported to have said: "The Department of Justice is not an independent agency. Anyone who brings that up in the White House, I want them out of the meeting," adding, "That is something you have to do on the outside. You can have the best personnel, you can have the best policy. At the paradigm level, if you haven't adopted what I would call radical constitutionalism to get out of the precedents of the last 100 years and get back to what would Thomas Jefferson or James Madison do in this meeting. How would he approach the issue, not just from what the Constitution says, but how it was devised to have separation of powers and competition between the branches. If we can't have that conversation, we are not saving the country and the Department of Justice is the lead dog in that conversation. It's why the attorney general is such a vital pick. It's why the [Justice Department's] Office of Legal Counsel is such an important job. Everything we do has to go through the Office of Legal Counsel."
- Note that Vought also supports prosecuting those who investigated or prosecuted Trump or his allies. He told Charlie Kirk on his podcast that "it can't just be hearings." "It has to be investigations, an army of investigators that lead to firm convictions."

■ Jeffrey Clark oversaw DOJ's civil and environmental divisions and, alongside Trump, sought to overturn the 2020 election.

- In a memo titled, "The U.S. Justice Department is not independent," Clark offered a detailed preview of potential plans to undermine DOJ independence, which the New York Times said "will most likely serve as a blueprint for a second Trump administration."
- Clark told the *New York Times*, "Biden and D.O.J. are baying for Trump's blood so they can put fear into America." "The

Constitution and our Article IV 'Republican Form of Government' cannot survive like this."

- *Reuters* reported in May 2024 that, according to nine people involved in the plans, Trump allies, many linked to Project 2025, are drafting proposals to curb the Department of Justice's independence and weaponize the FBI.
  - The plan to curtail DOJ independence is twofold. "First: flood the Justice Department with stalwart conservatives unlikely to say 'no' to controversial orders from the White House. Second: restructure the department so key decisions are concentrated in the hands of administration loyalists rather than career bureaucrats."
  - The FBI, in summary, "would have new constraints on its authority, with many of its responsibilities shifted to other law enforcement agencies."
    - *Reuters* reported that two Trump allies linked to "Project 2025"—Steve Bradbury, former Principal Deputy and Acting Assistant Attorney General for the Office of Legal Counsel at DOJ, who briefly served as Trump's acting Transportation Secretary and is a current fellow at the Heritage Foundation, and Gene Hamilton, a senior Justice Department official under Trump and current Vice President and general Counsel of America First Legal—said that "they support eliminating the FBI's general counsel," a decision that would "force the bureau to receive legal guidance from people closer to Trump's attorney general in the chain-of-command and limit the FBI's ability to conduct investigations without close political oversight, according to several Trump supporters and legal professionals with knowledge of the department's workings."
      - Bradbury wrote a memo in July 2023 setting out proposals to "fix the FBI."
      - Hamilton wrote "Project 2025's" chapter on the Justice Department. "DOJ has become a bloated bureaucracy with a critical core of personnel who are infatuated with the perpetuation of a radical liberal agenda and the defeat of perceived political enemies," Hamilton wrote, concluding that "[a]nything other than a top-to-bottom overhaul will only further erode the trust of significant portions of the American people and, in turn, harm the very fabric that holds together our constitutional republic."
    - Bradbury and Hamilton also support changes to the DOJ's chain of command so the FBI director reports to a pair of politically-appointed assistant attorneys general, instead of the deputy attorney general.
- According to *Reuters*, many Trump allies linked to Project 2025 "are also combing through federal regulations for novel ways to bring stalwart conservatives into the Justice Department at the start of a potential Trump term." Some of those allies "also want to expand the use of the Intergovernmental

Personnel Act, an obscure statute that allows departments to bring in outside experts with the help of non-profits."
    - Steve Bannon made similar comments after Reuters reporting.

- The *Wall Street Journal* reported on April 23, 2024, that a small group of Trump allies has produced a nearly 10-page document outlining proposals that would attempt to significantly erode the Federal Reserve's independence and give the president new powers to affect monetary policies. The proposals argue that the central bank should first consult with Trump as president on setting interest rates, and would give Trump the power to remove Jerome Powell as Chair of the Federal Reserve before his term ends in 2026. The Journal said it could not confirm whether Trump was aware of or signed off on the proposals, but some people close to the efforts said they believe the work received Trump's blessing.

- Trump's attack on federal agencies may well include the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), which has the second-largest employee workforce and third-largest budget of any U.S. federal agency. Over the past year of campaigning Trump has directed particular criticism at the VA. In fact, as a day one promise he has vowed to renew his no longer used Trump-era law—Section 714 of the Veterans Affairs Accountability and Whistleblower Protection Act of 2017 (VA Accountability Act)—that allowed officials to suspend, demote, or fire employees without first allowing them the opportunity to improve their performance "by weakening their civil service protections." Thousands were let go, mainly impacting "lower-level VA employees such as housekeepers, food service workers, and nursing assistants." Many of his plans align with Project 2025, with a chapter of its mandate focused on dismantling the VA (pp. 641-655), authored by Brooks Tucker, who served as chief of staff for former VA secretary Robert Wilkie under the Trump administration. The Washington Examiner reported in May 2021 that Wilkie, a visiting fellow at the Heritage Foundation's Center for National Defense, celebrated Trump-era mass firings of VA employees as one of his greatest achievements, and Trump has recently been referring to those firings.
    - May 1, 2024, Waukesha, WI, speaking on his disapproval of medical protections for veterans, Trump said: "And then also with the veterans…You know, it's not primetime, necessarily for them. And they were getting beat up. We had, we have sadists, we have thieves, sadists, but we had sadists that did bad things to our people, to our heroes, bad, bad things. And we couldn't fire them because of civil service laws and various other reasons, unions a little bit, but civil service, you couldn't fire them. No matter what they did, they could kill somebody, you couldn't fire them. And they'd beat the hell out of our people. And I was able to fire 9,000 sadists and bad people. Get them out and replace them with people that loved our veterans. And it was a whole different place. But it's, it's fairly rapidly morphing back into what it's, I've seen it…"
    - March 2, 2024, Greensboro, NC, Trump said: "For our great veterans we passed VA Accountability and VA Choice. That was a big deal. On accountability, as you know, you, you had 9,000 people in the Veterans Administration that were

sadists and thieves and bad guys, bullies. And you couldn't fire them because of civil service. I had it passed through Congress. We fired 9,000" and replaced them with "great people, with heart, that love our veterans."
    - Aug. 8, 2023, Windham, NH, Trump outlined his plans for veterans, promising to bring back his VA Accountability Act on his first day in office, as well as fire "every corrupt VA bureaucrat," referring to some "sadists." "Crooked Joe Biden has been a disaster for American veterans," Trump said. "As one of his first acts in office, Biden gutted my historic VA reforms. He gutted them out, making it [harder] to remove bad VA employees from the job in a shocking act of betrayal of America's veterans, as well as the tens of thousands of dedicated professionals." He said on his first day in office, he will bring the VA Accountability Act "back in full force" and "we already have the legislation passed. So, I don't have to go through Congress." "All we have to do is make it work," he said, adding, "The hardest part is done and [I will] direct my Secretary of Veterans Affairs to fire every corrupt VA bureaucrat who Joe Biden has outrageously refused to remove from the job or put back in the job."
    - June 10, 2023, North Carolina Republican Convention, Trump claimed that, when he entered the White House, there were "sadists" and "thieves" working at the VA who "would beat up old wonderful soldiers. Beat the hell out of them…and we weren't allowed to fire them."
    - Sept. 12, 2019, remarks to the House GOP conference retreat, Trump said: "Together, we enacted the VA Accountability Act, so that anyone who mistreats or abuses our great veterans can be promptly fired. There was a time you couldn't fire anyone, no matter how they treated our veterans, whether they stole or they were sadists. And we had some of them, too. You couldn't fire them, and now we can do it very, very quickly and easily. They don't treat our veterans well. We get them out. Since then, we've removed more than 7,600 employees who failed to give our vets the care they so richly deserve."

- "[M]ove parts of the federal bureaucracy outside of the Washington Swamp … Up to 100,000 government positions could be moved out of Washington."
    - Note that in 2019 the Trump administration moved the headquarters of the Interior Department's Bureau of Land Management to Grand Junction, Colorado, and two agencies within the Department of Agriculture—Economic Research Service (ERS) and the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA)—to Kansas City. The moves impacted diversity, led to swathes of employees leaving their positions, reduced productivity and, unlike promised, cost the taxpayers millions of dollars.

- Trump plans to install lawyers who will bless his radical agenda.

- Trump has wrongly claimed that the Constitution gives the president the power to do whatever he wants.

- June 19, 2019, Trump said: “I had absolutely Article II powers. I could've done anything I wanted. I don't even bring it up because we don't even get there. Absolutely, I have Article II. We could have used that instead. I wouldn't even have to bother talking to you about all the other things. I wouldn't have to talk to you about conflicts. I could have fired [Special Counsel Robert] Mueller for conflicts. I could have fired anybody.”
- July 23, 2019, Trump said: "Then I have an Article 2, where I have the right to do whatever I want as President. But I don’t even talk about that."

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VIII. Rigging Elections and Promoting Harmful Election Conspiracy Theories

- Trump has spent much of the past three years falsely claiming that the 2020 election was stolen and perpetrating baseless and harmful conspiracy theories about election fraud. If he returns to the White House, he is likely to continue his assault on American elections.
  - If he were reelected as president, he has said that he would “go down and indict” a rival presidential contender to keep them “out of the election.”

- Trump has endorsed the baseless theory that the vice president can block certification of the electoral votes.
  - December 20, 2022, Truth Social: Trump wrote, “I don’t care whether they change The Electoral Count Act or not, probably better to leave it the way it is so that it can be adjusted in case of Fraud, but what I don’t like are the lies and ‘disinformation’ put out by the Democrats and RINOS. They said the Vice President has ‘absolutely no choice,’ it was carved in ‘steel,’ but if he has no choice, why are they changing the law saying he has no choice?” He continued, “…Simply put, it is because the Vice President did have a choice, and looking back at it now, the 2020 Voting Fraud was far greater than anyone thought possible, with even our Government, through the FBI, changing the results of the Election by millions and millions of votes.” Adding, “In other words, John Eastman and others were correct in stating that the Vice President of the United States had the right to do what should have been done. The only reason this change is being promulgated is to reform The Electoral Count Act so that the VP cannot do what they powerfully said he couldn’t do, but if it couldn’t be done, why are they making this law change? The whole thing is one big Scam!”

- Trump has supported election-deniers who have contested the results of and echoed his baseless conspiracy theories about the 2020 presidential election.
  - Trump is supporting Michael Whatley for RNC chair. Whatley worked with top election denier Jim Womack’s group, North Carolina Election Integrity Team.
  - Trump supported Kari Lake, who has refused to acknowledge her loss in the 2022 race for Arizona’s Governor and is now running for U.S. Senate.

    - For Speaker of the House, Trump supported Rep. Mike Johnson, who according to the Brennan Center for Justice was "the congressional architect of the effort to overturn the 2020 presidential election."

- Trump has made outlandish claims about automatic voter registration and mail ballots, often claiming they hurt Republicans.
    - Trump has opposed automatic voter registration because it would be a "disaster for the Election of Republicans, including your favorite President, ME!"
    - Trump has criticized the use of mail ballots, calling it "out of control" and "a whole big scam" and making wild claims that "MILLIONS OF MAIL-IN BALLOTS WILL BE PRINTED BY FOREIGN COUNTRIES."
    - Sept. 25, 2023, Truth Social, Trump wrote: "Pennsylvania is at it again! The Radical Left Governor, Josh Shapiro, has just announced a switch to Automatic Voter Registration, a disaster for the Election of Republicans, including your favorite President, ME! This is a totally Unconstitutional Act, and must be met harshly by Republican Leadership in Washington and Pennsylvania."

- Trump has said that he intends to clamp down on the ways that people can vote in the United States. He has specifically mentioned paper ballots and voter ID at least 10 times..
    - In its claim to ensure "free, honest and lawful elections," Trump's campaign website states: "We will reform our election laws to verify the identity and eligibility of all voters to ensure faith and confidence in all future elections. We will pass a bold range of critical election integrity measures that include banning unsecure drop boxes and ballot harvesting. State and local officials cannot be permitted to make illegal and unconstitutional changes to election procedures without the required approvals by the state legislatures. Very importantly, we must ban private money from pouring into local election offices."
    - May 11, 2024, Wildwood, NJ, Trump said: "Our goal will be one-day voting with paper ballots, proof of citizenship, and voter ID."
    - May 1, 2024, Waukesha, WI, Trump said: "I will secure our elections because you know what happened in 2020. And our goal will be one-day voting with paper ballots, proof of citizenship, and voter ID."
    - March 2, 2024, Richmond, VA, Trump said: "And I will secure our elections. Our goal will be: one-day voting with paper ballots and voter ID.
    - March 2, 2024, Greensboro, NC, Trump said: "Our goal will be one-day voting with paper ballots and voter ID."
    - May 2023 CNN town hall, Trump said: "I hope we're going to have very honest elections. We should have voter I.D. We should have one-day elections. We should have paper ballots, instead of these mail-in votes."

- Trump and the GOP have promised to deploy swathes of MAGA poll workers to observe voting in battleground states in the 2024 election. Trump has a history of rallying supporters as poll watchers. In 2016, his campaign website asked for volunteers to "Help

Me Stop Crooked Hillary From Rigging This Election!" In 2020, his team called for an "army" of poll watchers.

- In March 2024, newly elected Co-chair of the Republican National Committee Lara Trump said in her first interview after having been elected that the RNC is calling for volunteers that will be trained as poll workers and be permitted to handle ballots. She noted that this is the first time in a longtime that the RNC has been permitted to do this. The expectation is a mass recruitment of MAGA supporters. She also said: "Once Donald Trump is president, once we have a huge majority in the House…and we take back the Senate, then we can change the voting laws. Then you could have one day of voting, you could have paper ballots, you could have voter ID all across this country."
- April 19, 2024, the Trump campaign and the Republican National Committee jointly announced a "historic…election integrity program" that seeks to deploy over "100,000 dedicated volunteers and attorneys deployed across every battleground state as part of the RNC's commitment to ensuring transparency and fairness in the 2024 elections." The announcement said that volunteers, with an emphasis on attorney-presence, will be sent to oversee various stages of the election process, including monitoring the testing of voting machines, early voting, voting on election day, the processing of mail-in ballots, and post-election activities like canvassing, auditing, and recounts. They will also have lawyers at mail-in voting processing centers and will establish a hotline for poll watchers and voters to report issues. Additionally, attorneys will be stationed at "every single target processing center where mail ballots are tabulated." "Whenever a ballot is being cast or counted, Republican poll watchers will be observing the process and reporting any irregularity. In the event of an irregularity or problem, RNC lawyers and the volunteer attorneys that they have coordinated will provide rapid response services to resolve the issue using a sophisticated, tested action protocol," the press release read.
  - President Trump said of the new program, "Having the right people to count the ballots is just as important as turning out voters on Election Day. Republicans are now working together to protect the vote and ensure a big win on November 5th!"
- May 1, 2024, Freeland, MI, seemingly referring, at least in part, to plans to send MAGA observers to polling stations, Trump said that, in conjunction with the RNC, his campaign will be leading an "historic effort" to "protect the vote" alongside a "team of the most highly qualified lawyers and other professionals in the country to ensure that what happened in 2020 will never happen again, we're not going to allow it to happen again."

- Trump has signaled that he will only accept the 2024 election results if everything is "honest"—and has refused to rule out political violence if he loses again. Top Republicans have also refused to commit to accepting the results.
  - June 27, 2024, CNN presidential debate, Trump deflected answering clearly whether he would commit to accepting the 2024 election results. When asked a

third time by CNN moderator Dana Bash, Trump said that he would accept results only if it is a "fair and legal and good election."

- May 1, 2024, Milwaukee Journal Sentinel interview, when asked whether he would accept the election results in Wisconsin, Trump said: "If everything's honest, I'd gladly accept the results. If it's not, you have to fight for the right of the country." "But if everything's honest, which we anticipate it will be — a lot of changes have been made over the last few years — but if everything's honest, I will absolutely accept the results," he added.
- April 27, 2024, Time Magazine interview: Trump was asked by reporter Eric Cortellessa, "You said you weren't worried about political violence in connection with the November election. You said, 'I think we're going to win and there won't be violence.' What if you don't win, sir?" Trump replied, "Well, I do think we're gonna win. We're way ahead. I don't think they'll be able to do the things that they did the last time, which were horrible. Absolutely horrible. So many, so many different things they did, which were in total violation of what was supposed to be happening. And you know that and everybody knows that. We can recite them, go down a list that would be an arm's long. But I don't think we're going to have that. I think we're going to win. And if we don't win, you know, it depends. It always depends on the fairness of an election. I don't believe they'll be able to do the things that they did the last time. I don't think they'll be able to get away with it. And if that's the case, we're gonna win in record-setting fashion."
- May 11, 2023 CNN town hall, Asked if he would accept the election results, Trump said, "Yeah, if I think it's an honest election, absolutely." Pressed if he would accept the election result regardless, he reiterated, "If I think it's an honest election, I would be honored to."

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IX. Rejecting the Constitution

- Trump has long indicated that he wants to hold onto the presidency for as long as he could, and has recently suggested that he would seek a third term, in violation of the 22nd Amendment.
  - May 18, 2024, National Rifle Association's Annual Meeting, Dallas, TX, Trump said: "FDR [Franklin D. Roosevelt]: 16 years. Almost 16 years. He was four-term. I don't know, are we going to be considered three-term or two-term, you tell me?"
  - Jan. 14, 2024, Trump said: "We have a good chance of staying for four years ... four years and beyond."
  - Aug. 17, 2020, Trump said, "We are going to win four more years." "And then after that, we'll go for another four years because ... they spied on my campaign. We should get a redo of four years." He made similar comments at different times during the 2020 presidential campaign.

    - However, Trump has almost made comments saying that he would not seek a third term.
        - April 27, 2024, Time Magazine interview, Trump walked back on prior statements : “I don’t know anything about it [the 22nd amendment]. I mean, you're telling me now that somebody's looking to terminate. I wouldn't be in favor of it. I wouldn’t be in favor of a challenge. Not for me. I wouldn’t be in favor of it at all. I intend to serve four years and do a great job. And I want to bring our country back. I want to put it back on the right track. Our country is going down. We're a failing nation right now. We’re a nation in turmoil.”

- Trump called for the “termination” of provisions of the Constitution, provisions that he did not identify, as part of his claim to overturn the 2020 election.
    - Dec. 3, 2022, Truth Social: “A Massive Fraud of this type and magnitude allows for the termination of all rules, regulations, and articles, even those found in the Constitution. Our great ‘Founders’ did not want, and would not condone, False & Fraudulent Elections!”
    - Two days later, Trump denied that he suggested terminating the Constitution, posting, “The Fake News is actually trying to convince the American People that I said I wanted to ‘terminate’ the Constitution. This is simply more DISINFORMATION & LIES.”
    - April 27, 2024, Time Magazine interview, Trump denied he called for the termination of the Constitution, “I never said that at all. I never said that at all. When I talk about certain things, we are, there is nothing more important than our Constitution. But the Democrats have violated our Constitution with crooked elections and many other things. They violated it by using the FBI and the DOJ to go after people very unfairly, very unconstitutionally.”

- Trump has claimed that his political opponents “have broken the constitution” and that he would “end those violations” of the Constitution.
    - April 27, 2024, Time Magazine interview, denying that he had ever called for the termination of the Constitution, Trump said, “But the Democrats have violated our Constitution with crooked elections and many other things. They violated it by using the FBI and the DOJ to go after people very unfairly, very unconstitutionally.” He went on to state: “I’m in a court case. A Biden-inspired court case, where the judge has put a gag order on me where I’m not allowed to answer many very important questions. And so that's a violation of our Constitution. And I would end those violations of Constitution. So that’s what I was referring to. They have broken the Constitution. They have gotten very far astray from our Constitution. I'm talking about the fascists and the people in our government right now, because I consider them, you know, we talk about the enemy from within. I think the enemy from within, in many cases, is much more dangerous for our country than the outside enemies of China, Russia, and

various others that would be called enemies depending on who the president is, frankly.

- Trump has promised to issue an executive order giving him "impoundment authority" to withhold funds appropriated by Congress–power that he could use to override Congress's budget authority and subvert the Constitutional separation of powers.

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X. Demonizing Americans with Whom He Disagrees

- Trump has long demonized his opponents, both political and others—those from "within"—who he says pose a greater threat to America than foreign adversaries. He has pledged to "root" out the "vermin" from the United States, echoing past fascist leaders' rhetoric.
    - May 11, 2024, Wildwood, NJ, Trump said: "I always talk about we have enemies on the outside and we have enemies from within. The enemies from within are more dangerous to me than the enemies of the outside. Russia and China, we can handle, but these lunatics within our government that are going to destroy our country, and probably want to, we have to get it stopped."
    - May 1, 2024, Waukesha, WI, alleging that there are plenty of "communists," "fascists," and "criminals," in the US government, Trump said: "I say the enemy from within and the enemy on the outside. I think that, frankly, the enemy from within is more dangerous to our country than China and Russia and others. I feel that, because if you have a president that knows what he's doing, he can handle China and Russia. But these people are crazy. And the enemy from within is very dangerous, criminals that nobody can believe and we will take care of business."
    - April 27, 2024, Time Magazine interview: Trump said, "They have broken the Constitution. They have gotten very far astray from our Constitution. I'm talking about the fascists and the people in our government right now, because I consider them, you know, we talk about the enemy from within. I think the enemy from within, in many cases, is much more dangerous for our country than the outside enemies of China, Russia, and various others that would be called enemies depending on who the president is, frankly."
        - He later said, "Because if you have the proper president, you'll be able to handle them very smartly, and everybody will be very satisfied. But if you don't have the proper president, I agree they would be strong enemies. But the enemy from within is a bigger danger to this country than the outside enemy, on the basis of having a president that knows what he's doing. Because if a President is good, solid, the proper person, and you're not gonna have a big problem with China, Russia or others, but you still have a problem from the sick people inside our country."
    - March 2, 2024, Greensboro, NC, Trump said: "Together we're taking on some of the most menacing forces and vicious opponents our people have ever seen. But no matter how hateful and corrupt the communist and criminals are, and they are

hateful. We are fighting against some of the most vicious people in the world and they're not outside, they're inside…We can handle China, we can handle Russia, we can handle all of them."

- Nov. 11, 2023, Claremont, NH, during a rally, Trump said he would "root out" political opponents who "live like vermin within the confines of our country" warning that the greatest threats come "from within" (words that according to ABC News and others "echoed those of past fascist dictators like Hitler and Benito Mussolini," and alarmed historians).
- Nov. 15, 2022, Mar-a-Lago, while announcing his 2024 presidential bid, Trump said, "the gravest threats to our civilization are not from abroad, but from within."

- May 26, 2024, Truth Social, Trump reposted to his platform a video of a man who, in addition to verbally attacking MSNBC's Joe Scarborough, raged on about Trump getting rid of "blowjob liberals" if he is re-elected. "I can't wait for Uncle Donnie to win. I can't wait. He'll get rid of all you fucking liberals. You liberals are gone when he fucking wins. You fucking blowjob liberals are done. Uncle Donnie's gonna take this election—landslide…Landslide, you fucking half a blowjob. Landslide. Get the fuck out of here, you scumbag."

- He has called those who don't support his reelection "demonic forces, abolishing and demolishing–and happily doing so–our country."
  - He later described the opposition as "Marxist, fascist, and communist tyrants who want to smash our Judeo-Christian heritage."

- March 6, 2023, CPAC conference: Trump said, "If those opposing us succeed, our once beautiful U.S.A. will be a failed country that no one will even recognize. A lawless, open-borders, crime-ridden, filthy, communist nightmare. That's what it's going and that's where it's going ... Either they win or we win. And if they win, we no longer have a country."

- Oct. 22, 2023, Truth Social, Trump said: "Democrat politicians, mainstream media personnel and Hollywood actors and producers are brazen unapologetic Communists"

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XI. Trump's Effusive Praise of Autocrats

Trump has long praised many autocratic leaders, including:

Adolf Hitler

- Trump's reported fascination with Hitler stems back decades, according to biographers, news articles and books about his presidency.

- Trump's former chief of staff, John Kelly, told CNN's Jim Sciutto, for his new book, "The Return of Great Powers," that the former president once praised Hitler's ability to rebuild Germany's economy, and admired his maintaining "loyalty" of his senior Nazi officers. "He said, 'Well, but Hitler did some good things.' I said, 'Well, what?' And he said, 'Well, [Hitler] rebuilt the economy.' But what did he do with that rebuilt economy? He turned it against his own people and against the world. And I said, 'Sir, you can never say anything good about the guy. Nothing,'" Kelly recounted Trump as saying, according to Sciutto. "I mean, Mussolini was a great guy in comparison." "He would ask about the loyalty issues and about how, when I pointed out to him the German generals as a group were not loyal to him, and in fact tried to assassinate him a few times, and he didn't know that," Kelly said to Sciutto, adding, "He truly believed, when he brought us generals in, that we would be loyal — that we would do anything he wanted us to do."
    - The same comments were reported two years ago in Michael Bender's book, "Frankly, We Did Win This Election: The Inside Story of How Trump Lost," which said the conversation between Trump and Kelly took place while on a trip to Paris to commemorate the armistice after World War I. "Well, Hitler did a lot of good things," Trump reportedly told Kelly. He remained "undeterred" in supporting his statement by claiming Germany made economic gains under Hitler's rule. "Even if it was true that he was solely responsible for rebuilding the economy, on balance you cannot ever say anything supportive of Adolf Hitler," Kelly is said to have told Trump. "You just can't." Trump denied ever having this conversation.
- In a 1990 interview with Vanity Fair, Trump's late wife Ivana Trump said he once kept on bedside table a copy of Hitler speeches entitled "My New Order," a gift from a friend, which apparently she had seen him occasionally skim.

Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán

- Orbán and Trump have a long history stemming to 2019 when the Hungarian leader visited the Oval Office. Their respective positions on key policies appear to be further aligning by the day, especially on immigration and the Russian-Ukraine war. The pair have publicly praised each other as great leaders and seem to agree on a breadth of harmful issues. Trump is said to be seeking inspiration from Orbán's regime in Hungary for some of his own autocratic-influenced promises intended in 2025 and beyond. Meanwhile, Orbán is fully behind Trump winning the 2024 election—he often repeats it as a necessary precondition for future international security.
    - Orbán's relationship with Trump allies and fellow Republicans has also flourished. He met with Republicans and Heritage Foundation members in Washington in December 2023 to discuss U.S. funding to Ukraine. On March 7, 2024, a day prior to meeting with Trump at Mar-a-Lago, Orbán was invited to and spoke at a Heritage Foundation event that was closed to the media. Following his appearance, Orbán wrote in posts on X:

        - March 7: “Supporting families, fighting illegal migration and standing up for the sovereignty of our nations. This is the common ground for cooperation between the conservative forces of Europe and the US. I talked about this and many other topics with @KevinRobertsTX at the @Heritage Foundation. Thank you for the invitation!”
        - March 8, “The greatest fight in international politics is between the globalists and those who believe in national sovereignty. I was happy to see at the @Heritage Foundation that we sovereignists have many friends in the US as well.” Clips from the concert were shared in a video accompanying Orbán’s post.

- On March 8, 2024, Trump hosted Viktor Orbán at his Mar-a-Lago resort, Florida. Reports suggest that Trump and a small group of close advisers first met privately with the Hungarian prime minister for approximately an hour that evening, in what sources called a “friendly” “social meeting” with no agenda. A Trump campaign readout said the two “met…to discuss a wide range of issues affecting Hungary and the United States, including the paramount importance of strong and secure borders to protect the sovereignty of each nation.” A “members only” concert followed that meeting, with Orbán in attendance.
    - Addressing the crowd and, at times, Orbán directly, Trump embraced Orbán: “There’s nobody that’s better, smarter or a better leader than Viktor Orbán. He’s fantastic …. [He] does a great job …. [He’s] “a noncontroversial figure because he said, ‘This is the way it’s gonna be, and that’s the end of it,’ right? He’s the boss …. He’s a great leader, fantastic leader. In Europe and all over the world, they respect him. It’s an honor to have you with us, Viktor. Very great honor. Thank you.” A video clip of Trump’s address and the concert were shared by Orbán on his X account, along with the message: “Thank you for the invitation and the kind words, President @realDonaldTrump !”
    - March 9, 2024, Truth Social, Trump said the day after Orbán’s visit to Mar-a-Lago: “It was an honor having Viktor Orbán and his lovely daughter, Flóra, as my guests last night at Mar-a-Lago. Viktor is a Great Leader, respected all over the World. Hungary is a Safe Country because of his Strong Immigration Policies, and as long as he is in charge, it always will be!”
    - March 11, 2024, Truth Social, Trump reposted a March 10 X post by Orbán. The post was accompanied by an edited video of the pair’s meeting on March 8, narrated by Orbán.
        - The original post reads: “President @realDonaldTrump was a president of peace. He commanded respect in the world, and created the conditions for peace. During his presidency there was peace in the Middle East and peace in Ukraine. We need him back more than ever! Thank you for the invitation, Mr. President!”
        - The subtitles to the narrated video read as Orbán stating, in part repeating the above post’s text: “My meeting with President Donald Trump has come to an end. President Trump was a president of peace. He commanded

respect in the world, and thus created the conditions for peace. During his presidency there was peace in the Middle East and peace in Ukraine. And there would be no war today if he were still the President of the United States. We agreed that there will be peace when there are world leaders who want peace. I am proud that Hungary is one of those countries. We also agreed that there still still much potential in US-Hungarian economic relations. Although our trade turnover has grown to more than 9 billion dollars, we do not want to stop there. When the president returns, we will give him impetus [sic] to US-Hungarian trade relations. Here in America the campaign is in full swing, and indeed in rushing ahead. It is up to Americans to make their own decision, and it is up to us Hungarians to frankly admit that it would be better for the world – and better for Hungary too – if President Donald Trump were to return to power."

  - March 16, 2024, Daytona, OH: "Viktor Orban, the prime minister of Hungary, very tough man, probably the toughest guy there is, frankly, toughest in Europe. A lot of people don't like him because he's tough. He says, 'I don't want to have criminals in my country if that's okay with you.'"
  - Nov. 18, 2023, Fort Dodge, Iowa: "One of the strongest leaders, Viktor Orbán from Hungary ... he's a very strong man, very strong, powerful man, and one of the most respected leaders in the world. It's tough. No games, right? Hungary."

Russian President Vladimir Putin

- May 1, 2024, Waukesha, WI, Trump said: "And Putin once told me, he said, 'you know, if you're supposed to be like a guy, a nice guy, I'd hate like hell to see you as a bad guy. You have been brutal.'...I got along with Putin very well."
- March 25, 2023, Waco, Texas: "President Putin: Smart. Very smart people."
- May 3, 2019, Twitter: "Had a long and very good conversation with President Putin of Russia. As I have always said, long before the Witch Hunt started, getting along with Russia, China, and everyone is a good thing, not a bad thing...."
- July 18, 2018, Twitter: "So many people at the higher ends of intelligence loved my press conference performance in Helsinki. Putin and I discussed many important subjects at our earlier meeting. We got along well which truly bothered many haters who wanted to see a boxing match. Big results will come!"
- March 21, 2018, Twitter: "I called President Putin of Russia to congratulate him on his election victory (in past, Obama called him also). The Fake News Media is crazed because they wanted me to excoriate him. They are wrong! Getting along with Russia (and others) is a good thing, not a bad thing....."
- Sept. 7, 2016: "The man has very strong control over a country. Now, it's a very different system and I don't happen to like the system, but certainly in that system, he's been a leader. Far more than our president has been a leader."
- Dec. 20, 2016: "Great move on delay (by V. Putin) - I always knew he was very smart!"

Chinese President Xi Jinping and Chinese leadership

- May 1, 2024, Waukesha, WI, Trump said: “I got along with President Xi of China very well.”
- Feb. 4, 2024, Fox News, “I want China to do great. I do. And I like President Xi a lot. He was a very good friend of mine during my term.”
- March 25, 2023, Waco, Texas: “President Xi: Smart, top of his game.”
- Nov. 18, 2023, Fort Dodge, Iowa: “A man who looks like a piece of granite, right? He’s strong like granite. He’s strong. I know him very well, President Xi of China. … He runs 1.4 billion people with an iron hand. … I got along well with Putin. That’s a good thing.”
- June 30, 2019: “And I like President Xi a lot. I consider him a friend, and – but I like him a lot. I've gotten to know him very well. He’s a strong gentleman, right? Anybody that – he’s a strong guy, tough guy.”
- In John Bolton’s White House memoir, he recalled that “[a]t the opening dinner of the Osaka G-20 meeting in June 2019, with only interpreters present, Xi had explained to Trump why he was basically building concentration camps in Xinjiang. According to our interpreter, Trump said that Xi should go ahead with building the camps, which Trump thought was exactly the right thing to do. The National Security Council’s top Asia staffer, Matthew Pottinger, told me that Trump said something very similar during his November 2017 trip to China.”
- April 2, 2019: “President Xi, who is a strong man, I call him King, he said, ‘But I am not King, I am president.’ I said, ‘No, you’re president for life and therefore, you’re King.’ He said, ‘Huh. Huh.’ He liked that.”
- April 12, 2018: “I had President Xi, who’s a friend of mine, who’s a very, very good man.”
- In 1990, Trump said China had shown the “power of strength” when its troops killed hundreds, possibly thousands, of pro-democracy demonstrators in Tiananmen Square the year before. “When the students poured into Tiananmen Square, the Chinese government almost blew it. Then they were vicious, they were horrible, but they put it down with strength,” Trump said. “That shows you the power of strength. Our country is right now perceived as weak … as being spit on by the rest of the world.”
    - During the 2016 presidential debates, Trump said of his prior comment, "I was not endorsing it. I said, 'that is a strong, powerful government' ... it was a horrible thing. It doesn't mean at all I was endorsing it."

North Korean dictator Kim Jong-un

- May 1, 2024, Waukesha, WI, Trump said: “[I] got along with Kim Jong-un of North Korea very well.”
- June 30, 2023, Philadelphia: “We did a fantastic job with Kim Jong-un. You know, I got along with him very well. The fake news said, ‘it’s terrible that he gets along with him.’ I said, ‘Really? It’s not terrible, it’s a very good thing.’ You know, it’s a positive thing.”
- May 27, 2019: “Well, first of all, let me say that I think that Kim Jong-un, or Chairman Kim, as some people say, is looking to create a nation that has great strength economically. I think he’s very much – I talk to him a lot about it, and he’s very much into

the fact that – he believes, like I do, that North Korea has tremendous economic potential like perhaps few other developing nations anywhere in the world."

- April 11, 2019: "Kim Jong Un has been, really, somebody that I've gotten to know very well and respect, and hopefully — and I really believe that, over a period of time, a lot of tremendous things will happen."
- Sept. 29, 2018: "And then we fell in love. Okay. No really. He [Kim] wrote me beautiful letters. And they're great letters. We fell in love."
- Sept. 24, 2018: "Chairman Kim has been really very open and terrific, frankly. And I think he wants to see something happen. So we have done — I think, mutually, we've done very well with respect to North Korea."
- In August 2018, Trump wanted to invite Kim Jung-un to the White House. "I should meet with Kim Jong Un. We should invite him to the White House," John Bolton's White House memoir recalled Trump saying.
- June 15, 2018, Trump said of Kim Jong-un, "He's the head of a country, and I mean, he's the strong head, don't let anyone think different. He speaks and his people sit up at attention. I want my people to do the same." Later that day, Trump told reporters, "I was kidding," "You don't understand sarcasm."

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan

- June 29, 2019, Osaka, Japan: "President Erdogan. He's tough, but I get along with him. And maybe that's a bad thing, but I think it's a really good thing."
- June 29, 2019, Osaka, Japan: "Well, thank you very much. It's my honor to be with a friend of mine, somebody I've become very close to, in many respects, and he's doing a very good job: the President of Turkey"
- Sept. 21, 2017, New York: "Thank you very much. It's a great honor and privilege — because he's become a friend of mine — to introduce President Erdoğan of Turkey. He's running a very difficult part of the world. He's involved very, very strongly and, frankly, he's getting very high marks."

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XII. Enriching Himself and His Family

- The Constitution's Foreign Emoluments Clause protects against foreign interference in our political system by ensuring the President and other federal officeholders do not have financial entanglements with other countries. President Trump repeatedly violated the Emoluments Clause while in office and is likely to repeat such violations if he continues to commingle his private business with his public service.
    - A 2017 lawsuit filed by Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington detailed violations from (i) entities owned by foreign governments leasing Trump property, (ii) foreign government officials patronizing Trump properties, including staying at a Trump hotel, (iii) broadcasters owned by foreign governments paying

for broadcast rights for Trump's "The Apprentice" television show, and (iv) property interests tied to foreign governments outside of the United States.
        - The lawsuit was dismissed as moot after Trump left office without resolving the merits of the alleged legal violations.
    - As the Brennan Center for Justice described, Trump violated the Foreign Emoluments Clause "from day one, in part because he never truly relinquished his businesses, and in fact could 'withdraw profits' from his not-so-blind trust whenever he pleased. This presented ongoing conflicts of interest."

- Trump abused his office for the financial benefit of his family.
    - As the Boston Globe reported, Trump "exploited loopholes to build a White House rife with nepotism," including hiring his daughter Ivanka and her husband Jared Kushner as senior advisors.
    - Although neither Ivanka nor Kushner took a salary for their positions, their financial disclosures reveal they earned between $172 million and $640 million in outside income while working in the White House.

- Use of political contributions to pay for personal expenses (e.g. legal) and to enrich himself and his family members.
    - Trump has a history of enriching himself from political donations. He was forced to repay millions to donors who were tricked into signing up for recurring payments.
    - In January 2024 alone, Trump's leadership political action committee (PAC), Save America, spent around $ 2.9 million in legal consulting costs, with around half a million dollars going to the law firm of John Lauro, the lawyer representing Trump in the Jan. 6 case. Save America also owes another $1.9 million in outstanding legal costs.
    - Trump's legal costs for 2023 set his political fundraising committees back over $50 million, millions more than the committees made in the same year.
    - In 2022, Trump spent around $10 million of his PAC's money to fund his personal legal bills, according to federal election filings.

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XIII. Creating an Unconstitutional Criminal Justice System

- Trump has vowed to "indemnify" or offer "immunity" to police officers in their fight against crime, including what he calls "Biden migrant crime." He has used the phrase, "Indemnify all police officers" at least 15 times.
    - May 11, 2024, Wildwood, NJ, Trump said: "We're going to give back our police…back the protection and the respect that they need. We're gonna give them immunity so they don't get sued and lose their families, lose their homes, lose their pensions."

    - May 1, 2024, Waukesha, WI, Trump said: “We're going to give our great police, they are great, their power back, and they're going to protect us again…They're great and they can do the job. But we have to give them their power back.” Later he added, “Again, we're gonna give our police their power back, and we're gonna give them immunity from prosecution. So they're not prosecuted for doing their job.”
    - April 2, 2024, Grand Rapids, MI, Trump said: “And we’re gonna work out a federal immunity for police so they’re allowed to do their job without losing their house and their pension and everything else when the…liberal governors and mayors don't back them.”
    - April 2, 2024, Green Bay, WI, Trump said: “We will, very importantly, restore law and order to our country. And I'm going to indemnify all police officers and law enforcement officials throughout the United States to protect them from being destroyed by the radical left for taking strong actions on crime.”
    - March 16, 2024, Daytona, OH, Trump said: “We will restore law and order to our country, and I'm going to indemnify all police officers and law enforcement officials throughout the United States to protect them from being destroyed by the radical left for taking strong action on crime.”
    - March 2, 2024, Greensboro, NC, Trump said: “First of all, we're giving our policemen immunity from prosecution because when they stop crime, they get prosecuted. They take away their house, their pension, their family, they lose their wife or husband.” He later added: “This week, Joe Biden once again declared his intention to strip our police officers of their qualified immunity by passing a radical anti-police bill through Congress. By contrast, I am going to indemnify all police officers and law enforcement officials throughout the United States to protect them from being destroyed by the radical left for taking strong action on crime.”
    - Feb. 29, 2024, Fox News interview, Trump said: “We have the greatest police. They don’t get the respect they have to get. They are treated so badly. They do something and they end up losing their pension, even if it’s a good thing. If they stop crime nowadays they lose their pension, their family, their house. And we’re gonna give immunity to police. And we’re gonna let the police do the job they have to do…they understand who these migrants are.”
    - Feb. 17, 2024, MI, “I’m also going to indemnify all police officers and law enforcement officials throughout the United States to protect them from being destroyed by the radical left…You can stop that [significant shop looting] in one day, in one hour. If you got really nasty and really tough. Once they [criminals] see things happening that they never thought would happen to them. And I mean tough. It’ll all stop overnight.”

- As early as 2017, Trump and his administration have supported the death penalty for those who deal drugs, drawing inspiration from “zero tolerance” drug policies in some Asian countries and elsewhere. In addition to Trump’s broader 2024 campaign agenda

to tackle drug cartels, Trump's newly proposed criminal justice policies intend to legislate for draconian sentencing measures.

- March 2, 2024, Greensboro, Trump said: "We have become a drug-infested, crime-ridden nation, which is incapable of solving even the simplest of problems. We will institute the powerful death penalty for drug dealers."
- Nov. 14, 2023, Mar-a-Lago: Trump said that he would be asking Congress for legislation to introduce the death penalty for human traffickers and "everyone who sells drugs, gets caught selling drugs, to receive the death penalty for their heinous acts. Because it's the only way."
- Nov. 11, 2023, New Hampshire: Trump said: "President Xi in China controls 1.4 billion people, with an iron hand, no drug problems, you know why they have no drug problems?" "Death penalty for the drug dealers." "You want to solve your drug problem, you have to institute a meaningful death penalty for… a drug dealer."
- June 20, 2023, Fox News: Trump warned that the country might not be ready for the "only way" to stop drug selling: "the death penalty," making reference to China and Singapore. "That's the only way you're going to stop it." "If you want to get rid of it – now, I don't know that this country is ready for it. I just don't know...You know, every time I say it, I sort of like – it's – it's not easy to say the death penalty."
- March 19, 2018, New Hampshire: Trump said: "But if we don't get tough on drug dealers, we're wasting our time, just remember that, we're wasting our time. And that toughness includes the death penalty."
- Early 2018, Trump was speaking behind closed doors on how drug dealers were as bad as serial killers and all deserved the death penalty. He would reference countries such as Singapore and the Philippines.
  - "He says that a lot … He says, 'When I ask the prime minister of Singapore do they have a drug problem [the prime minister replies,] 'No. Death penalty'," said a source who'd spoken at length to Trump about the matter.
  - "He often jokes about killing drug dealers... He'll say, 'You know the Chinese and Filipinos don't have a drug problem. They just kill them'," a senior administration official told Axios.
- April 29, 2017, Trump congratulated Filipino President Rodrigo Duterte for doing"an unbelievable job on the drug problem" in the Philippines, according to a leaked transcript of the conversation.

- A new Trump administration would justify shoplifters being shot as they leave stores.
  - Oct. 29, 2023, CA, Trump said: "We will immediately stop all of the pillaging and theft. Very simply: If you rob a store, you can fully expect to be shot as you are leaving that store," Trump said, before again loudly shouting, "shot," for emphasis. "The word that they shoot you will get out within minutes and our nation, in one day, will be an entirely different place," he added. "There must be retribution for theft and destruction and the ruination of our country."

- Trump "will require local law enforcement agencies receiving DOJ grants to return to proven policing measures such as stop-and-frisk,...cracking down on the open use of illegal drugs, and cooperating with ICE to arrest and deport criminal aliens."

- Trump said he plans to "ask Congress to send a bill to my desk ensuring that anyone who murders a police officer will receive immediately the death penalty."

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XIV. Wielding the Military to Suppress Civil Dissent

- Trump has signaled that he will again seek to use the Insurrection Act to suppress domestic dissent and violence—primarily in Democratic-run cities and states—with work on the plan being led by Jeffrey Clark, and likely to include draft executive orders. The proposal is an "immediate priority" of Project 2025, and he and his associates have been drafting plans to potentially invoke the Insurrection Act on Trump's first day in office, in order to police any public protests against him.
    - March 13, 2023, Iowa, Trump complained about being prevented during his presidency from using the military to address violence in primarily Democratic cities and states. Describing New York City and Chicago as "crime dens," he said: "We can not let it happen any longer. And one of the other things I'll do, because you know, you're supposed to not be involved in that. You have to be asked by the governor or the mayor to come in. The next time I'm not waiting. One of things I did was let them run it, and we're gonna show how bad a job they do. Well, we did that. We don't have to wait any longer. We need to get crime out of our cities."

- Trump and those close to him considered invoking the Insurrection Act at least twice before: to crack down on Black Lives Matter protests in Washington DC and later in an effort to stay in office after losing the presidency in 2020.
    - Sept. 10, 2020, Fox News, Trump said in response to how he would stop potential riots on election night if he won: "We'll put them down very quickly if they do that. We have the right to do that, we have the power to do that if we want." "Look, it's called insurrection. We just send in and we do it, very easy. I mean, it's very easy. I'd rather not do that because there's no reason for it, but if we had to we'd do that and put it down within minutes."
    - May 30, 2020, Twitter: Trump posted that if demonstrators had breached the White House perimeter, they would "have been greeted with the most vicious dogs, and most ominous weapons, I have ever seen."
    - June 1, 2020, Rose Garden, Trump threatened to deploy the military in response to protesters clashing with law enforcement outside the White House and across the nation amid demonstrations following the death of Georgia Floyd:

Today, I have strongly recommended to every governor to deploy the National Guard in sufficient numbers that we dominate the streets. Mayors and governors must establish an overwhelming law enforcement presence until the violence has been quelled.

If a city or a state refuses to take the actions that are necessary to defend the life and property of their residents, then I will deploy the United States military and quickly solve the problem for them.

I am also taking swift and decisive action to protect our great capital, Washington, D.C. What happened in this city last night was a total disgrace. As we speak, I am dispatching thousands and thousands of heavily armed soldiers, military personnel, and law enforcement officers to stop the rioting, looting, vandalism, assaults, and the wanton destruction of property.

We are putting everybody on warning: Our seven o'clock curfew will be strictly enforced.

    - Former Defense Secretary Mark Esper wrote in his memoir that President Trump asked whether demonstrators gathering around the White House following the death of George Floyd could be shot. "Can't you just shoot them? Just shoot them in the legs or something?"
        - Esper confirmed Trump's ask in a March 2024 MSNBC interview: "He wanted to deploy active-duty troops on the street of Washington, D.C., and suggested actually that we…shoot…Americans in the street…That's kind of more what you'll see: this hyper-aggressive behavior."

- April 27, 2024, Time Magazine interview, asked if he would use the military against protesters, Trump said, "Well, I would use certainly the National Guard, if the police were unable to stop. I would absolutely use the National Guard…I don't think you'd ever have to use much more than that."

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XV. Undermining America's Stature Abroad and Eroding International Alliances

- Trump did not criticize Vladimir Putin's jailing of Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny or question Navalny's highly-suspicious death on Feb. 16, 2024 while in Russian custody. Instead, Trump repeatedly compared himself to Navalny by suggesting his ongoing legal problems were the result of political persecution.
    - Feb. 18, 2024, Truth Social: "'Biden:Trump::Putin:Navalny.'"
    - Feb. 19, 2024, Truth Social: "The sudden death of Alexei Navalny has made me more and more aware of what is happening in our Country. It is a slow, steady

progression, with CROOKED, Radical Left Politicians, Prosecutors, and Judges leading us down a path to destruction. Open Borders, Rigged Elections, and Grossly Unfair Courtroom Decisions are DESTROYING AMERICA. WE ARE A NATION IN DECLINE, A FAILING NATION! MAGA2024"

- Trump has long threatened to leave NATO**.** He has long criticized NATO and suggested he would seek to leave the military alliance, and also suggested that the U.S. would help defend a NATO ally only if certain conditions are met, usually financial. His campaign website contains a single sentence on Agenda47 and NATO: "Finally, we have to finish the process we began under my Administration of fundamentally reevaluating NATO's purpose and NATO's mission."
    - May 11, 2024, Wildwood, NJ, Trump boasted that while in the Oval Office: "I was tough on our allies, too, because our allies always took advantage of us. But once I got them straightened out, it was fine. I mean, we had NATO, and they weren't paying their bills. And they said, 'Well, what are you going to do?'...But I said, 'I'll be back in about six months.' And when I came back, I said, 'You're not paying your bills.' And they looked at me, they said, 'Well, you mean to tell me,' because I said, 'You got to pay your bills, or we're not going to protect you with NATO.'...So I said, 'No, you have to pay your bills.' And one of the presidents from one of the countries, 28 countries at the time, 28 countries, only seven of them were paid up. The rest of them didn't pay. And the United States was paying much more than they should have, like by about 10 times. We were carrying NATO. So we get screwed on trade and we carry NATO. And I said, 'If you don't do this, we got problems.' And one of them stood up and said, 'Sir, do you mean to tell me that if I'm attacked…as a country, by Russia, you will not defend me?' I say, 'Are you delinquent?' He said, 'Well, let's say I was.' I said, 'If you're delinquent, I would not protect you.'"
    - Feb. 10, 2024, Conway, SC: Trump boasted that while president he had once told a counterpart of a "big" NATO country that if that country failed to satisfy its "bills," the United States would not protect the country from a Russian invasion and would in fact "encourage" Russia "to do whatever the hell they want."
        - March 2023, CPAC Conference: Trump bragged to the crowd that he had told NATO Secretary General Stoltenberg and other NATO ally leaders that he would not protect them from Russia if they were "delinquent" in spending. "This was a round table with nobody in the room, but the presidents, prime ministers, and dictators, okay? Some of them are all the same, but they stood up and he stood up and said, 'Sir, can I ask you a question? If we don't pay up and if we get attacked by Russia, will you protect us, sir?' I said, 'Now you're not paid up, right?' 'That's right.' 'You're delinquent, right?' 'Yes.' 'I will not protect you from Russia.' 'Sir, we'll send you a check tomorrow, sir. We'll send you a check tomorrow. It'll be sent by overnight mail, sir, I promise you'll have it tomorrow.'"
            - He made similar comments in July 2023 during a Fox News interview.

- Since late summer 2023, Trump has been privately touting, "NATO on standby," drawing inspiration from a February 2023 Center for Renewing America policy brief, titled "Pivoting the US Away from Europe to a Dormant NATO." He has also made clear that the ranks of a second administration would not be "NATO lovers."
- In his 2000 book, "The America We Deserve," Trump wrote that "[p]ulling back from Europe would save this country millions of dollars annually."
- July 20, 2016: Trump said he would come to the aid of a NATO ally attacked by Russia only after reviewing whether they had "fulfilled their obligations to us."
- In July 2018, Trump questioned whether he would come to the defense of NATO ally Montenegro.
- During the 2018 NATO summit, those present said that Trump warned that the U.S. would "go it alone" if allies, particularly Germany and Canada, did not meet their defense budgets for next year. He had similar conversations with his administration officials.
- In July 2018 he denounced the E.U. as a "foe" because of "what they do to us in trade."
- At a rally in 2018, Trump said that he had threatened NATO allies with leaving if all countries did not spend 2% of their GDP on defense.
- In August 2019, Trump said, "I don't give a shit about NATO," according to John Bolton, Trump former National Security Advisor.

- Although Trump's intended policies on the ongoing conflict between Russia and Ukraine are not all totally clear (at this point), some would endorse violations of international law, seriously jeopardize Ukraine's security, and are expected to align with policies of his autocrat ally Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán.
  - During his 2016 campaign he said that he would consider recognizing Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea:
    - July 2016, ABC News interview, Trump said of Russia's plans to annex parts of Crimea, "I'm going to take a look at it. But you know, the people of Crimea, from what I've heard, would rather be with Russia than where they were. And you have to look at that, also."
  - Trump has said that he would somehow end the Russia-Ukraine war in "24 hours," but has been unclear as to how exactly he would do so with such speed. In fact, he has suggested that he would have prevented Russia's recent invasion of Ukraine territories, including by making a deal in which Ukraine simply ceded to Russia its eastern territories, despite Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy having made clear he would never do so. (note: he has also recently claimed that the October 7 Hamas attack would never have happened if he were President. *See e.g.*, March 2, 2024, Greensboro, NC; May 1, 2024, Waukesha, WI; May 11, 2024, Wildwood, NJ)
    - May 11, 2024, Wildwood, NJ, Trump said: "Before I even arrive at the Oval Office shortly after we win the presidency, I will have the horrible war between Russia and Ukraine settled."

- May 1, 2024, Waukesha, WI, Trump said: “Before I even arrive at the Oval Office shortly after we win the presidency, and it's ‘we’ all together, it's a ‘we,’ it's not me, I will have the horrible war between Russia and Ukraine settled. I will get it settled quickly. Horrible war. Would have never happened if I was president.”
- April 12, 2024, Mar-a-Lago, during a joint press conference with House Speaker Mike Johnson, Trump said: “The Ukraine situation would have never happened if I was president, would have never ever happened.” He made the same claim later in response to media questions.
- March 2, 2024, Greensboro, NC, Trump said: “And we are a nation that allowed Russia and Ukraine to fight, killing hundreds of thousands of people. And it will only get worse. It would never have happened with me as your president.”
- March 2, 2024, Greensboro, NC, Trump said: “Before I even arrive at the Oval Office shortly after we, we win the presidency, I will have the horrible war between Russia and Ukraine settled.”
- Feb. 1, 2024, Trump campaign video, he stated: “If I were president, the Russia-Ukraine War would never have happened,” President Trump said. “Never in a million years. But even now, if I were president, I’d be able to negotiate an end to this horrible and rapidly escalating war within 24 hours.” He went on to say ending the war would be “easy.”
- May 10, 2023 CNN town hall, Trump said: “If I’m president, I will have that war settled in one day, 24 hours.” “I’ll meet with Putin, I’ll meet with Zelenskyy. They both have weaknesses and they both have strengths. and within 24 hours that war will be settled. It’ll be over, it’ll be absolutely over.”
- May 3, 2023, GB News, in a sit-down interview with British politician Nigel Farage, Trump said: “If I were president … I [would] end that war in one day. It’ll take 24 hours. I know Zelenskyy well, I know Putin well. I will get that ended… That deal would be easy. That deal would be easy. But I would get that deal done within 24 hours. That war has to be stopped. That war is a disaster.”
- March 27, 2023, Fox News interview with Sean Hannity, Trump said of Russia’s invasion of Ukraine: “I’d be able to work that out. It would have never happened in a million years, and even the Democrats admit that. But if this thing isn’t solved by the time we have the [2024] election, which it’s possible it won’t be … if it’s not solved, I will have it solved in 24 hours with with Zelensky and with Putin, and there’s a very easy negotiation to take place, but I don’t want to tell you what it is because then I can’t use that negotiation, it’ll never work. But there’s a very easy negotiation to take place. I will have it solved within one day—a peace between them.”
- March 6, 2023, radio interview with Sean Hannity, Trump said Russian president Vladimir Putin would have “never” tried to take over anything in the region while Trump was in office, but that he could have “made a deal

to take over something." "He [Putin] would have never done it. That's without even negotiating a deal. I could have negotiated. At worst, I could've made a deal to take over something … there are certain areas that are Russian-speaking areas, frankly, but you could've worked a deal."

- Trump's plans to end the war *could* include cutting off U.S. funding to Ukraine or significantly paring it back. For months, Trump, via his Republican allies, has "been undermining...effort[s]" by the Biden administration to boost military aid to Ukraine. Most recently he said that any funds should be loaned to Ukraine and repaid "*if* they make it" through the war. Indeed, behind closed doors it seems Trump is toying with the idea of totally cutting funding, according to his close ally Orbán who recounted a conversation with Trump while at Mar-a-Lago.
  - Orbán has long attempted to disrupt the flow of funding and aid into Ukraine coming from the European Union and United States. He met with Republicans and Heritage Foundation members in Washington in December 2023, and has repeatedly advocated that international peace and security, including in Ukraine, rests on Trump returning to office.
    - March 10, 2024, M1 TV, Orbán is reported to have told state television that during his March 8 visit to Mar-a-Lago Trump told him if he regains the White House he "will not give a penny into the Ukraine-Russia war and therefore the war will end." The Trump campaign readout of the meeting made no such mention of discussing Ukraine. Orbán is reported to have said:
      - "He has a very clear vision that is hard to disagree with. He says the following: first, he will not give a single penny for the Russo-Ukrainian war. That's why the war will end, because it's obvious that Ukraine cannot stand on its own two feet. If the Americans don't give money and weapons along with the Europeans, the war will end. And if the Americans don't give money, then the Europeans won't be able to fund this war alone. And then the war will end."
      - "If Europeans are afraid of the Russians or want to have a high level of security in general, they have to pay for it. Either by building their own army and their own equipment, or if they use the Americans for this, by paying the Americans a price, the price of security. So he [Trump – ed.] is speaking directly and clearly."
    - Orbán has said that he believes Trump must win the 2024 election for international peace and security to be restored, and, of course, Trump has seized the opportunity to repeat Orbán's support during rallies).
      - March 10, 2024, M1 TV, Orbán told state television: "So we already know about him, we already know from his presidency, that he is a man of peace. And he is not hiding

his views now: he has made it clear that his goal is to bring peace to the Russo-Ukrainian war. We want a ceasefire as soon as possible. We want an early end to this war, which is slowly coming to an end. I don't see anyone else who has more determination and strength to do that than Donald Trump."

- March 4, 2024, Orbán told an economic forum: "It is not gambling but actually betting on the only sensible chance, that we in Hungary bet on the return of President Trump." "The only chance of the world for a relatively fast peace deal is political change in the United States, and this is linked to who is the president."
- As noted above (XI), on March 11, 2024, Trump shared on his Truth Social a March 10 X post by Orbán, which was accompanied by an edited video of the pair's meeting on March 8 at Mar-a-Lago, narrated by Orbán. The subtitles read: "My meeting with President Donald Trump has come to an end. President Trump was a president of peace. He commanded respect in the world, and thus created the conditions for peace. During his presidency there was peace in the Middle East and peace in Ukraine. And there would be no war today if he were still the President of the United States. We agreed that there will be peace when there are world leaders who want peace. I am proud that Hungary is one of those countries. We also agreed that there still still much potential in US-Hungarian economic relations. Although our trade turnover has grown to more than 9 billion dollars, we do not want to stop there. When the president returns, we will give him impetus [sic] to US-Hungarian trade relations. Here in America the campaign is in full swing, and indeed in rushing ahead. It is up to Americans to make their own decision, and it is up to us Hungarians to frankly admit that it would be better for the world – and better for Hungary too – if President Donald Trump were to return to power."
- April 2, 2024, Green Bay, WI, Trump said: "You know, if you look at Prime Minister Orban of Hungary, he said, 'the only way you're going to clean up this world is if Trump becomes president again.' I said, 'that's nice.'... They asked him, 'What's going on.' He said, 'You gotta have Trump, get Trump back. You gotta get Trump back."

- March 16, 2024, Daytona, OH, suggesting that Ukraine might not make it through the war, Trump said: "We should loan them the money, not send them the money. We should loan them the money so that if they do make

it—*if* they make it, they're against tremendous odds, but if they make it—they pay us back. Loan them the money. Give it to them as a loan. Let them be a little bit like they have to be a little nice. Loan them the money, don't just hand them a check for $ 60 billion."
        - May 3, 2023, GB News, Trump said: "If I were president…I [would] end that war in one day. It'll take 24 hours…A lot of it has to do with the money. A lot of it has to do with the military…that we're giving. But I would get that deal done within 24 hours. That war has to be stopped. That war is a disaster. And I'm talking more than money; I'm talking about the human life."
    - Trump has also made flippant comments about thousands who have died during the Russia-Ukraine war, and has suggested that Ukraine might not make it through the conflict.
        - March 17, 2024, Fox News interview, Trump said: "Hundreds of thousands of people are dead now that would be alive. With that being said, It is what it is. It's a terrible situation."
        - As noted above, during his speech in Daytona, March 16, Trump said: "We should loan them the money, not send them the money. We should loan them the money so that if they do make it—*if* they make it, they're against tremendous odds, but if they make it—they pay us back. Loan them the money. Give it to them as a loan. Let them be a little bit like they have to be a little nice. Loan them the money, don't just hand them a check for $ 60 billion."

- As early as early 2020, Trump was asking his aides and top administration officials if they could shoot missiles into Mexico to "destroy the drug labs" and take out drug cartels, in violation of international law.
    - Trump's defense secretary Mark Esper recounts Trump asking him if: "We could just shoot some Patriot missiles and take out the labs, quietly," adding that "no one would know it was us." Trump raised the idea to Esper at least twice during 2020, asking whether they could blame another country for it.
    - January 2023, a policy video on the Trump campaign website titled, "President Donald J. Trump Declares War on Cartels," saw Trump promise to "deploy all necessary military assets, including the U.S. Navy, to impose the full Naval embargo on the cartels" and demand the Department of Defense "to make appropriate use of special forces, cyber warfare, and other overt and covert actions to inflict maximum damage on cartel leadership, infrastructure, and operations." Trump's administration would also designate cartels as foreign terrorist organizations, a move he previously considered.

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XVI. Discriminating Against LGBTQ+ Americans

- Trump believes gender transition among youth is "left wing gender insanity" and said he would pass a bill establishing that there are "only two genders." Specifically, he plans to use the powers of the federal government to reduce gender transition at any age and to ban the use of hormone therapies and surgeries for gender transition among youth.
    - Trump plans to announce that medical facilities providing hormone therapies or surgeries for transition will be deemed non-compliant with federal health and safety regulations, resulting in the loss of federal funding, including Medicaid and Medicare. Additionally, he aims to urge Congress to ban hormonal and surgical treatments for transgender minors across all 50 states.
        - June 30, 2023, Moms for Liberty Event, Trump said, "On Day One, I will sign an executive order instructing every federal agency to cease the promotion of sex or gender transition at any age. They're not gonna do it anymore. I will declare that any hospital or health-care provider that participates in the chemical or physical mutilation of minor youth no longer meets federal health and safety standards—they will be terminated from receiving federal funds effective immediately."
        - Agenda47, Feb. 1, 2023: "I will declare that any hospital or health-care provider that participates in the chemical or physical mutilation of minor youth will no longer meet federal health and safety standards for Medicaid and Medicare and will be terminated from the program immediately."

- Trump intends to revoke gender affirming care.
    - Agenda47, Feb. 1, 2023: "The Left wing gender insanity being pushed in our children is an act of child abuse. On day one, I will revoke Joe Biden's cruel policies on so-called gender affirming care. Ridiculous. A process that includes giving kids puberty blockers, mutating their physical appearance and ultimately performing surgery on minor children. Can you believe this? I will sign a new executive order instructing every federal agency to cease all programs that promote the concept of sex and gender transition at any age. I will then ask Congress to permanently stop federal taxpayer dollars from being used to promote or pay for these procedures…No serious country should be telling its children that they were born with the wrong gender, a concept that was never heard of in all of human history. Nobody's ever heard of this. What's happening today. It was all when the radical left invented it just a few years ago."

- Trump has called for establishing that there are only two genders through the Department of Education and legislation.
    - June 30, 2023, Moms for Liberty Event, "I will also take historic action to defeat the toxic poison of gender ideology, to restore the timeless truth that God created two genders: male and female."
    - Agenda47, Feb. 1, 2023: "My Department of Education will inform states and school districts that if any teacher or school official suggest to a child that they could be trapped in the wrong body, they will be faced with severe consequences. I will ask Congress to pass a bill establishing that the only

genders recognized by the United States government are male and female, and they are assigned at birth."

- Trump refers to gender affirming care as "child sexual mutilation" and says he will impose a national ban..
    - Agenda47, Feb. 1, 2023: I will "pass a law prohibiting child sexual mutilation in all 50 states."
    - Agenda47, Feb. 1, 2023: "The left-wing gender insanity being pushed at our children is an act of child abuse. Very simple. Here's my plan to stop the chemical, physical and emotional mutilation of our youth."

- Trump has criticized allowing transgender athletes to compete, saying he will prohibit "men from participating in women's sports." He has made similar remarks at least 15 times.
    - June 2023, speaking on transgender people in sports, Trump said: "These people are sick; they are deranged."
    - May 11, 2024, Wildwood, NJ, Trump said: "And I will keep men out of women's sports."
    - March 2, 2024, Greensboro, NC, Trump said: "I will keep men out of women's sports."
    - Agenda47, Feb. 1, 2023: "The bill will also make clear that Title 9 prohibits men from participating in women's sports."

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XVII. Attacking the Free Press

- Trump has a long and bitter history with the media, especially those he disagrees with, and has made no apologies for his pointed criticism of certain news outlets as the "enemy of the people." He has recently called their actions "treason" and vowed to investigate them if he returns to office.
    - Sept. 24, 2023, Truth Social: "They are almost all dishonest and corrupt, but Comcast, with its one-side and vicious coverage by NBC NEWS, and in particular MSNBC, often and correctly referred to as MSDNC (Democrat National Committee!), should be investigated for its 'Country Threatening Treason.; Their endless coverage of the now fully debunked SCAM known as Russia, Russia, Russia, and much else, is one big Campaign Contribution to the Radical Left Democrat Party. I say up front, openly, and proudly, that when I WIN the Presidency of the United States, they and others of the LameStream Media will be thoroughly scrutinized for their knowingly dishonest and corrupt coverage of people, things, and events. Why should NBC, or any other of the corrupt & dishonest media companies, be entitled to use the very valuable Airwaves of the USA, FREE? They are a true threat to Democracy and are, in fact, THE ENEMY

OF THE PEOPLE! The Fake News Media should pay a big price for what they have done to our once great Country!"
    - Jan. 15, 2024, Truth Social: Trump has called the mainstream the "LameStream Media, which is merely a subsidiary of the Democrat [sic] Party."
    - Nov. 29, 2023, Truth Social: "Our so-called 'government' should come down hard on them and make them pay for their illegal political activity. Much more to come, watch!"

- May 26, 2024, Truth Social, Trump reposted to his platform a video of a man who was verbally attacking MSNBC's Joe Scarborough and raging on about Trump getting rid of "blowjob liberals" if he is re-elected. "I can't wait for Uncle Donnie to win. I can't wait. He'll get rid of all you fucking liberals. You liberals are gone when he fucking wins. You fucking blowjob liberals are done. Uncle Donnie's gonna take this election—landslide…Landslide, you fucking half a blowjob. Landslide. Get the fuck out of here, you scumbag." Reports have pointed to the "dangerous turn" this could signal for the press.

- As President, Trump proposed ending federal funding for nonpartisan media, e.g. NPR & PBS, which exist to ensure Americans have universal access to educational and informational programming.

- In December 2023, former Trump Pentagon official Kash Patel vowed in an interview with Steve Bannon that a second Trump administration would prosecute people in the media who "helped Joe Biden rig presidential elections." "We're gonna come after you ... we're putting you all on notice."

- Trump would attack federal whistleblowers.
    - Trump's Agenda47 plan calls for a "major crackdown on government leakers who collude with the media to create false narratives, pressing criminal charges when appropriate."
    - In 2019, in connection with asking Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy to investigate then-Vice President Biden, Trump compared the people who gave information to the whistleblower to spies and said the U.S. should "handle" them like they did "in the old days," a reference to capital punishment.

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XVIII. Spreading Disinformation and Conspiracy Theories on Public Health

- Trump spent decades spreading dangerous misinformation about public health and disease, a practice that continued throughout his administration, especially in connection with COVID-19.

- Going back to the early 1990s, Trump repeated and spread myths about HIV transmission and has embraced baseless conspiracy theories about vaccines.

- In 1993 during the AIDS/HIV crisis, while on The Howard Stern Show, Trump said that people who knew they were HIV-positive intentionally spread the virus: "they go out on a rampage on purpose" from "anger [and] hatred."
- In 2015, Trump linked childhood vaccines with autism and as a candidate in 2016, Trump met with anti-vaccine activists.

- During the COVID-19 epidemic, Trump was the "single largest driver" of coronavirus misinformation and conspiracy theories, responsible for 38% of false and baseless medical information related to the pandemic, according to researchers at Cornell University who analyzed 38 million articles about COVID-19.
  - Although the Trump administration played a role in helping to develop the COVID-19 vaccine (albeit a smaller role than Trump claims), Trump also played a critical part in spreading false information about miracle cures, including suggesting that injecting disinfectant into one's body could help fight the virus.

- Trump has called for a curtailment of research into mis- and disinformation.
  - December 15, 2022: "I will sign an executive order banning any federal department or agency from colluding with any organization, business or person to censor, limit, categorize or impede the lawful speech of American citizens. I will then ban federal money from being used to label domestic speech as mis- or disinformation."

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XIX. Embracing Christian Nationalism

- Trump allies are preparing to infuse "Christian nationalism" in a second Trump administration.

- Russell Vought, Trump's former director of the Office of Management and Budget, is a Christian nationalist and possible chief of staff in a second Trump presidency. Vought wants Christian nationalism to be front and center in a second Trump administration.
  - Vought leads the Center for Renewing America (CRA), an influential conservative group creating plans for a second Trump presidency. From their website, their mission statement is "to renew a consensus of America as a nation under God with unique interests worthy of defending that flow from its people, institutions, and history, where individuals' enjoyment of freedom is predicated on just laws and healthy communities."
  - In the CRA annual report, Trump commented, "Russell Vought did a fabulous job in my administration, and I have no doubt he will do a great job in continuing our quest to make America great again"
  - March 22, 2021, Newsweek Op-Ed by Vought: "My own definition of 'Christian nationalism' would be this: An orientation for engaging in the public square that recognizes America as a Christian nation, where our rights and duties are

understood to come from God and where our primary responsibilities as citizens are for building and preserving the strength, prosperity and health of our own country. It is a commitment to an institutional separation between church and state, but not the separation of Christianity from its influence on government and society. It is a belief that our participation in the political system can lead to beneficial outcomes for our own communities, as well as individuals of all faiths."

- Vought is close with Christian nationalist William Wolfe, an activist who said in a deleted X post that schools should no longer teach sex education, and that surrogacy and no-fault divorce should be ended.
    - X post from Vought, Jan. 25, 2023: "I'm proud to work with @William_E_Wolfe on scoping out a sound Christian Nationalism. Both he & @wokal_distance are VFs @amrenewctr . @ConceptualJames is there no room for Christians who are also nationalists to be in an anti-woke coalition? My take below"

- April 2, 2024, Green Bay, WI, Trump said: "November 5 is going to be called something else you know, it's going to be called Christian visibility day when Christians turnout in numbers that nobody has ever seen before. Let's call it Christian visibility day."

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XX. Politicizing Education & Censoring Disfavored Ideas

- Eliminating or depleting the Department of Education, as he has previously tried to do. Trump has also said at least 15 times that he would "defund any school pushing critical race theory."
    - May 11, 2024, Wildwood, NJ, Trump said: "On day one, I will sign a new executive order to cut federal funding for any school pushing critical race theory, transgender insanity, and other inappropriate racial, sexual or political content onto the lives of our children."
    - May 1, 2024, Waukesha, WI, Trump said: "On Day One, I will sign a new executive order to cut federal funding for any school pushing critical race theory, transgender insanity, and other inappropriate racial, sexual, or political content onto the lives of our children."
    - March 2, 2024, Greensboro, NC, Trump said: "On day one, I will sign a new executive order to cut federal funding for any school pushing critical race theory, transgender insanity, and other inappropriate racial, sexual, or political content onto our children."
    - Sept. 2023: Trump said, "We're going to end education coming out of Washington, DC. We're going to close it up – all those buildings all over the place and people that in many cases hate our children. We're going to send it all back to the states."
    - March 2023, Iowa, Trump vowed to cut federal funding to any school covering any subject he finds "inappropriate," including critical race theory, transgender

issues, or "any other inappropriate racial, sexual or political content on our children."
    - August 2022, CPAC Texas: Trump said, "Across the country, we need to implement strict prohibitions on teaching inappropriate racial, sexual and political material to America's schoolchildren in any form whatsoever. And if federal bureaucrats are going to push this radicalism, we should abolish the Department of Education."

- Trump said he would use the college accreditation process to attack diversity, equity, and inclusion policies at higher education institutions because "radical Left accreditors [ ] have allowed our colleges to become dominated by Marxist Maniacs and lunatics."

- Trump has said at least 15 times that he would defund schools with a vaccine or mask mandate.
    - May 11, 2024, Wildwood, NJ, Trump said: "I will not give one penny to any school that has a vaccine mandate or a mask mandate."

- Trump said he would direct DOJ to pursue civil rights cases against schools that engage in affirmative action and diversity policies–what he calls "racial discrimination"--and will impose fines equal to the entire amount of a school's endowment.

- Trump has vowed to fire federal employees who he claims have engaged in "domestic censorship" based on his belief that "a sinister group of Deep State bureaucrats, Silicon Valley tyrants, left-wing activists, and depraved corporate news media have been conspiring to manipulate and silence the American People."

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XXI. Condoning Anti-Semitism

- In 2022, Trump had dinner with Nick Fuentes and Kanye West. Fuentes is a white supremacist who has professed his love for Hitler and denied the Holocaust, comparing Jews murdered in concentration camps to cookies in an oven. West has a history of praising Hitler and Nazis, denying the Holocaust, and spreading anti-Semitic conspiracy theories.

- May 20, 2024, a 30-second video was posted on Trump's Truth Social platform featuring hypothetical newspaper articles celebrating a purported 2024 presidential election victory. The headline read, "What's next for America?" and heralded "the creation of a unified Reich."
    - The Trump campaign eventually deleted the post and insisted the video was created by a "random account" and posted by an unnamed campaign staffer.
    - The articles were styled like early 20th-century newspapers, apparently recycling text from World War I reports, including references to "German industrial

strength" and "peace through strength." Other articles included headlines such as, the "Border Is Closed" and "15 Million Illegal Aliens Deported," as well as that the Trump administration would reject "globalists" (a term that *NYT* reports "has been widely adopted on the far right and that scholars say can be used as a signal of antisemitism").

- After a 2017 rally in Charlottesville, Virginia organized by white supremacists where neo-Nazis marched shouting anti-Semitic slogans, Trump said "there were very fine people on both sides."

- Trump has suggested that Jewish Americans are loyal to Israel over the United States, saying to them that Israel is "your country" and Benjamin Netanyahu "your prime minister."

- As the *New York Times* noted, Trump has "repeatedly accused Jewish voters of disloyalty if they voted for Democrats…evok[ing] an antisemitic trope that Jews have a 'dual loyalty' and are often more loyal to Israel than to their own countries."

    - April 8, 2024, Trump said in an interview aired April 8 on Real America's Voice: "Any Jewish person that votes for Biden does not love Israel and frankly, should be spoken to," adding, "A lot of it's habit. Jewish people by habit, they just, they vote for the Democrats and Black people, by habit, vote for the Democrats."
    - March 18, 2024, Trump said to Sebastian Gorka, one of his former White House aides who now hosts a conservative talk radio show, that Jews who vote for Democrats "hate Israel" and "hate[] their religion." He continued to say that they "hate everything about Israel, and they should be ashamed of themselves because Israel will be destroyed."
        - That same day, Trump's spokesperson Karoline Leavitt doubled down on his comments, saying in a statement that "Trump is right," and that "[t]he Biden Administration has given millions in aid to Gaza and the Iranian Regime, Democrats in Congress have signed petitions supporting Gaza terrorists and caved to the demands of Far-Left Palestinian extremists." "The Democrat Party has turned into a full-blown anti-Israel, anti-Semitic, pro-terrorist cabal."
    - December 2022, Truth Social, Trump said: "No President has done more for Israel than I have. Somewhat surprisingly, however, our wonderful Evangelicals are far more appreciative of this than the people of the Jewish faith, especially those living in the U.S." "Those living in Israel, though, are a different story – Highest approval rating in the World, could easily be P.M.! U.S. Jews have to get their act together and appreciate what they have in Israel – Before it is too late!"
    - October 2022, Truth Social, Trump wrote: "No President has done more for Israel than I have. Somewhat surprisingly, however, our wonderful Evangelicals are far more appreciative of this than the people of the Jewish faith, especially those living in the U.S.." "Those living in Israel, though, are a different story — Highest

approval rating in the World, could easily be P.M.!" Jewish Americans need to "get their act together" and "appreciate" Israel "before it is too late."
    - December 2021, Trump said in an interview that "the Jewish people in the United States either don't like Israel or don't care about Israel," adding, "People in this country that are Jewish no longer love Israel."
    - June 2021, Trump said: "Jewish people who live in the United States don't love Israel enough. Does that make sense to you? I'm not talking about Orthodox Jews. I believe we got 25% of the Jewish vote, and it doesn't make sense. It just seems strange to me."
    - April 2021, during an interview for a book about his Middle East policy, Trump said: "These people in this country that are Jewish no longer love Israel. I'll tell you, the evangelical Christians love Israel more than the Jews in this country." He also said the fact that many Jewish Americans voted for Obama and Biden "tells you that the Jewish People in the United States either don't like Israel or don't care about Israel."
    - December 2019, Trump said: "We have to get the people of our country, of this country, to love Israel more, I have to tell you that. We have to do it. We have to get them to love Israel more. Because you have people that are Jewish people that are great people – they don't love Israel enough."
    - August 21, 2019: Trump said that Jewish Americans who vote for Democrats are "being very disloyal to Jewish people and you're very disloyal to Israel." He continued: "I think that if you vote for a Democrat, you are very, very disloyal to Israel and to the Jewish people."
    - August 20, 2019: Trump said, "any Jewish people that vote for a Democrat, I think it shows either a total lack of knowledge or great disloyalty."
- During the 2016 campaign, Trump tweeted a picture calling Hilary Clinton the "Most Corrupt Candidate Ever" with a red Jewish star and $100 bills in the background, an anti-Semitic image with white-supremacist origins.
- Another 2016 Trump campaign ad featured several prominent Jewish figures while warning against "global special interests."
- In 2015 while seeking the Republican nomination for president, Trump told an audience at the Republican Jewish Coalition, "You're not going to support me because I don't want your money. But that's okay. You want to control your own politician."

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XXII. The Economic Impacts of Trump's Autocratic Moves

- **Overview**
    - "There is strong evidence that democracies provide stability and predictability in growth and other development outcomes relative to autocracies," according to a report by the University of Oslo's V-Dem Institute. Conversely, the erosion of democratic norms and institutions can introduce significant financial risk that

destabilizes economies. Specific economic indicators such as access to capital markets at lower interest rates and foreign direct investment correlate with the strength of democratic institutions and the rule of law. Autocratic regimes are associated with negative economic factors such as high inflation, lagging GDP and brain drain. They are prone to "drastic economic decline."

- An important warning was issued in June 2024, when sixteen Nobel Prize-winning economists signed a joint letter expressing "deep[ ] concern[ ]" about the "risks to the U.S. economy" posed by a second Trump term. They warn that Trump's unpredictable actions and policies threaten "economic and political certainty," jeopardizing the United States' " standing in the world" and its stable international relationships. The economists caution that Trump returning to office would have a "destabilizing effect" on the nation's domestic economy and raise alarms about his "fiscally irresponsible budgets" potentially "reignit[ing]" inflation. The warning highlights the severe economic instability and international isolation that could result from another Trump term, underlining the broader autocratic threat his presidency poses to democratic norms, economic stability, and the United States' global economic leadership.
- Given the shock autocratic policies Trump and his allies have proposed for a second Trump Administration, the risk of economic deterioration and of spiraling economic crises driven by autocratic forces is very serious, if not acute.

- **Economic instability and black swan risk**

  - Research indicates that democratic backsliding of the kind Trump promises is correlated with increasing economic risk and unpredictability. A Yale Budget Lab report states, "The US enjoys a safe harbor investment premium—a value that investors place on US safety, soundness and stability. Even a relatively modest move in risk premia would have profound implications for the US. If the US country risk premium moved to that of the current UK level, after 10 years, real equity wealth per household would be $50,000 lower and real GDP 1% smaller. The erosion of safe harbor advantages could include more uncertainty and discontinuous risk, higher bond yields, and, ultimately, lower growth." The unrest that the emergence of a Trump-led autocratically-oriented governing regime would create could pierce the United States's safe harbor investment premium, which would significantly impact the country's prosperity and economic security.
  - According to the Yale report, the risk includes "a 'black swan' event outside of the realm of US experience, such as a debt default or a military intervention in domestic politics. Here we assume an immediate 300 basis point rise in risk premia and a 30% decline in FDI, but even these assumptions may still undershoot the potential damage of such a scenario."
  - This risk correlates with many of the threats of unprecedented autocratic action set forth throughout the Tracker. The use of the U.S. military in domestic politics is but one example of such policies; it is also reasonable to assume mass

deportation of millions of migrants, the demolition of departments and agencies, and many other planned autocratic-leaning policies risk producing similar results.

- As Professor Layna Mosley of Princeton wrote, "The uncertainty associated with an erosion of democratic values can generate volatility as well as higher costs of capital, for business as well as for municipal and sovereign borrowers." Indeed, "peer-reviewed research in finance, economics, and political science reveals the risks to markets of political instability, weak rule of law, and democratic backsliding." The specific harms associated with Trump's policy proposals, in tandem with the political and social upheaval outlined in the aforementioned sections of this report, increase the danger of severe economic risks.

- **Runaway inflation**

  - Moreover, "Trump's second-term agenda of sweeping tariffs, mass deportation of undocumented migrants, and enormous tax cuts would accelerate, rather than alleviate, inflation," according to Ronald Brownstein. As former Treasury Secretary Larry Summers stated in that publication, "There has never been a presidential platform so self-evidently inflationary as the one put forward by President Trump. I have little doubt that with the Trump program, we will see a substantial acceleration in inflation, unless somehow we get a major recession first."
  - "Summers identified multiple pillars of Trump's economic agenda that could accelerate inflation. These included compromising the independence of the Federal Reserve Board, enlarging the federal budget deficit by extending his 2017 tax cuts, raising tariffs, rescinding Biden policies designed to promote competition and reduce junk fees,' and squeezing the labor supply by restricting new immigration and deporting undocumented migrants already here." Summers has also warned: "There is a real risk during a Trump presidency that we would again see mortgage rates above 10 percent as inflation expectations rose and long-term interest rates increased."
  - Mark Zandi, the chief economist of Moody's Analytics, also predicted that Trump's policies would increase inflation. Zandi further warned that Trump would, "force the Federal Reserve Board to raise interest rates higher than they would be otherwise."
  - As we document elsewhere in the Tracker, Trump is planning mass deportations. That severe action in turn "would cause a severe supply shock to the labor market, which could increase the overall cost of living," according to Michael Strain of AEI.

- **Protectionist harms**

  - Autocracies are often associated with greater levels of economic isolation on the international stage. Kimberly Clausing, professor of tax policy at the UCLA Law School and co-author of a nonpartisan Peterson Institute for International

Economics report that found the tariffs Trump is promising to implement would significantly increase costs for consumers, noted that "Trump is promising a no-holds-barred, all-out protectionist spree that will affect every single thing that people buy that is either an import or in competition with imports."
    - Trump's Agenda47 promises to "reclaim our economic independence from China. President Trump will revoke China's Most Favored Nation trade status and adopt a 4-year plan to phase out all Chinese imports of essential goods—everything from electronics to steel to pharmaceuticals" and commits to "an eye for an eye, a tariff for a tariff, same exact amount" should "India, China, or any other country" assert additional tariffs on the U.S.

- **Attacking independence of the Federal Reserve Board**

    - The Wall Street Journal has reported: "Former Trump administration officials and other supporters of the presumptive GOP nominee have in recent months discussed a range of proposals, from incremental policy changes to a long-shot assertion that the president himself should play a role in setting interest rates. A small group of the former president's allies—whose work is so secretive that even some prominent former Trump economic aides weren't aware of it—has produced a roughly 10-page document outlining a policy vision for the central bank, according to people familiar with the matter. The group of Trump allies argues that he should be consulted on interest-rate decisions, and the draft document recommends subjecting Fed regulations to White House review and more forcefully using the Treasury Department as a check on the central bank. The group also contends that Trump, if he returns to the White House, would have the authority to oust Jerome Powell as Fed chair before his four-year term ends in 2026, the people familiar with the matter said, though Powell would likely remain on the Fed's board of governors."
    - These policies would have a dramatic impact on the U.S. and global economies. As Citigroup Global Chief Economist Nathan Sheets has said: "If Fed independence is eroded it would be absolutely disastrous. When I think about the risk for markets and the dollar, any policy change that eroded Fed independence in an appreciable way would be greeted by the market very vigorously and adversely and be a source of great pressure and volatility," he said. "Any gains a political actor might think they glean would be so small compared to the potential cost that they might have ... it leaves me optimistic it is not a game worth playing."

- **Devaluing the dollar**

    - Trump economic advisers are also proposing methods to devalue the U.S. dollar. *POLITICO* reported that one former Trump administration official said, "Currency revaluation is likely to be a priority for some members of a potential second

Trump administration, mainly because of the viewpoint that [an overvalued dollar] contributes to the trade deficit."

- Trump has long harbored a belief that the dollar is "too strong," a view echoed by his current economic advisers. *POLITICO* noted, "But weakening the dollar could have other far-reaching consequences, from sending consumer prices for imported products soaring, to inviting retaliation from other countries and threatening the dollar's role as world reserve currency, which would undermine U.S. sanctions on adversaries like Iran and Russia." Former trade chief Robert Lighthizer, who has been named as a possible Treasury Secretary in a Trump Administration, has championed aggressive currency devaluation.

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XXIII. Bipartisan Actions to Counter Autocratic Threats

The literature of how to prevent and address autocratic onset is vast. One of the authors of this Tracker has co-authored a comprehensive guide to this subject globally and to the relevant scholarly literature—the Brookings Institution's "The Democracy Playbook." Important recent contributions specifically addressing Trump's threats for 2025 have been made by Protect Democracy, Democracy Forward, and many others.

In future editions of this tracker, we will attempt to catalog those and other suggestions and to comprehensively address how best to respond to the growing threats of autocratic and anti-democratic efforts. For the moment, we offer some preliminary thoughts toward a comprehensive theory of the case. We group those preliminary suggestions into three periods of time: the pre-election period from present through November 5, 2024; the transition period from November 5, 2024 to January 20, 2025; and the period from January 20, 2025 onward.

Following those three sections, we summarize some of the more substantial recommendations that have been made by others. Because those recommendations tend to cut across all three of the time periods we isolate, we present those additional recommendations as separate sections rather than trying to slice and dice them into our three periods.

A. Preliminary Suggestions: Present through November 5, 2024

The current administration can and should take proactive measures to put in place additional federal regulatory or executive order frameworks that impose legal limitations on the Executive's invocation of the Insurrection Act and other emergency powers. While statutory reform may or may not be realistic in 2024, legislative proposals can inform possible executive action. There is a rich body of existing scholarship upon which regulations and executive orders can draw. Advocates have proposed statutory language that would toughen the legal framework for the utilization of military, paramilitary, and DOJ powers by more precisely delineating what are valid triggering circumstances for the Act and what particular range of responses would be

authorized. Legal scholars have also warned of the potential for abuse with existing authorities and proposed legal reforms to address such risks.

Similar steps should be considered with respect to the full range of threats set forth in this Tracker. While executive orders or regulations could be reversed by an incoming Trump or other future administration, such rollbacks would be subject to the requirements of the Administrative Procedure Act, other legal review, and then litigation. Thus, such internal executive branch regulations would serve both to sound the alarm if they were violated and to impose possible impediments to autocratic action. Regulations were impactful in the past in slowing and stopping illegal and authoritarian moves. For instance, lawsuits early in Trump's presidency forced executive agencies to comply with Obama-era rules which helped counteract egregious policies such as Trump's first travel ban targeting Muslim countries in January 2017.

Attempts at congressional intervention should not be written off, despite apparent congressional gridlock and in particular House control by allies of Trump and supporters of his autocratic tendencies. It is worth looking at whether there could be any appetite for particular individual provisions from the Protecting Our Democracy Act (PODA), such as: preventing abuse of the pardon power; enforcing the Emoluments Clause; preventing abuse of the National Emergencies Act; preventing political interference into the DOJ; protecting whistleblowers; enforcing congressional subpoenas; limiting a president's ability to evade advice and consent through installation of long-term acting officials; and increasing accountability for online election advertising. A recent book by one of the authors of this Tracker, "Overcoming Trumpery", highlights those and other solutions to preventing nepotism and conflicts of interest, safeguarding the DOJ from being hijacked for political ends, and preventing foreign interference in the American democratic process (Chapters 2-4).

In order to have any hope of consideration, solutions would need to be more narrowly crafted and framed in conservative, and even MAGA, terms. Conservatives of all stripes have long articulated hostility to excessive executive power, such as Sen. Mike Lee (R-UT) attempting, during the Trump administration, to require greater congressional assent for a president's declaration of national emergency. So it might be possible to at least mull narrowly crafting some bipartisan reforms. Indeed, some in Congress may view these as necessary to address possible overreach by a Democratic administration, either today or in the future. After all, the far-right fear (however unfounded) of autocratic moves by their political opponents is intense. So the possibility of bipartisan legislative solutions should not be altogether discounted.

B. Preliminary Suggestions: November 5, 2024 through January 20, 2025

Should there be hesitation to make bold regulatory moves in the pre-election period, such reforms might be considered in the transition period should we be facing the threat of autocratic takeover in January 2025. That would be less than optimal, because they would be seen as last-minute changes and might be easier to unwind legally and politically. But it would be better than nothing.

Depending upon its makeup, Congress could also move on a package of anti-autocratic legislative reforms in the short interregnum between when the new Congress is seated on January 3 and when the president is sworn in on January 20. Indeed, it is not too soon to begin preparation of such a package that could achieve bipartisan support. It could include some of the remedies noted in the section above.

This package should also include narrowly crafted provisions clarifying standing for state attorneys general and "private attorneys general"—that is, other plaintiffs with strong equities in responding to wrongdoing—to seek federal court review of particularly egregious autocratic conduct.

C. Preliminary Suggestions: January 20, 2025 and Onward

Nonpartisan civil society organizations, and affected individuals and enterprises, will have a critical role to play in meeting every illegal action with legal action as they did in 2017 and following. Another front line of defense, as it has been both with respect to both Democratic and Republican administrations, are the above mentioned state attorneys general. So are the many other state and local government officials who may have legal standing to bring cases, or have other parts to play.

To take some examples from Trump's first administration, fifteen states, including Washington and Alaska, had standing to challenge the Trump administration on drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. Harris County, which faced chemical explosions at some of its plants, was the only Texas local government to join an effort in challenging the Trump EPA for rolling back chemical safety rules. Fourteen state attorneys general supported a lawsuit to prevent federal ICE agents from conducting arrests in and around state courthouses. Cities in Indiana successfully defended their status as sanctuary cities. And on and on—the examples are legion.

Many more suggestions for 2025, and indeed for all three of the time periods we have identified, follow in the discussion of remedies others have suggested.

D. Democracy Playbook Recommendations

In their report, The Democracy Playbook, Eisen et al. recommend the following 10 commitments for countering democratic backsliding and the advent of autocracy. The following summary is drawn from the Executive Summary to the linked report (see pp. 4-15), and the page numbers refer to the body of the report. The following include both steps which can be undertaken immediately and in the future; at the federal, state and local level; and even from international election observers and the like.

COMMITMENT 1: Strengthen and Ensure Election Security, Integrity, Transparency, and Voting Access

Preventing authoritarianism will start at the ballot box by securing Americans' exercise of their

right to vote. State Actors can commit to investing “in the people, administrative framework and election management bodies (EMBs), electoral jurisprudence, and systems required for the technological security, transparency, and accountability of election counting, voter registration, and political campaign networks” (see p. 23).

Political opposition groups can “make a commitment to contest acts of nondemocratic actors, within the bounds of democratic norms, who aim to sow distrust in elections. Opposition leaders may also choose to pursue more extreme institutional measures available to them such as investigations, impeachment processes, votes of no confidence, and recall referendums and/or deploy extra-institutional tools like protests, strikes, or boycotts” (see p. 39).

International actors can “commit to observe elections together under the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) or other international umbrellas to meet basic standards of universal access, equality, fairness, freedom, transparency, accountability, and privacy in voter submission” (see p. 87).

Nonprofit and civil society actors can “strengthen nonpartisan election monitoring and increase efforts to restore citizen trust and confidence in both the electoral process and the overall foundations of democracy, transparency, and accountability, including by engaging the broader public audience” (see p. 36). They can also “enhance collaboration with independent media to counter disinformation and ensure citizens can access transparent and truthful information as part of electoral processes” (see p. 80).

COMMITMENT 2: Advance Rule of Law and Impartial Justice (Commitments for State Actors)

Branches of the government, or even individual offices, can take steps now to enact codes to promote oversight and independence. Government ethics and transparency mechanisms can “enhance citizen trust in, and access to, the operation of government under law. With respect to the judicial system, that means establishing codes of conduct, opening up courtrooms by producing publicly available transcripts of proceedings in a timely fashion, taking steps to ensure that sealed documents are minimized, and placing cameras in courtrooms” (see p. 32).

COMMITMENT 3: Depoliticize Democratic Processes

Our politicians, on both sides of the aisle, must use language that condemns autocracy to meet the challenges of the moment. “Political actors should uphold international laws and institutional obligations and use their political power with restraint. But when norms break down, further legal mechanisms should be considered” (see p. 26). “Political parties, through their capacity to influence coalitions and internal leadership roles, should limit leaders who espouse anti-democratic sentiment or positions or who evince a disregard for human rights” (see p. 28).

Nonprofit and civil society actors can “model the responsible behavior civil society groups wish to see among their elected leaders in terms of good governance structure, rhetoric, and public positions” (see p. 44). They can also “carry out activities, including with targeted and increased support from domestic and international partners, to depolarize democracy, strengthen resiliency, and create space for common ground among political actors” (see p. 46).

COMMITMENT 4: Enhance Democratic Safeguards on Technology

Online speech is more profitable the more polarizing it is. State actors should “commit to establishing a common democratic agenda for regulating private industries that have an impact on democratic discourse and processes through close cooperation on regulatory efforts around data protection, content moderation, and export control reform” (see p. 25). Social media companies specifically should “support[ ] narrowly tailored, targeted government regulations that do not infringe on users’ right to free speech—focusing on mechanisms like political advertising and reduction of disinformation prevalence measures” (see p. 59). They should “intensify[ ] cooperation with other platforms to share best practices” and “establish[ ] better information with independent researchers and universities” (see p. 59).

COMMITMENT 5: Strengthen Civil Society and Independent Media

The press has a significant role to play in checking abuses of power, by determining what it will cover and how the coverage should play out. Since critics accused the press of awarding Trump too much coverage in 2016, many outlets are now going too far in the opposite direction and refraining from covering his recent autocratic outbursts. The media should “strengthen professional development, training, and education to provide a pipeline to up-and-coming media actors able to notice and resist threats to the industry” (see pp. 49, 70). They should “practice media self-scrutiny and develop a robust media criticism community. Such a community could increase public trust, and thus public support, through the transparent and constructive questioning of the relationship between journalists, politicians, and advertisers” (see p. 50).

“External actors, including international donors, NGOs, and government officials should forcefully respond to government attacks on NGOs and independent media. That includes issuing systematic, coordinated, and high-level responses to government authorities’ restrictions on NGO activities and the work of free media, while taking steps to avoid the perception that activities are solely externally driven” (see p. 69). “NGOs should train and be prepared to use diverse and varied nonviolent tactics to increase the pressure on government and attract more people to participate” (see p. 46).

COMMITMENT 6: Avoid Toxic “Otherization” Politics

With Project 2025, radical autocratic ideas have shaped the Overton window of American politics. Autocratic ideas must instead be unacceptable as part of our politics. “Those on both sides of critical issues should create space in the public square for legitimate and respectful debate. For example, there is a legitimate debate over migration levels that is very different from tolerating the anti-migrant and often anti-Muslim rhetoric that frequently uses xenophobic language to exploit refugee and migration crises” (see p. 28). “While substantive debates on policy issues should be welcomed, democratic actors must try to limit the extent to which debates over toxic identity politics weaken the trust of citizens in democratic governance and institutions, and serve as fuel to empower extremists. This effort needs to be matched with a focus on local, rural, and urban-level integration—as well as a posture that eschews hateful rhetoric” (see p. 28). “There must be a full lifecycle approach—from recruitment through return to civilian life—to preventing and mitigating the scourge of white nationalist, extremist, and other anti-democratic ideologies that exhibit a disregard for basic human rights” (see p. 44).

We must “tailor efforts to rural and underserved areas that are highly susceptible to radicalization due to a systemic lack of access to NGO and government support systems, thus allowing for anti-democratic extremist actors to fill the gap in community needs while promoting anti-democratic sentiment” (see p. 59). This includes “provid[ing] additional funding towards

preemptive measures to prevent radicalization (see pp. 59, 69).

“Democracies should enhance coordination on migration and refugee crises, as well as increase humanitarian support for civil society organizations and municipalities that are working to house and assist refugees” (see p. 88). Private sector actors can “seek affirmative ways to help protect democracy, including through activism, philanthropy, corporate social responsibility, and helpful rhetoric” (see p. 55).

COMMITMENT 7: Prioritize Anti-Corruption and Anti-Kleptocracy Initiatives

Key to preventing democratic backsliding is upholding the obligations enshrined in the U.S. Constitution. During Trump’s first term, he was able to violate the Emoluments Clause, for example. Instead, we need to “agree to regulate the role of money in politics to retain trust in the democratic system through the creation of such mechanisms as public financing of campaigns, disclosure requirements for donations, and limits on the amount of campaign donations” (see p. 26). This includes pledging that “corruption-related financial crimes are not deprioritized” and promising to “provide whistleblower protections and incentives” (see p. 89).

COMMITMENT 8: Demonstrate that Democracies Can Deliver a Better Standard of Living (State Actors)

There must be an affirmative message about how democracy benefits people. That means committing to policies of inclusive growth that tackle economic inequality and that improve well-being and opportunity across all demographic lines, including race, class, and geography” (see p.44).

“Such pro-growth policies for left-behind areas include extending broadband access, providing investment capital for new and small businesses, and using both transportation investment and regulatory policy to address rural-urban imbalances. Policies should address the unique needs of each area by elevating existing community assets and collaborations that bolster local economies” (see p. 68).

COMMITMENT 9: Strengthen Democracy via Multilateral Institutions

Multilateral institutions can “pledge to use conditionality more aggressively—both punitive and incentive-based—against backsliding democracies and malign actors,” including “cutting funding to the worst offenders” (see p. 86). “International organizations should pledge to invest in and expand capabilities for monitoring disinformation campaigns emanating from foreign actors” (see p. 81).

COMMITMENT 10: Deepen a Broad-Based Global Coalition of Democracies

Those who support democracy anywhere support democracy everywhere. That means “democracies should commit to increase coordination and cooperation with each other in defense of the key elements of the multilateral order, including strengthening standing local, regional, or global democratic institutions and frameworks or expanding or creating new mechanisms for advanced democratic collaboration” (see p. 87).

E. Protect Democracy Recommendations

In their report, the The Authoritarian Playbook for 2025, Protect Democracy recommends the following ten steps (see pp. 65-69):

1. Create pro-democracy coalitions before the crisis arrives.

"Now is the time to build stronger and deeper pro-democracy coalitions that are educated about what's at stake and prepared to act together. Blunting a full-on autocratic government takeover will require courts, Congress, agency officials, states, and municipalities to act as checks against abuse of power. But, institutions often struggle to do this on their own. We'll need to bolster them, and the best way to do that is through broad coalitions — whether of civic groups, advocacy organizations, business interests, faith groups, or otherwise. Building coalitions is time-consuming and requires legwork to establish respect and develop alignment."

2. Take anti-democratic ideas and promises seriously.

"The voting public must know what is at stake in the next election and beyond. Public communicators, whether they hold jobs in the news media, campaigns, non-profit advocacy, corporate public affairs, or some other outward-facing positions, should focus on explaining how autocratic rule will impact their audiences and communities. That means focusing less on the horserace elements of political stories and refraining from 'both sides' coverage that fails to explain the unique authoritarian threat. As New York University journalism professor Jay Rosen has encapsulated the need, we must all focus on 'not the odds, but the stakes.'"

3. Keep a broad pro-democracy movement united against the acute, big-picture autocratic danger.

"Authoritarians will exacerbate … divisions, pitting vulnerable groups against each other. The pro-democracy coalition must stay focused on what unites us — protecting the ability to resolve policy disagreements through a democratic process. As Poland showed recently, and Belgium and Finland showed in the early 20th century, the way to overcome autocratic movements is for people committed to democracy from the left, center, and right to put their traditional differences aside to come together to defend democracy."

4. Support Republicans that stand firm for democratic institutions.

"The authoritarian movement in America has been made possible with support from the Republican Party. At the same time, Republican officials and affiliated interest groups can have an outsized impact in checking the authoritarian faction. As scholars Daniel Ziblatt and Steven Levitsky have explained, it's essential for pro-democratic actors in the authoritarian-dominated party not just to offer tacit criticism of autocratic actions but to 'expel antidemocratic extremists from their ranks, refuse to endorse their candidacies, eschew all collaboration with them and, when necessary, join forces with ideological rivals to isolate and defeat them.' The pro-democracy coalition must be willing partners to support and nurture those relationships with pro-democracy Republicans that can produce meaningful change."

5. Rally around non-partisan, independent public servants.

“Our democracy depends on millions of dedicated public servants doing their jobs to deliver services, uphold the law, and keep the public informed. Through their commitment to the rule of law, these civil servants, election officials, judges, and court employees are a first line of defense against an autocratic government … that is why among the autocratic faction’s first moves in power will be to dismantle the civil service and independent law enforcement and replace them with regime loyalists.

Independent public servants are the bulwark standing between the authoritarian and the American people; we may frequently disagree with them or be frustrated by what they do (or don’t do), but we must safeguard their vital roles. We must also help them when they speak out against authoritarianism, providing material resources and other forms of support in lawful ways when they risk their livelihoods or safety to do the right thing.”

6. Uphold the rule of law and democratic institutions, and always repudiate violence.

“[P]ro-democracy actors must always condemn political violence. This also means respecting lawful court orders, avoiding aggressive presidential executive actions that stretch constraints on abuse of power, and refusing to tolerate corruption.”

7. Protect the first targets and arrange to advocate for the most vulnerable.

“A central tenet of the autocratic playbook is to target vulnerable people and populations to deflect from an autocrat’s failures and consolidate support. Community groups, civic and industry associations, and state and local governments should articulate agreements to support each other in times of need. We might think of this as the NATO Article V approach — ‘an attack against one … is an attack against all.’ As with NATO, such alliances and agreements can create a deterrent effect that will make it harder for an autocrat to single out members.”

8. Evaluate security at the community, household, and personal level.

“Members of the pro-democracy coalition should be ready to address potential threats to their personal security, families, and workplaces. Practical safety preparedness includes protecting private personal information, evaluating online security vulnerabilities, and training for the unexpected. We should also identify people in our households, neighborhoods, and communities who may require additional support and develop plans in advance to help them should the need arise.”

9. Work to protect free and fair elections in 2026 and 2028.

“An autocrat in the White House will cause immense damage to our democratic institutions and hurt an enormous number of people, but the 2026 midterms will not be far away. We can expect the autocratic faction to continue to seek to suppress the right to vote, undermine confidence in election systems, and explore ways to nullify votes for opposing candidates.

We need to make substantial investments in all available strategies to protect free and fair elections in 2026 and 2028 so that 'we the people' have a chance to hold the authoritarian faction accountable and vote it out of office. Those cycles may also be an opportunity for the pro-democracy coalition to come together to support solid pro-democracy candidates committed to upholding our Constitution and the rule of law."

10. Continue building the democracy of tomorrow.

"In many ways, our democracy hangs in the balance over the next 12 months. American civil society must focus aggressively during that time on the defensive work of protecting a free and fair election in 2024, limiting the likelihood the autocratic faction prevails, and preparing for an autocrat in the White House in 2025.

Alongside these defensive efforts to protect our democracy, however, we must also work to build the resilient and inclusive democracy of tomorrow. That includes strengthening our checks and balances and rule of law institutions, reforming our electoral systems and political parties to make our democracy more representative and authoritarian resistant, enabling the democratic participation of those who have been historically excluded, bridging divides, and enhancing civic engagement."

F. Democracy Forward Recommendations

As discussed above, with Trump's plan to eliminate civil servant jobs en masse, a Democracy Forward report draws attention to specific threats including relocating federal agencies, shortening the disciplinary process, attacking public sector unions, utilizing buyout programs, terminating employees for past work, impounding appropriated funds, and utilizing the National Security Act of 1947. The report notes that countermeasures targeting these main weak points can be taken—and have begun.

"The pro-democracy community has started to respond. In November of 2023, 26 organizations joined with Democracy Forward to submit comments in support of the Office of Personnel Management's (OPM) proposed rule: Upholding Civil Service Protections and Merit System Principles. The proposed rule is intended to counter a return of the so-called 'Schedule F' efforts, which was a proposal at the end of the Trump administration to reclassify large numbers of civil servants into positions from which they could be readily terminated. The far right is already planning to re-issue Schedule F should it gain control of the federal executive branch. It is crucial now to put in place safeguards against future attacks on the civil service. While preparing for Schedule F is necessary, it is not sufficient to respond to the wide-ranging threats from anti-democratic actors. Their systematic planning must be met with a comparable response. Other serious threats remain."

"Identifying threats is the first step toward effectively countering them. Addressing these threats will require a thoughtful and coordinated response by the many institutions, policymakers, and communities dedicated to advancing democracy and the ability of the government to be

responsive to the needs of people and communities. Some of these proposals can be forestalled by proactive actions. Others can be challenged in court if they come to fruition."

G. Atlantic Council/International Center on Nonviolent Conflict Recommendations

In their report, "Fostering a Fourth Democratic Wave," Atlantic Council and ICNC recommend that in building democratic solidarity, "the United States and its allies could establish a new standing body, such as D-10 or a broader coalition of democracies, with a mandate to develop strategy and coordinate execution of joint efforts to support democracy and counter authoritarian efforts. The informal working group, or new standing body, would engage perspectives from every major region to identify threats and develop solutions to address them."

"The US government should elevate supporting democracy to be a central factor in foreign policy decision-making. The president should direct the national security agencies and the national security advisor to weigh implications for democracy in all major foreign policy decisions. In addition, the president should issue a National Security Strategy or directive for supporting democracy overseas. Such a directive would send a strong signal to US allies and authoritarian regimes that the United States is committed to supporting democracy overseas."

"The United States should establish a government-wide working group to develop a tiered framework of escalating responses to violent repression. The United States should work with leading democracies to build a framework for collective action centered around enforcement of this tiered approach."

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