# Elections DA---Living Wage---NEG

## 1NC

### 1NC—DA

#### Harris wins now. The next few weeks will determine her outcome to the marginal-turnout voter.

Salvanto 08-04 [Anthony Salvanto, Jennifer De Pinto, Kabir Khanna, Fred Backus, 8-4-2024, "Boosts in Democratic excitement help Harris reset the race against Trump — CBS News poll", CBS, https://www.cbsnews.com/news/poll-harris-trump-cbs-news/] TDI \*figures omitted

Boosted by Democrats, younger and Black voters becoming more engaged and likely to vote, and by women decidedly thinking she'd favor their interests more, Vice President Kamala Harris has reset the 2024 presidential race.

She has a 1-point edge nationally — something President Biden never had (he was down by 5 points when he left the race) — and Harris and former President Donald Trump are tied across the collective battleground states.

Looking ahead, voters are also defining why the next few weeks could be critical.

On one hand, Harris has additional edges with the wider electorate that Mr. Biden did not: she's leading Trump on being seen as having the cognitive health to serve, a measure that was of course central to the campaign before Mr. Biden stepped aside.

And on policy generally, Harris is seen as a little different from Mr. Biden, opening some possibility of defining her stances for the electorate now, either way.

But to Trump's advantage, some critical things have not changed: he keeps his sizable lead on voters saying they'll be financially better off with him and that his policies would decrease migrants at the border.

The percentage of Democrats who say they'll "definitely vote" has risen to its highest point this year. That narrows the partisan "turnout gap" we've seen throughout the campaign.

And today much higher numbers of Black voters say they'll vote, compared to July when Mr. Biden was the nominee.

More generally, all this points to how the election might well hinge on turnout and specifically on marginal-turnout voter — those who don't always show up to vote.

For example, among those who generally describe themselves as "sometimes" or "rarely" voting — but say they'll definitely vote now — Harris is currently winning.

#### The plan is an electoral nightmare. The link turn is fool’s gold. Plan flips young and median voters.

Miltimore ’19 [Jon Miltimore; Jonathan Miltimore is the former Senior Creative Strategist of FEE.org at the Foundation for Economic Education., 7-19-2019, "Support for $15 Minimum Wage Plummets When Americans Are Told Its Economic Impact", Foundation for Economic Education, https://fee.org/articles/support-for-15-minimum-wage-plummets-when-americans-are-told-its-economic-impact/] TDI

Minimum wage laws, I’ve noted, are popular with the public. This no doubt explains why House Democrats passed a bill Thursday that would raise the federal minimum wage to $15 an hour.

Yet the minimum wage’s apparent popularity might be political pyrite (fool’s gold).

A newly published Business Insider survey found that support for the minimum wage wilts when Americans—both Republicans and Democrats—are told of its full economic impact.

Of the 1,100 poll respondents, 63 percent supported raising the federal minimum wage to $15 an hour. Just 22 percent opposed the policy.

However, when told of the Congressional Budget Office’s recent finding that raising the minimum wage to $15 an hour would cost an estimated 1.3 million jobs, respondents soured on the policy.

After being told that “a proposed policy” to raise the minimum wage could lead to 1.3 million job losses, people were considerably less enthusiastic. Thirty-seven percent of respondents would support a policy with those implications, considerably down from the 63% who backed a $15 minimum wage.

The CBO, which projected that job losses could be as high as 3.7 million, explained in their report who would be most affected by the minimum wage hike.

The $15 option would alter employment more for some groups than for others. Almost 50 percent of the newly jobless workers in a given week—600,000 of 1.3 million—would be teenagers (some of whom would live in families with income well above the poverty threshold). Employment would also fall disproportionately among part-time workers and adults without a high school diploma.

If Business Insider’s survey is accurate, it provides a roadmap for defeating minimum wage laws: Educate people on the economic consequences of the minimum wage. For better or worse, with more states and cities adopting such policies, it appears we’ll soon have an abundance of new empirical evidence.

#### Trump wins by calling Harris a socialist. Plan gives him the ground to do so.

Sarat ’23 [Austin Sarat; Austin Sarat is the William Nelson Cromwell professor of jurisprudence and political science at Amherst College., 6-22-2023, "Opinion", POLITICO, https://www.politico.com/news/magazine/2023/06/22/donald-trump-red-scare-communism-00102990]

More than three decades after the fall of the Berlin Wall and the collapse of the Soviet Union, Donald Trump seems determined to resurrect red baiting as a political tactic. Calling his political opponents communists has become a regular feature of Trump’s attacks on the Biden administration, the Democratic Party, and the likes of George Soros.

Using this tactic, Trump hopes that a single word can discredit their political views. He wants his followers to fear what the people and institutions he calls communist will do to those who don’t share their world view — including to the former president himself.

Trump’s effort to brand his political opponents and those who now would hold him to account for his alleged criminal conduct as communists has been a through line of his rhetoric since he became a major political figure in 2015. In October of that year, he called Sen. Bernie Sanders, then a candidate for the Democratic nomination for president, “a socialist-slash-communist ... He’s going to tax you people at 90 percent; he’s going to take everything!”

Trump continued his red baiting throughout his term in the White House. In September 2019, he used an address to the United Nations General Assembly to expand on his anti-communist crusade. “Socialism and communism,” Trump said, “are not about justice. They are not about equality. They are not about lifting up the poor. They are certainly not about the good of the country. Socialism and communism are about one thing only — power for the ruling class.”

“America,” Trump promised, “will never be a socialist country.”

At a September 2020 White House event honoring Cuban-American veterans of the ill-fated, 1961 Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba Trump repeated that promise and branded his political opponents radical “Marxists.”

“When you look at the kind of ideology we are also facing ...” Trump told the appreciative audience, “we did not fight tyranny abroad only to let Marxists destroy our beloved country.”

During his 2020 reelection campaign he told a rally of supporters in Vandalia, Ohio, “The choice in November is going to be very simple. There’s never been a time when there’s been such a difference. One is probably communism. I don’t know. They keep saying socialism. I think they’ve gone over that one. That one’s passed already.”]

Three years later, reviving the Red Scare also is part of Trump’s 2024 electoral strategy. It works for at least three reasons.

First, it is designed to appeal to older voters who remember the days when the phrase “Better Dead Than Red” signaled solidarity among white people in this country against a common enemy. Polls show that only 3 percent of people in their 70s and older have a favorable view of communism as opposed to 28 percent among Gen Z.

Second, it stirs up fears of China, today’s most prominent and powerful communist nation.

Finally, this language has special meaning in South Florida, where the former president is under federal indictment. It’s no accident that Trump reacted to his arraignment in the classified documents case on June 13 by waving the bloody flag of communism and describing the threat it allegedly poses.

“If the communists get away with this,” he said in a speech later that day, “it won’t stop with me. They will not hesitate to ramp up their persecution of Christians, pro-life activists, parents attending school board meetings, and even future Republican candidates.”

It is noteworthy that in his post-indictment speech he linked what was happening to him with a litany of familiar, polarizing, conservative culture war issues. If they get me, he suggested to supporters, they will soon be after you. And that message seemed to get through, with some of his MAGA allies quickly joining Trump in blaming communists for his legal troubles. Georgia Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene, for instance, said the indictment was the product of “CORRUPT AND WEAPONIZED COMMUNISTS DEMOCRAT CONTROLLED DOJ.”

The former president is hitting the Red Scare hard now in the hope of influencing his forthcoming trial. Because the jury in the classified documents case is going to be from Miami, haven for Cuban-Americans and immigrants from socialist-dominated Venezuela, he hopes to appeal to potential jurors who might stand in the way of a conviction. What better way to win their sympathy than to suggest that his prosecution is part of a communist conspiracy?

As Harvard professor Steven Levitsky argues, for many Americans, Trump’s anti-communist rhetoric “just sounds silly… But (for) people who are either descendants of Cuban exiles or actual Venezuelan exiles — that actually struck some chord.”

And news reports suggest that Trump is indeed appealing to a receptive audience. An Associated Press story last week noted that “For some Hispanic Trump supporters who gathered outside the federal courthouse in Miami where the former president was arraigned, the charges evoked memories of political persecutions their family members had once escaped.”

The AP quoted one protester, Madelin Munilla, who said she came to Miami as a child when her parents fled Fidel Castro’s Cuba and carried a poster with a photo of Biden alongside Castro, and leftist leaders from Venezuela and Nicaragua. Munilla said of the Trump indictment, “This is what they do in Latin America.”

Whatever his motivations, Trump’s kind of red baiting has a long lineage. It is right out of the playbook of authoritarians and tyrants from the early 20th century. It was instrumental in the rise of fascist leaders in mid-century Germany and Italy.

Like them, today’s strongmen and would-be strongmen like the former president need powerful “us” versus “them” narratives, and communism is a tried and true boogeyman. It works, as columnist John P. Baird has argued, “to narrow the spectrum of what it is possible to achieve politically. It has historically been used against all kinds of change agents.”

Trump’s revival of the Red Scare also draws on an American tradition that fueled the notorious Palmer Raids in 1919 and 1920, when the Justice Department arrested and deported anarchists, communists, and radical leftists. The raids, sparked by social unrest following the First World War, were the climax of that era’s own Red Scare.

Trump is surely channeling his mentor Roy Cohn. Cohn served as a prosecutor in the trial of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg, who were convicted of espionage, and was chief counsel to Republican Sen. Joseph McCarthy in the 1950 hearings that alleged that numerous communists and Soviet spies had infiltrated the United States federal government, universities and the film industry.

Seven decades after Cohn and McCarthy, the former president persists in trying to bring back the Red Scare even though, as the journalist Ed Kilgore notes, “There is not a single Democratic political figure in the United States who espouses anything resembling communism.”

Trump is “hallucinating” a communist threat where there is none and promoting what The Guardian columnist Richard Seymour labels “anti-communism without communism.” Seymour gets it right when he suggests that for a would-be authoritarian like Trump, communism signals a “single, treasonous, diabolical enemy.” “Rather like a racial stereotype,” Seymour wrote, “‘communism’ figuratively presents systemic crisis as … a demonic plot … Those labelled ‘communists’ are thus blamed not just for the reforms they demand, but for all the crises that call for reform.”

By conjuring such demonic forces, Trump amplifies his anti-democratic claim that, as he put it in his post-indictment speech, “I am the only one that can save this nation.”

#### Perception. It’s about expected not actualized inflation. Americans are clueless.

Chris Giles, 12-5-2023, Honorary Professor of Practice at the UCL Policy Lab, "The public are clueless about inflation: That means interest rates are likely to stay high for too long," Financial Times, https://www.ft.com/content/78ba05d8-d712-494c-95e1-d58567754325, KL

<<GRAPHS EXCLUDED>>

Article Title: "The public are clueless about inflation"

Eurozone headline inflation fell much more than expected in November, to an annual rate of 2.4 per cent. In the US, lower core PCE (personal consumption expenditures) inflation in October prompted former inflation hawks, such as Jason Furman, to capitulate. Barack Obama’s former economic adviser said last week: “We’re almost at the soft landing.”

The main piece today argues that the public are likely to be unimpressed with slower price rises, partly because they are clueless about the inflation process. What do you think? Email me: chris.giles@ft.com

Clueless

OK, I accept that is an aggressive adjective about my fellow global citizens. But I hope this piece will convince you of the importance of public perceptions of inflation; the differences between economists and most people in the way they think about prices; and that these issues matter — almost as much as the data — for monetary policy.

Many prominent US economists, especially Democrat-leaning ones, have recently had beef with fellow Americans over their economic gloom. Claudia Sahm complains that even Democrats are “being dismal” when the US economy has been growing strongly, real wages are rising, inequality is falling and inflation is way down. Paul Krugman and Arin Dube have made similar points recently.

As my colleague John Burn-Murdoch has brilliantly noted, there is a partisan bias in the way Americans answer questions about economic conditions.

But I don’t think that quite captures the way people think about inflation and why they’re still mad as hell. My evidence and the consequence is below. The shorter version is that if you tell people they should be happy about inflation coming down, the most likely response you get is the full Cher in Clueless: “Ugh, as if.”

People overestimate inflation

It does not matter where you look, but people tend to think inflation has been higher than official statistics suggest. In the US, consumers generally perceive inflation to be between 0.75 to 1 percentage point higher than official estimates. The US data is a bit sketchy, however, and far better indications come from the European Commission’s consumer survey.

The ECB has monitored inflation perceptions since 2004 after it had a difficult time in the early years of the single currency. People were convinced that companies were using the switch to the euro to raise prices. They still think they are being diddled. The eurozone clearly has a problem of perceived high inflation with people across the bloc thinking prices are rising on average 4.9 percentage points more than the reality. They are wrong. Wrong and unhappy.

#### Harris is successfully differentiating herself from Biden but allowing Trump ammunition via the plan dooms her campaign.

Alcindor ’24 [Yamiche Alcindor; NBC News Washington correspondent., 8-2-2024, "Democrats battle Trump's efforts to define Harris", NBC News, https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/2024-election/battle-intensifies-define-kamala-harris-rcna163622]

The race is on to define Kamala Harris.

Harris’ campaign rallies are a clear change from those held by President Joe Biden, the man she is replacing at the top of the Democratic ticket. The soundtrack is Beyoncé’s “Freedom” and songs like the “Cupid Shuffle.” Megan Thee Stallion performs. They’re brat — or at least trying to be. The vice president likes to say she’s running a “people-powered campaign” and would oversee “a people-first presidency.”

While the atmospherics are meant to bring some energy back to the Democratic Party, she has also introduced herself to the country as a prosecutor out to press the case against former President Donald Trump.

“I was elected a United States senator. I was elected attorney general of the state of California. And I was a courtroom prosecutor before then,” she said at her first campaign rally, in Wisconsin on July 23. “And in those roles, I took on perpetrators of all kinds — predators who abused women, fraudsters who ripped off consumers, cheaters who broke the rules for their own gain. So hear me when I say: I know Donald Trump’s type.”

But the Trump campaign is rushing to define Harris differently.

“Weak, failed, too liberal,” Trump senior adviser Brian Hughes said. “The agenda that brought a border invasion when she was border czar.”

The Trump campaign’s overall messaging strategy that will play out in the coming weeks can largely be seen as multipronged: tying Harris to Biden administration policies, questioning her authenticity and race, focusing on the fact she was in charge of trying to fix the flow of migrants coming across the southern border, and what the Trump campaign will frame as a record in the Senate that is much more liberal than the records of her Democratic colleagues.

Harris is an unprecedented presidential candidate, thrust into the top spot roughly 100 days before the election. She’s not the incumbent, and she didn’t have to go through a grueling primary process. Some voters are still learning the details of her biography: her background, policies she supported and how she’s different from Biden.

And both sides are eager to make sure their image of Harris is the one that sticks with voters.

“She knows this is going to be a very close race,” Julie Chávez Rodríguez, Harris’ campaign manager, said in an interview. “We are quickly getting our operations up and running. So we are all in constant communication, especially as we move into the next phase of the campaign.”

She added that the campaign is working to make sure it has the resources nationally and locally to keep the momentum going.

“The biggest priority is continuing to build out our infrastructure in the states and continuing to do the hard, methodical work that we know we need to win,” Chávez Rodríguez said.

Still, a source familiar with Harris’ thinking said, “There are only about 90 days left … so a lot of the work is just making sure the record is correct as the other side seeks to define her.”

The Harris approach

This week, two ads went up that underscored the war to define Harris. The Trump team debuted an ad blaming her for what it characterized as deadly failures at the southern border. Harris, meanwhile, launched a $50 million preconvention ad buy, with its first spot making the case that she had a stellar career as a “fearless” prosecutor who held murderers, abusers and financial fraudsters accountable. Future Forward, the main super PAC backing Harris, is advertising similar amounts and with similar themes.

Leading Harris’ efforts will be Chávez Rodríguez, who stayed on as campaign manager, and Jen O’Malley Dillon, who also stayed on as chair of the campaign after Biden dropped out.

Chávez Rodríguez and Harris have been close for nearly a decade, since Chávez Rodríguez first took a job as state director for Harris’ Senate office in 2016.

Back then, Harris saw Chávez Rodríguez’s job, which was based in California, as the “tip of the spear of some of the resistance against Trump and the policies that we knew he was going to enact,” Chávez Rodríguez told NBC News. She later ended up working on Harris’ presidential campaign in 2019 as her traveling chief of staff.

Chávez Rodríguez said she got to “see every aspect” of Harris’ leadership and style in action, from her “dancing to music” to cooking Bolognese using herbs from her garden to making calls to grassroots organizations and Democratic leaders to showing that she “cared deeply about the work that she does and who she’s fighting for every day.” It is that “multidimensional” Harris whom the campaign will seek to lean in to.

“There is a kind of nurturing aspect of her,” Chávez Rodríguez said. “She is extremely caring and sort of motherly, if I may say so. She is constantly thinking about the well-being of others. I think that the joy kind of is a big piece of that, making sure we are able to have fun while we’re still doing the hard work that we need to do.”

Ashley Etienne, who formerly worked as Harris’ vice presidential communications director, said a two-pronged approach of both attacking Trump and laying out a plan for what Harris will do in office will be key to winning the election. She said the 1% to 2% of voters who are likely to decide the election “want more.”

“They have Trump fatigue. She’s going to have to chart out a vision that has absolutely no relationship to Donald Trump,” Etienne said of voters and Harris. “She clearly has grown and developed and feels so much more comfortable and fortified in who she is. You can see that. I think the challenge is going to be can you articulate a vision that’s compelling and inspiring, that’s unifying and that makes people want to come out and vote for you. And I can tell you, that’s a hard thing to do.”

Etienne added that, with Election Day looming, time is certainly of the essence and that Harris needs to find a way to define herself before Republican messaging sticks.

The Trump approach

Meanwhile, as Harris tries to paint herself as a person with a positive vision for the country, the Trump campaign hopes to paint a picture of her that is just the opposite. Its ad released Tuesday called her “failed,” “weak” and “dangerously liberal.”

“Joe Biden acted like a California liberal. Kamala Harris is one,” said Hughes, the senior Trump adviser.

The pro-Trump super PAC MAGA Inc. also quickly went up with an anti-Harris TV ad focused on what it said was the “cover-up” surrounding Biden’s mental decline” and her role in the administration’s attempts to fight illegal immigration.

#### Economic policy is key—perception of a radical Kamala flips the median voters.

Salvanto 08-04 [Anthony Salvanto, Jennifer De Pinto, Kabir Khanna, Fred Backus, 8-4-2024, "Boosts in Democratic excitement help Harris reset the race against Trump — CBS News poll", CBS, https://www.cbsnews.com/news/poll-harris-trump-cbs-news/] TDI \*figures omitted

On policy and issues: What's changed, what's the same?

Harris' policy views are seen as mostly — but not entirely — the same as Mr. Biden's, opening the question of how the campaigns may spend the coming weeks looking to define those differences in the public mind.

Voters do see her as somewhat or very liberal. (The more conservative one is, the more likely they are to view her as very liberal.) Then again, voters see Trump as very or somewhat conservative — and so that choice is more polarized than the electorate as a whole.

On having policies that will improve people's finances: Harris opens in the same position as Mr. Biden was in July, trailing Trump substantially.

#### Issue salience. Economy’s the #1 issue. Err neg. It’s underreported by other surveys.

Kirby Phares, 3-6-2024, senior analyst at Data for Progress, "Inflation and the Economy Consistently Rank as Top Issues Among Likely Voters ​​— and Here’s Our New Way To Ask Issue Importance," Data For Progress, https://www.dataforprogress.org/blog/2024/3/6/inflation-and-the-economy-consistently-rank-as-top-issues-among-likely-voters-and-heres-our-new-way-to-ask-issue-importance, KL

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Ahead of the 2024 election, voters are consistently indicating that the economy is one of their top issues. However, we have found that surveys may actually be underreporting the specific importance of inflation for voters this year. Moving forward, Data for Progress is using a new way to track issue importance, honing in on specific factors motivating respondents to select different issue areas as important to their vote.

Findings From Previous Issue Importance Questions

From July 2023 to February 2024, Data for Progress tracked likely voters’ most pressing concerns with the question: “Of the choices listed below, which do you think are the top three most important issues for Congress to focus on?” Our findings consistently indicate that economic issues have remained at the forefront throughout this period. Specifically, the choice labeled “jobs and the economy” has maintained a consistent level of importance, hovering around 30%. Inflation, which held the top spot for the majority of the time, fluctuated to 32% in July from a high of 40% in October.

#### Trump 2.0 causes extinction---great-power-wars, U.S. belligerency, AND trade collapse.

Feaver 24, PhD, Professor of Political Science. (Peter, 2-19-2024, “The Real Challenge of Trump 2.0,” Foreign Affairs, https://www.foreignaffairs.com/united-states/real-challenge-trump-20)

TITLE: The Real Challenge of Trump 2.0

What has changed is that the members of a new Trump administration will be far less likely to restrain his worst impulses. In Trump’s first term, many of the most important members of his national security team, as well as Republican allies on Capitol Hill, held more traditional Republican views. When Trump expressed a desire to go in a different direction, they had access and clout to explain why that might be a bad idea, and they often persuaded him. This is what played out, for example, in the Afghanistan strategy review of 2017. Just as important, for the many issues on which Trump simply did not engage, his traditional appointees were able to conduct a normal policy below his radar, as was the case with the 2018 National Defense Strategy. Finally, in the few areas where slow-rolling and end-running and other normal bureaucratic gimmicks were used to thwart a determined Trumpian policy flourish, the paucity of true-believing MAGA warriors at every level of the bureaucracy made it difficult for Trump to have his whims fulfilled. It is far from clear that there will be such guardrails this time around.

Trump has already developed plans to intimidate the bureaucracy by reclassifying employees so as to deny them civil service protections and make it possible to fire them en masse. His allies are talking about using the powers of the presidency to root out members of the military who do not show sufficient MAGA leanings. Trump certainly won’t repeat his first-term mistake of appointing senior officials and military brass, such as retired generals Jim Mattis and John Kelly, who were adamant about placing their loyalty to the Constitution ahead of personal loyalty to Trump. And many MAGA loyalists who did serve in the first administration now have a better understanding of the bureaucracies that once frustrated them—and will be better positioned to enact more radical changes if they regain power.

In theory, Congress could still constrain a destructive president. If the Democrats managed to retain control of the Senate, or to regain control of the House, they would be able to use the power of the purse to direct what the executive branch could or could not do. But these legislative tools are weaker than they appear. Congress has, for instance, passed a law making it harder for a president to withdraw formally from NATO. Yet the law is constitutionality dubious. And a president who simply disowns those alliances as a matter of policy—for example, by reducing to zero the number of U.S. troops deployed to NATO or by loudly insisting he will not come to the defense of countries if Russia attacks them—can effectively undermine the alliance even without a formal U.S. withdrawal. There is simply no good way for Congress to Trump-proof U.S. foreign policy, given the considerable powers of the executive branch. Trump would also face a Congress less inclined to impose such constraints, having established ideological mastery of the Republican Party, whose old-line elites can no longer claim that his agenda is aberrant and must be resisted.

But perhaps the greatest reason Trump 2.0 will be different from Trump 1.0 is the changes in the geopolitical environment abroad. If he returns to the Oval Office, Trump would be acting in a far more disordered world. In 2017, Trump took office as the post–Cold War era was ending. There were tensions with China and hot wars in the broader Middle East against the Taliban and the Islamic State, known as ISIS, but the situation is far more dire today. Now, he is running for a second term amid major hot wars in eastern Europe and the Middle East, a growing risk of conflict across the Taiwan Strait and in the South China Sea, escalating tensions with Iran and North Korea, and other crises. An unruly world demands more of the international engagement and leadership Washington has often provided since 1945—the opposite of what it will likely get if Trump returns.

MORE KABUKI, MORE CHAOS

The foreign policy of a second Trump administration will likely be an unusual mix of continuity and change. Some of his policies would, at first, seem to differ from Biden’s only by degree. Trump would surely intensify economic competition with China, albeit with a focus on cutting the bilateral trade deficit and onshoring critical supply chains. He might announce a Reagan-like “peace through strength” agenda that raises U.S. defense spending, a goal that could split hawks from doves within the Democratic Party just as aid to Ukraine now splits internationalists from neoisolationists within the Republican Party.

But such policies would come, of course, with a Trumpian spin. A military buildup would likely be accompanied by an aggressive politicization of the military, as Trump would seek to root out senior leaders that he believes showed inadequate loyalty to him in the past. Economic competition with China will likely go hand in hand with a renewed quest for a “historic” trade deal of the sort Trump sought but failed to achieve between 2017 and 2020. And in dealing with many adversaries, Trump will once again fall back on a strategy of kabuki competition—hot rhetoric and rising tensions, but without coherent policy or clear strategic purpose.

More important, Trump would likely pursue sharper versions of the policies of his first administration. As his campaign has already made clear, he seems certain to intensify his attacks on U.S. alliances, especially NATO: former National Security Adviser John Bolton has warned that Trump would have withdrawn from the alliance had he won a second term in 2020. Regardless of whether Trump goes that far, he could easily, on his own, attach more conditions to effective U.S. participation in NATO and U.S. partnership with treaty allies in East Asia, demand exorbitant financial tributes from other member states, or simply undermine relations within such multilateral groups by stoking tensions over such issues as climate policy and trade. Trump has already proposed a universal tariff, which would shred the existing international trade regime by unilaterally taxing all imports to the United States.

Meanwhile, European states on NATO’s frontlines and Asian governments such as Taiwan and South Korea would have to contend with a more transactional, less committed United States. Trump has already mused about ending the war in Ukraine in 24 hours, and his first-term attempt to hold Ukraine’s security hostage to pursue a vendetta against Biden may indicate a readiness to impose an unfavorable peace deal on Kyiv. Trump would also be less committed to Taiwan’s security. If Beijing attacks the island, he once remarked, “there isn’t a fucking thing we can do about it.”

Broadly speaking, a Trump administration seems likely to step back further from the greater Middle East. Since Trump has no interest in providing U.S. security for the world, his administration would presumably be less willing to take steps, as the Biden administration has, together with the United Kingdom, to protect vital shipping lanes from Houthi attacks.

It is hard to imagine that the Trump administration would be as committed as the Biden administration to achieving a stable peace that addresses both Israeli and Palestinian interests. The desire for a big deal with Saudi Arabia might push Trump to address the Palestinian issue—something that was off the table in the Abraham Accords but cannot be ignored after the October 7 attacks and the war in Gaza. There are few plausible scenarios for a favorable outcome in the Middle East and none that would not require a significant U.S. commitment. So it is hard to see how Trump would be able to square his support for Israel with a desire to shed U.S. commitments in the Middle East.

A second Trump term would also likely involve further policy incoherence in the Middle East, however, since he might also be willing to pair a retreat from the region with some dramatic military action on the way out the door. Given Trump’s order to assassinate Qasem Soleimani, the head of Iran’s Revolutionary Guard Corps, in 2020—a risky move that many in the administration feared would set off an escalation spiral with Tehran—he may prove more willing than Biden has been to conduct lethal strikes against Iran and its proxies if they target U.S. personnel, or to return to what the Trump administration called a “maximum pressure” policy meant to deliver a better nuclear deal than the one he inherited in 2017.

A new Trump administration will also almost certainly further downgrade democracy and human rights as policy objectives. And just as Trump talked endlessly about migrants and building a wall on the Mexican border during his first term, he would likely take a more extreme approach in his second—namely, a more militarized border and more restrictive policies on refugees, combined with an intensified war on drugs.

HUGGING, HEDGING, AND OTHER HACKS

During the first Trump administration, many foreign leaders developed “Trump hacks” for dealing with this most unusual of presidents. The first approach consisted of hiding and hedging, a strategy that appealed to countries such as France and Germany that had the most to lose if Trump dismantled the American-led international order. Thus, French President Emmanuel Macron and German Chancellor Angela Merkel both attempted to keep some distance from Washington to minimize points of friction with Trump, yet at the same time tried to fill the leadership vacuum in transatlantic institutions and assert a greater role for bodies such as the European Union. Although they avoided a full-blown transatlantic crisis, they could not prevent Trump from stirring up numerous diplomatic insults and skirmishes that were mitigated somewhat by reassurance from the more pro-ally factions within the Trump administration and by Republicans on the Hill. Moreover, they simply lacked the full range of tools—military, political, economic, and diplomatic—to compensate for Trump’s abdication of America’s traditional leadership role.

The second approach for dealing with Trump involved hugging and humoring, a strategy that appealed to leaders with personalities that were well matched to Trump’s. British Prime Minister Boris Johnson made a point of flattering Trump and stroking his ego to smooth relations. Likewise, Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe went to extraordinary lengths to court Trump, even giving him a gold-plated golf club after his electoral victory in November 2016. These efforts paid dividends: Japan fared better than other U.S. allies in the Asia-Pacific during Trump’s presidency, and Trump did not give Johnson the bullying treatment he gave Johnson’s predecessor. Yet few other foreign leaders had the mix of chutzpah and domestic support to risk such an approach.

A third approach involved emulation and emoluments to get on his good side. This tactic appealed to leaders who shared Trump’s authoritarian inclinations and understood his need for seemingly spectacular achievements: Hungary’s Viktor Orban, Turkey’s Recep Tayyip Erdogan, Saudi Arabia’s Mohammed bin Salman, and even Israel’s Benjamin Netanyahu. Trump’s most significant diplomatic achievement, the Abraham Accords, showed the possibilities and the limits of this approach. Netanyahu succeeded in getting the Trump administration to broker a deal—normalization between Israel and several Arab states—that was long imagined as a crucial part of a comprehensive Middle East peace settlement, but Trump’s variant did not involve Israel making any of the requisite concessions or even to acknowledge the Palestinian issue. That strategy seemed to work better than anyone had expected—until Hamas blew it up with its vicious October 7 terrorist assault on Israel. (Arguably, the emulation and emoluments approach held for Russia, as well, although in that case, it was clear that Putin was the leader being wooed and Trump was the one doing the wooing.)

Finally, a fourth approach that some foreign leaders took was to maintain an adversarial posture and dare Trump to make good on his threats. The countries that caused Trump the most trouble (Iran, North Korea, Venezuela) all pursued this line to some extent. Although each received some of Trump’s most intense forms of coercive diplomacy—in Iran’s case, up to and including the targeted killing of Soleimani in January 2020—all ended Trump’s first term in a stronger position of defiance, having made no meaningful concessions to his demands. Arguably, this is the approach that China also relied on, especially once Trump started ratcheting up the tariff war.

Several lessons emerge from this record. Hugging, humoring, and emulating can be humiliating because Trump’s erratic behavior requires frequent flip-flops. Moreover, it may not work in the long run: Japan faced demands to quadruple the amount of money it paid to offset the cost of hosting U.S. forces, despite Abe’s ardent courtship of Trump. Hedging and hiding is a viable strategy only for states whose interests are not much affected by U.S. power or that can plausibly compensate for U.S. disengagement from existing alliance structures. At present, only China has the potential to fill a power vacuum left by the United States stepping back from playing its traditional geopolitical role as the focal point for alliances, but the U.S. economy remains too important to China’s prosperity to make a true hiding and hedging strategy viable.

On the other hand, governments such as China that adopted a hardball negotiating stance were often able to do business with Trump to their benefit. This was because Trump proved to be so eager for a deal that he undermined his own bargaining leverage: the agreement that Trump was desperately trying to finalize with China in early 2020 would have offered little benefit apart from a short-term increase in soybean exports. Finally, leaders who openly defied Trump endured a lot of tension but usually emerged with their interests intact. This was especially true for states that shared Trump’s disdain for the liberal international order. Even the terrorist group ISIS saw positive results from hanging tough: Trump abruptly ended the counter-ISIS fight before a decisive victory was achieved, the equivalent of spiking the ball on the five-yard line.

AVOIDING A ROUT

For U.S. allies, there are many reasons why it will be harder to cope with Trump during a second term than during his first. For one thing, it will be much more difficult to make the case that Trump is an aberration from the traditional pattern of U.S. leadership. At the same time, most liberal democratic allies will find it unpalatable to wrap good policies in bad but exigent emoluments to get Trump to go along with them. Since far fewer traditional Republicans would serve in key posts, foreign governments would have few advocates and partners within the administration to help them mitigate Trump’s anti-ally impulses. That would leave many liberal allies scrambling to preserve as many of the benefits of the old rules-based international system as possible—without U.S. power underwriting them. As a result, a second Trump presidency could deepen regionalization, including, for instance, greater cooperation between Japan and Australia or between the United Kingdom and eastern European countries—but without the United States as the diplomatic and military connector. France and Germany may well try to revive some version of Macron’s vision of a European-led security system despite prospects that are no better than before.

Paradoxically, if Trump’s diagnosis of the international order is correct—that is, if all the benefits of the U.S.-led order could be preserved without U.S. leadership if the allies stopped free-riding—then the consequences of a Trump restoration would be manageable. It is possible that some combination of other middle powers stepping up and pursuing prudent hedging could be enough to hold the existing order together, at least for a time. But a Trump-led U.S. retreat could quickly turn into a rout with the collapse of the order that has provided relative global prosperity without a great-power conflagration for nearly 80 years. Much would depend on how much advantage traditional adversaries such as China and Russia seek to gain, and how fast.

As in the first Trump presidency, the greatest beneficiaries of a second one are likely to be U.S. adversaries because they will be given a host of new opportunities to disrupt the existing order. China might exploit the fact that Trump does not care about defending Taiwan and pursue quick action to recapture the “rebellious” province. Chinese leader Xi Jinping might just sit back and let Trump torch U.S. alliances in Asia to China’s benefit later. Putin might play along with Trump’s proposed “peace” deal on Ukraine as a way of getting the West to sanctify his gains at Ukraine’s expense. He could also stonewall in the hope that Trump would cut off Ukraine aid altogether, leaving Russia free to march on Kyiv once again. Regardless of which path they choose, adversaries will likely be able to count on Trump as a useful tool in their efforts to undermine the traditional U.S.-led alliance system, which has long served as the primary constraint on their power.

Yet another basket of states, backsliding allies and hypertransactional partners, will likewise welcome a Trump rerun. If Israel’s beleaguered Netanyahu is still clinging to power after Trump’s inauguration, Trump’s pledge of unconditional support for Israel may serve as the lifeline Netanyahu needs to avoid accountability for his catastrophic mishandling of Israeli security. The Arab regimes that helped deliver the Abraham Accords would likely welcome the return of transactional diplomacy, even if they may be much less likely to pursue further normalization deals in the absence of a viable Palestinian peace plan. Populist leaders in Argentina, Hungary, and perhaps even India would also welcome the cover provided by a new Trump presidency in their efforts to resist international pressures to uphold minority rights.

Taken together, these various responses to Trump’s return to the White House would result in a highly volatile international system, one marked by an extraordinary amount of geopolitical instability and a power vacuum at its center. Amid a chaotic U.S. retreat, Washington’s traditional allies and partners would mostly be left without viable approaches for managing their relations. And traditional adversaries would enjoy the upper hand in their dealings with the United States. One of the more interesting questions in contemporary international relations is how much resilience is built into the existing international order—how long it can continue functioning without the active, constructive engagement of the world’s strongest power. Since 1945, the answer to that question has been unknowable. If Trump wins in November, however, the world may quickly find out.

### 1NC—L—State Capacity

#### The public’s confidence in civil servants is shot. The plan is unpopular among the masses. Turns resources away from civil servants.

Pew ’22 [Pew Research Center; Pew Research Center is a nonpartisan fact tank that informs the public about the issues, attitudes and trends shaping the world. We conduct public opinion polling, demographic research, content analysis and other data-driven social science research., 6-6-2022, "6. The people of government: Career employees, political appointees and candidates for office", Pew Research Center, <https://www.pewresearch.org/politics/2022/06/06/the-people-of-government-career-employees-political-appointees-and-candidates-for-office/>] TDI \*figures omitted

6. The people of government: Career employees, political appointees and candidates for office

Chart shows confidence in career civil servants has declined in both parties since 2018

The public continues to express more confidence in the federal government’s career employees than in officials appointed by the president. However, the share of Americans who have a great deal or fair amount of confidence in career employees at federal agencies has declined since 2018.

The public is deeply skeptical about the motives of those who seek political office: Far more U.S. adults say these individuals do so in order to serve their own interests rather than to serve their communities. And most Americans are doubtful that if they reached out to their House member with a problem, that the representative would be likely to help them.

Confidence in government’s career employees drops

The share of Americans who have a great deal or a fair amount of confidence in career employees at government agencies who are not appointed by a president has declined by 9 percentage points since late 2018, from 61% to 52%.

Roughly one-in-ten adults (9%) now say they have a great deal of confidence in career government employees, while 44% have a fair amount of confidence. A third say they have not too much confidence in career civil servants, and 14% say they have no confidence in them at all.

Confidence in government employees has declined among both Republicans and Democrats since 2018. Among Republicans and independents who lean toward the Republican Party, 38% say they have a great deal or a fair amount of confidence in civil servants, down from 48% in December 2018.

Chart shows after 2020 election, partisans flip in confidence in presidential appointees

Among Democrats and Democratic leaners, nearly two-thirds (65%) have a great deal (14%) or a fair amount (51%) of confidence in career civil servants, down from 71% nearly four years ago.

Overall confidence in officials appointed by a president to oversee government agencies has also decreased slightly since 2018. Nearly four-in-ten adults (39%) have a fair amount (35%) or a great deal (5%) of confidence in presidential appointees. Six-in-ten adults say they have not too much confidence (42%) or no confidence at all (18%) in these officials – a 3 point increase since 2018.

Confidence in officials appointed by a president to oversee government agencies is more closely related to partisanship than to confidence in career government employees.

Between December 2018, when Donald Trump was president, and May 2022, with Joe Biden midway through his term, Republicans became much less confident in presidential appointees; at the same time, Democrats became much more confident in them.

Today, about two-in-ten Republicans (21%) have a great deal (2%) or a fair amount (19%) of confidence in officials appointed by a president, compared with six-in-ten who expressed at least a fair amount of confidence in 2018. And a narrow majority of Democrats (54%) now have a great deal (6%) or a fair amount (48%) of confidence, compared with 28% in late 2018.

More say those who run for office do so to serve personal interests rather than their community

Chart shows a majority of U.S. adults say that most or all candidates for office run to serve their own personal interests

The public is skeptical of the motivations of those who run for local, state and federal elected offices. Nearly two-thirds (65%) say that at least some candidates run for office out of a desire to serve the community, but a much larger share (92%) say at least some political candidates seek office as a means of serving their own interests.

Relatively few Americans say all (3%) or most people (18%) who run for office do so because they want to serve the community; however, another 44% say some political office seekers are motivated by a desire to serve. About a third (35%) say few or no candidates run because they want to serve the community.

By contrast, 65% say all (15%) or most (50%) candidates for office are motivated by personal interests; another 27% say this is a factor for some candidates. Very few (7%) say few or no candidates run to advance their own interests.

Republicans and Democrats hold fairly similar views on the motivations of those who run for office.

Nearly identical shares in each party say that all or most of the people who run for office do so to serve personal interests (66% of Republicans, 64% of Democrats). However, Democrats are somewhat more likely than Republicans to say that all or most candidates run to serve the community (25% vs. 18%).

A substantial share of the public is particularly cynical about the motives of people who run for office: Three-in-ten adults say that all or most of those who run for office do so to serve their own personal interests and say that a few or none do so to serve the community.

Republicans are somewhat more likely to be in this group than Democrats, and those who lean toward a party are more likely than those who identify with that party to be in it: Four-in-ten Republican leaners, 33% of Democratic leaners, 30% of Republicans and 21% of Democrats say that all or most candidates for office run to serve their personal interests and that few or none do so to serve the community.

## 2NR

### 2NR—UQ

#### Best predictive models. Outliers destroy AFF evidence.

Note: the graphic inside the card shows a Harris victory. Make sure to include it.

Silver and McKown-Dawson 08-04 [Nate Silver; Founded and was the editor in chief of FiveThirtyEight. Bachelor of Arts degree in economics from the University of Chicago., Eli McKown-Dawson; Silver Bulletin Assistant Elections Analyst and incoming MSc student at The London School of Economics studying social statistics and survey methods., 8-4-2024, "Silver Bulletin 2024 presidential election forecast", https://www.natesilver.net/p/nate-silver-2024-president-election-polls-model] TDI

Let’s cut to the chase: So, who’s gonna win the election?

Well, honestly, we don’t know — but we can give you our best probabilistic guess. This is the landing page for the 2024 Silver Bulletin presidential election forecast. It will always contain the most recent data from the model.1

The model is the direct descendant of the f/k/a FiveThirtyEight election forecast2 and the methodology is largely the same, other than removing COVID-19 provisions introduced for 2020. Other changes from 2020 are documented here. If you’ve received this post by email or are viewing it on the Substack app, we strongly recommend that you instead use the web version for interactive charts. Charts in the app don’t update when we add new data, so switch over to your browser to see our most up-to-date forecast.

The polls: who’s ahead right now?

The Silver Bulletin polling averages are a little fancy. They adjust for whether polls are conducted among registered or likely voters, the presence or absence of RFK Jr., and house effects. They weight more reliable polls more heavily. And they use national polls to make inferences about state polls and vice versa. It requires a few extra CPU cycles — but the reward is a more stable average that doesn’t get psyched out by outliers.







### 2NR—AT: Predictions Hard

#### LINK OUTWEIGHS. Uniqueness is probabilistic! It’s impossible to predict the future. Even 20% risk of uniqueness is massive.

Zeynep Tufekci, 11-1-2020, New York Times Opinion columnist, "Can We Finally Agree to Ignore Election Forecasts?: Before the election, I said we shouldn’t rely on them. The case just got overwhelming.," New York Times, https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/01/opinion/election-forecasts-modeling-flaws.html, KL

And given all the uncertainty, misunderstanding and fragility of electoral forecasts, I’m not sure there is a meaningful difference between, say, a 20 percent and a 40 percent chance of winning. That’s another way of saying these forecasts aren’t that useful, and may even be harmful if people take them too seriously.

Instead of refreshing the page to update predictions, people should have done the only thing that actually affects the outcome: vote, donate and organize. As we have found out, everything else is within the margin of error.

### 2NR—Link Outweighs

#### Socialist perception flips swing voters. 2020 and polling prove they’re key to a Harris victory, hate socialism, and far outnumber the *base*.

Kamarck 22 [Elaine Kamarck is a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution. She served as a senior adviser to Vice President Al Gore, 1993-97. William A Galston is a Journal columnist and senior fellow at Brookings. He served as deputy assistant to President Clinton for domestic policy, 1993-95.; “Will Democrats Throw It All Away in the 2024 Presidential Election?”; The Wall Street Journal; February 25, 2022; https://www.wsj.com/articles/democrats-2024-presidential-election-republicans-trump-biden-approval-voting-crt-hispanic-swing-white-working-class-blue-collar-voters-11645801008]//eleanor

Democrats who think that mobilizing their base will be sufficient to win elections overlook the sheer number of white noncollege voters in key states. In seven of eight swing states, they outnumber voters of color, often substantially. Democrats shouldn’t ignore the core of their coalition, but to win they need to walk a fine line between mobilizing the base and attracting voters outside it.

• The emerging progressive majority. It’s true that recent decades have seen an increase in the share of voters who describe themselves as liberal. But moderates and conservatives continue their predominance. The most recent survey of voters’ ideology found that only 7% of the electorate consider themselves very liberal. Another survey described five hypothetical political parties and found that only 9% of voters associated themselves with a far-left party whose positions matched those of Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, compared with 26% who supported a center-left party corresponding to Mr. Biden. (The survey didn’t mention any politician by name.)

Most Americans want evolutionary, not revolutionary, change. Americans turn to government when problems arise that the market can’t solve. But contrary to the hopes of some progressives, they aren’t turning to socialism as an alternative to capitalism. For important segments of the population, especially those who remember the Cold War and those who escaped from failed socialist states in Eastern Europe and Latin America, socialism was a disaster, and a party that seems sympathetic to it is unacceptable.

Similarly, progressives who believe that their cultural attitudes enjoy the support of a popular majority are living in a bubble defined by education, income and geography. Time after time, Republicans use progressive overreach in areas such as crime, immigration and education to drive wedges between swing voters and the Democratic Party. This pattern won’t end until Democrats break out of the mindset that dominates deep blue areas.

Much of this cultural bubble is a consequence of changing educational patterns in the electorate. Starting in 2000, whites with four-year college degrees moved toward the Democrats as whites without four-year degrees maintained their long-term movement away. Mr. Biden’s candidacy continued the shift of educated voters toward the Democratic Party while reversing only modestly the shift of voters without four-year degrees in the opposite direction. And as Democrats have gained ground among college-educated voters, they have increased their support in upper-income jurisdictions.

The progressives’ cultural bubble is also the result of the increasingly intense geographic polarization that has shaped the outlook of a new generation of political activists. In deep blue states like Massachusetts and California, the political spectrum within the Democratic Party runs from the far left—where a concept like democratic socialism is very popular—to the center, and Democrats’ dominance in the electorate means that they can succeed without paying attention to voters outside their coalition. Many in the new generation of political activists have been drawn into politics by Mr. Sanders and left-wing advocacy groups. They regard centrist Democrats as corporate shills and have never talked to Republicans, let alone fervent evangelical and pro-life voters. (The same can be said in reverse for young conservative activists.)

For reasons of education, income and geography, many Democratic voters and leaders are far removed from the daily experiences and cultural outlooks of noncollege voters. This is why advocates hijacked the criminal justice reform movement with a disastrous slogan—“defund the police”—that residents of crime-ridden communities, minority as well as white, rejected and that cost Democrats as many as a dozen House seats in 2020.

When we first wrote about these matters more than three decades ago, Democrats had given the impression of being the party that sympathized with criminals more than with their victims—that is, a party outside the moral mainstream. Although many of today’s cultural issues are different, the problem remains, and Democrats will remain on the cultural defensive until they pursue social change with policies and language—and at a pace—that can command a sustainable majority.

Not only must Democrats overcome the myths that distort their understanding of what building a national majority requires, they must also face up to the basic structure of contemporary American politics, which in many respects works against them.

Everyone senses that partisanship is more intense and more comprehensive than it was four decades ago, and that building bipartisan coalitions is far more difficult. But we are closely divided as well as deeply divided, and the absence of a stable national majority shapes competition between the parties.

National politics hasn’t always been this way. Of the 17 presidential elections between 1920 and 1984, 10 were settled with popular-vote margins of 10 points or more, and five yielded landslides exceeding 20 points. But in the nine elections between 1988 and 2020, no candidate has come close to a 10-point margin. In four of these elections, the winner failed to secure a majority of the national popular vote; two of them didn’t get even a plurality. Five of the past six presidential elections had popular-vote margins of less than 5 points.

During this 32-year period, both parties proved unable to establish a stable national majority, and the White House has changed parties five times. Of the roughly one billion votes cast for the major-party candidates in the past nine elections, Democrats received 51.2%, Republicans 48.2%.

Even though deepening partisanship has reduced the number of swing voters, the narrow margins of recent national elections have made these voters more important than ever. If the parties remain ideologically polarized, that reality will dominate national politics until one party breaks the deadlock of the past three decades and creates a decisive national majority.

As evidence, consider the difference between the election of 2016, which the Democratic nominee narrowly lost, and 2020, which the Democratic nominee narrowly won. Although Mr. Biden increased the Democrats’ share of the popular vote by only 3 points over 2016, he improved on Mrs. Clinton’s performance by 9 points among suburban voters, 10 points among independents, and 12 points among moderates. These gains were decisive in the five states—Arizona, Georgia, Michigan, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin—that shifted from the Republican to the Democratic column.

### 2NR—IL

#### Economic policy is the key narrative issue which flips the election.

Smith 08-04 [Sebastian Smith; AFP White House correspondent based in Washington DC., 8-4-2024, "New Poll Shows Harris Strengthening Against Trump", Barron’s, https://www.barrons.com/news/new-poll-shows-harris-strengthening-against-trump-0aed08c6] TDI

A new poll confirmed Sunday that Kamala Harris -- set to name her vice presidential pick imminently -- has drawn level with Donald Trump, transforming a White House race that the Republican had been increasingly confident he was going to win.

As the November 5 election rapidly approaches, Harris has erased the growing lead that Trump was building before President Joe Biden dropped his reelection bid.

According to the CBS News/YouGov poll released Sunday, Harris has a one percent advantage on Trump nationwide -- compared to Trump's previous five point edge on Biden.

In the swing states that decide the Electoral College contest in US elections, Harris and Trump -- who shocked the world with his 2016 presidential victory but was beaten by Biden in 2020 -- are equal.

These are considered good numbers for a Democratic candidate who parachuted into the race only last month, when Biden bowed to mounting concerns over his mental acuity and ability at 81 years old to serve a second term.

But Harris, who is Biden's vice president and the first Black and South Asian woman ever in the role, is in a sprint to define herself to voters before Trump does.

A big moment in that process will be when Harris announces her choice for running mate in a historic bid to become America's first female president. This could happen as early as Sunday or Monday.

Expectations are that Harris will pick a white man to balance the ticket -- and likely a moderate Democrat who would help counterweigh attacks on Harris from Republicans that she is too far to the left.

The three figures seen as heading the short list -- Minnesota Governor Tim Walz, Pennsylvania Governor Josh Shapiro and Senator Mark Kelly of Arizona -- were all visiting Harris in Washington on Sunday, The Washington Post reported.

"It's her first major decision that she's making as an executive, so it tells you about her thought process," Amy Walter, a polling expert from Cook Political Report newsletter, told CBS News.

The CBS poll, which echoes numerous other surveys indicating rapid gains by Harris, shows that Trump is still favored by voters on the key issue of the economy.

Only 25 percent said they expected to be better off financially if Harris wins, compared to 45 percent who said so about Trump.

However, when it comes to trust in the candidates' temperament, the poll shows voters prefer the former California prosecutor to Trump, a convicted felon who has made a career out of publicly insulting those who oppose him -- including while president.

The issue of cognitive health, which used to bedevil Biden, is now a liability for 78-year-old Trump, the poll found. Only 51 percent of respondents thought Trump is mentally capable for the presidency, compared to 64 percent for Harris.

The Democrats believe that if you "make this referendum on Trump rather than a referendum on the current state of the economy, then we have a real opportunity to win," Cook said.

Trump was riding high politically last month after surviving an assassination attempt at a rally, then using the Republican convention to highlight his image of vigor against the physically frail Biden.

But with Biden's dramatic exit and Harris's fast start, he's scrambling to recalibrate.

At a rally on Saturday in the swing state of Georgia, Trump called Harris a "Marxist" and a "radical left freak," claiming she would cause an "economic crash." On Wednesday, he shocked many when he told an audience of Black journalists that Harris had "turned Black" out of political expediency.

Where Biden often attacked Trump as a threat to democracy, given his unprecedented refusal to accept his loss in 2020, Harris's team has honed a sharper -- more meme-friendly -- line built around branding Trump and his vice presidential pick J.D. Vance "weird."

On Saturday, the Harris campaign said Trump was "scared" to debate her after he turned down a previously scheduled televised debate on ABC, while saying he'd be ready to debate her on Fox News -- a network that has for years given him support.

#### Moderates decide the election. Plan is worse for them.

Paz 24 [Christian Paz is a senior politics reporter at Vox, where he covers the Democratic Party; “What we’re getting wrong about 2024’s “moderate” voters”; Vox; February 2, 2024; https://www.vox.com/2024-elections/24058352/what-were-getting-wrong-about-2024s-moderate-voters]

How will they impact 2024?

Like most elections, the outcome in 2024 will likely be decided by which party, and which candidate, is able to hold on to their liberal and conservative constituencies while winning over as many moderates as possible.

In Fowler’s analysis, it’s been true and weird moderates who have played significant roles in swinging elections: True moderates were the kind most likely to switch their votes between parties between the 2012 and 2016 elections, contributing to Donald Trump’s win. “They’re the ones that are most open to switching parties if the other party does run a particularly compelling candidate,” he said. “The people who voted for Obama in 2012 and for Trump in 2016, those are people who are probably close to the middle ideologically, and maybe they really liked Obama, maybe they didn’t like Hillary Clinton quite as much, and Trump made an effort to try to appeal to them in some way.”

Weird moderates likely make up a smaller share of those vote switchers, but because they don’t feel represented by either side of the ideological or partisan spectrum, they are especially attentive to specific candidate messages and willing to look past party identification. That’s still a relatively small portion of the electorate — most people tend not to switch parties in presidential election years. But, again, shifts at the margins can make all the difference in close contests. And here enters a problem for both parties.

The imperative to persuade true and weird moderates runs counter to the trend of America’s political parties, which have been moving further to the political left and right while also becoming more ideologically consistent internally — pushing out moderates of all kinds. Party leaders have been leading this push, but the rank and file has followed suit in the last two decades, as rates of self-identified moderates have been on the decline in both parties.

Recent electoral trends aren’t too positive for Republicans. They’ve routinely lost moderate voters in elections since Trump’s rise in 2016 — by anywhere from 15 to 30 points in the 2018, 2020, and 2022 elections, according to exit polls. And Trump’s own brand of conservatism also appears to be less appealing to moderate Republicans in the first two states that have held primary contests so far: In Iowa, he garnered the support of about 20 percent of moderate GOP voters, a drop from his 34 percent showing in 2016 (the last time there were competitive GOP primaries). And in New Hampshire, he won about 25 percent of these moderates, down from 32 percent in 2016.

Democrats face a challenge of their own: Their winning coalition counts on a bigger chunk of various kinds of moderate voters turning out for them than for Republicans. With Biden’s unpopularity and voters’ ongoing mixed sentiment about the economy, stepping up efforts to persuade these voters will be key to keeping that political alliance together — and keeping Trump out of the White House.

### 2NR—Turns Case—Inequality

#### Trump uniquely worsens inequality.

Mabud 08-04 [Rakeen Mabud; Dr. Rakeen Mabud is the Chief Economist and Managing Director of Policy and Research at the Groundwork Collaborative., 8-4-2024, "Defeating Trump Gives Us a Real Chance to Restore Sanity to the Tax Code", Common Dreams, https://www.commondreams.org/opinion/trump-tax-cuts-2024] TDI

Next year, we’ll have to make one of the most important decisions about the future of our economy. Will we hand more power and wealth to big corporations and the rich — or invest in a healthy and resilient economy that works for all of us?

In 2017, Republican lawmakers passed tax loopholes and cuts that primarily benefited the wealthy and big corporations. President Trump signed these giveaways into law, spiking inequality and setting off a wave of corporate profiteering.

Next year, parts of that law will begin to expire, which gives us the opportunity to make changes.

For decades, both parties have created an economy where big corporations and the wealthy aren’t pitching in like the rest of us. We’ve been sold a bill of goods known as “trickle down” economics. Trickle down goes like this: Feed the rich the best cut of meat and maybe we’ll get a bit of gristle that falls on the floor — and we’ll thank them for it.

The rich and most profitable corporations aren’t just contributing less and less to our collective coffers. They’re using their power to enrich themselves further while more of us struggle. Senator Elizabeth Warren recently described this as a “doom loop” for our tax code: the wealthy and corporations get richer from tax giveaways and then use their wealth and power to boost their profits — and then lobby for more tax cuts.

For example, the 2017 Trump tax cuts dropped the top corporate tax rate to 21 percent from 35 percent (compared to 40 percent in 1987). Supporters argued this would lead to better wages and supercharge economic growth. Instead, economic growth continued at about the same pace as before the tax breaks. And while 90 percent of workers did not see a raise, billionaire wealth has doubled.

In the same period in which corporations have enjoyed lower taxes, they’ve also raked in record profits. As my colleagues at Groundwork Collaborative have highlighted, lowering corporate tax rates actually incentivized corporate profiteering in the wake of the pandemic, as companies that overcharged us got to keep more of their winnings.

Trickle down theory says these windfall profits and lower taxes should encourage companies to invest more in workers and innovation. But in an economy run by big corporations with enormous market share, that money ends up being funneled to shareholders instead of increasing worker wages, investing in new or more productive technologies, or holding critical inventories in case of a crisis.

If we want corporations to invest more in wages and productive investments, we should raise their taxes, since wages and research are mostly tax deductible.

In other words, corporate profiteering is not a foregone conclusion. Raising corporate taxes has the potential to boost investment, productivity, and economic growth — and get Americans some of their money back.

The Biden administration has taken critical steps to push back against failed trickle down economics and corporate profiteering. It capped the price of essential drugs like insulin, empowered regulators to go after corporations abusing their market power, and made historic investments in a green future. But more can be done by raising taxes on the largest, most profitable corporations.

Fundamentally, the coming tax debate is about who holds the reins in shaping our economy: megacorporations and their wealthy shareholders, or the everyday people who keep the economy humming. Next year is an opportunity for Congress to stand firm against the rich and powerful and build the economy that we want to see.

### 2NR—Turns Case—ILaw

#### Trump is a felon who fragrantly violates international law.

Beres ’24 [Louis Rene Beres; LOUIS RENÉ BERES (Ph.D. Princeton 1971) is the author of many books and articles dealing with literature, art, philosophy, international relations and international law. Emeritus Professor of International Law at Purdue., 1-16-2024, "Trump’s Wrongful Pardons for Crimes Against International Law", No Publication, https://www.jurist.org/commentary/2024/01/trumps-wrongful-pardons-for-crimes-against-international-law/] TDI

At the beginning of 2024, former President Donald J. Trump’s most conspicuously unsupportable legal claim has been his personal immunity from criminal prosecution. With this claim, Mr. Trump and his lead attorneys have willfully disregarded that a US president’s sworn oath to “take Care that the Laws be faithfully executed” (art II, sec. 3) is incompatible with arguments that even the assassination of a political opponent would not be prosecutable unless there had been prior impeachment and conviction. Here, I focus on a different but closely-related and mutually reinforcing Trump legal issue, the generally ignored issue of awarding presidential pardons for crimes against international law. The former president’s dual-level legal derelictions not only coincide in speciousness, they also represent force-multiplying assaults upon America’s Constitutional and “higher-law” foundations.[1

The defining purpose of the International Military Tribunal at Nuremberg (1945-46) was to fulfil the obligation to punish crimes against international law. Though some of those convicted for war crimes were subsequently granted commutations of sentence for extra-legal reasons,[2] the general principle continued to obtain that there should be no such crimes without proper punishment (nullum crimen sine poena). In its core origins, this “no pardon” principle derived from an always-binding “Higher Law” or “Natural Law,” the same universal and immutable doctrine upon which the United States Constitution had been founded.

But what exactly does this foundational American document actually say about US obligations concerning punishment of crimes against the “law of nations?” To begin, we may look back at Trump-era pardons for individuals convicted of such fundamental crimes. While the pertinent individuals involved surely didn’t rise to the levels of egregious criminality associated with those of prematurely released Nazis, the relevant grants of presidential pardon still left an ineradicable stain on both rudiments and precedents of United States justice.

Now, clarifying details are needed. After January 6, 2021, it was disclosed by special investigating committee of the Congress that several Trump associates had sought or were expected to seek a presidential pardon. Apart from any broader legal issues involved, one key Constitutional prohibition generally escaped public and lawmaker scrutiny. This prohibition expressly clarifies that no US president can ever claim codified or customary legal authority to pardon crimes against international law.[3]

Though Donald Trump’s pardoning actions for such crimes were inadmissible under US law,[4] and despite the fact that the former president has since been indicted for an assortment of other serious crimes in multiple judicial jurisdictions, he was allowed to “get away” with this specific Constitutional dereliction.[5] While typically unfamiliar even to capable jurists and legal scholars, the relevant issues of international law ought still to have been raised more directly by the January 6 committee, the Department of Justice and by uncompromised legal scholars.[6] Jurisprudentially and philosophically, all should recall, international law[7] shares its natural law[8] origins with US law. All three normative systems are inextricably intertwined.

The key legal problem here is unambiguous. Ipso facto, the law of nations is part of the law of the United States.[9] Notwithstanding certain evident and substantial intersections of US law, natural law[10] and international law,[11] the United States Constitution is abundantly clear on one US-specific separation: A US president’s power to pardon does not extend to violations of international law. This power is limited to “Offenses against the United States.” Moreover, these offenses are never subject to any idiosyncratic, whimsical or loosely ad hoc definitions. Rather, they are explicitly confined to “…only those offenses declared to be such by the solemn action of the legislative body.”[12]

There are further correlative details. The law of nations, or international law, is federal common law. Among other things, the constitutionality of federal subject matter jurisdiction on such inherently vital matters is established at Articles III and VI of the Constitution and in assorted actions involving US treaty violations. Per Judge Edwards in Tel-Oren, actions involving violations of international law arise under US law because the law of nations[13] is “an integral part of the laws of this country.”[14]

What are evident facts of the Trump-pardoning cases? Did any of Donald J. Trump’s late 2020 pardons concern identifiable violations of international law?[15] If “yes,” these openly-flaunted grants of presidential “largesse” were unlawful prima facie.

There is no mystery here. Only a few flagrant examples of the former president’s illegally-granted pardons[16] were acknowledged in official DOJ (Justice Department) records.[17] Plausibly, in coming months and years, perhaps even during a second Trump presidency, additional relevant evidence will surface. At that point, however, it should be the much larger issues of Constitutional and international law that occupy authoritative US decision-maker attention.

### 2NR—Turns Case—Bureaucracy

#### Trump 2.0 ends the administrative state.

Moynihan ’23 [Donald P. Moynihan; Professor of public policy at Georgetown and an expert on the administrative state., 11-27-2023, "Trump Has a Master Plan for Destroying the ‘Deep State’", New York Times, <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/11/27/opinion/trump-deep-state-schedule-f.html>] TDI

I study government bureaucracies. This is not normally a key political issue. Right now, it is, and everyone should be paying attention.

Donald Trump, the former president and current candidate, puts it in apocalyptic terms: “Either the deep state destroys America or we destroy the deep state.” This is not an empty threat. He has a real and plausible plan to utterly transform American government. It will undermine the quality of that government and it will threaten our democracy.

A second Trump administration would be very different from the first. Mr. Trump’s blueprint for amassing power has been developed by a constellation of conservative organizations that surround him, led by the Heritage Foundation and its Project 2025. This plan would elevate personal fealty to Mr. Trump as the central value in government employment, processes and institutions.

It has three major parts.

The first is to put Trump loyalists into appointment positions. Mr. Trump believed that “the resistance” to his presidency included his own appointees. Unlike in 2016, he now has a deep bench of loyalists. The Heritage Foundation and dozens of other Trump-aligned organizations are screening candidates to create 20,000 potential MAGA appointees. They will be placed in every agency across government, including the agencies responsible for protecting the environment, regulating workplace safety, collecting taxes, determining immigration policy, maintaining safety net programs, representing American interests overseas and ensuring the impartial rule of law.

These are not conservatives reluctantly serving Mr. Trump out of a sense of patriotic duty, but those enthusiastic about helping a twice-impeached president who tried to overturn the results of an election. An influx of appointees like this would come at a cost to the rest of us. Political science research that examines the effects of politicization on federal agencies shows that political appointees, especially inexperienced ones, are associated with lower performance in government and less responsiveness to the public and to Congress.

The second part of the Trump plan is to terrify career civil servants into submission. To do so, he would reimpose an executive order that he signed but never implemented at the end of his first administration. The Schedule F order would allow him to convert many of these officials into political appointees.

Schedule F would be the most profound change to the civil service system since its creation in 1883. Presidents can currently fill about 4,000 political appointment positions at the federal level. This already makes the United States an outlier among similar democracies, in terms of the degree of politicization of the government. The authors of Schedule F have suggested it would be used to turn another 50,000 officials — with deep experience of how to run every major federal program we rely on — into appointees. Other Republican presidential candidates have also pledged to use Schedule F aggressively. Ron DeSantis, for example, promised that as president he would “start slitting throats on Day 1.”

Schedule F would be a catastrophe for government performance. Merit-based government personnel systems perform better than more politicized bureaucracies. Under the first Trump administration, career officials were more likely to quit when sidelined by political appointees.

Schedule F would also damage democracy. The framers included a requirement, in the Constitution itself, that public officials swear an oath of loyalty to the Constitution, a reminder to public employees that their deepest loyalty is to something greater than whoever occupies the White House or Congress. By using Schedule F to demand personal loyalty, Mr. Trump would make it harder for them to keep that oath.

When he was president, his administration frequently targeted officials for abuse, denial of promotions or investigations for their perceived disloyalty. In a second administration, he would simply fire them. Trump loyalists reportedly have lists ready of civil servants who will be fired because they were not deemed cooperative enough during his first term.

The third part of Mr. Trump’s authoritarian blueprint is to create a legal framework that would allow him to use government resources to protect himself, attack his political enemies and force through his policy goals without congressional approval. Internal government lawyers can block illegal or unconstitutional actions. Reporters for The New York Times have uncovered a plan to place Trump loyalists in those key positions.

This is not about conservatism. Mr. Trump grew disillusioned with conservative Federalist Society lawyers, despite drawing on them to stock his judicial nominations. It is about finding lawyers willing to create a legal rationale for his authoritarian impulses. Examples from Mr. Trump’s time in office include Mark Paoletta, the former general counsel of the Office of Management and Budget, who approved Mr. Trump’s illegal withholding of aid to Ukraine. Or Jeffrey Clark, who almost became Mr. Trump’s acting attorney general when his superiors refused to advance Mr. Trump’s false claims of election fraud.

Mr. Clark is now under indictment for a “criminal attempt to communicate false statements and writings” to Georgia state officials. But he continues to lay the groundwork for a second Trump term. He has made the case for the president using military forces for domestic law enforcement. He has also written a legal analysis arguing that “the U.S. Justice Department is not independent,” while Mr. Paoletta told The Times, “I believe a president doesn’t need to be so hands-off with the D.O.J.” If government lawyers will not defend norms of Justice Department independence, Mr. Trump will use the department to shield himself from legal accountability and to pursue his enemies.

We sometimes think of democracy as merely the act of voting. But the operation of government is also democracy in action, a measure of how well the social contract between the citizen and the state is being kept. When values like transparency, legality, honesty, due process, fealty to the Constitution and competence are threatened in government offices, so too is our democracy. These democratic values would be eviscerated if Mr. Trump returns to power with an army of loyalists applying novel legal theories and imposing a political code of silence on potential holdouts.

American bureaucracy is often slow and cumbersome. The civil service system in particular is in need of modernization. But it is also suffused with democratic checks that limit the abuse of centralized power. This is why Mr. Trump and his supporters are so precisely targeting the administrative state, taking advantage of an antipathy toward Washington that both parties have long nurtured. If Mr. Trump has a chance to implement his various plans, expect a weaker American government, worse public services and the dismantling of limits on presidential power.

### 2NR—!—Nuke War

#### Trump win causes nuclear war.

Daryl G. Kimball, 2024, Executive Director of the Arms Control Association, "Nuclear Dangers and the 2024 Election," Arms Control Association, https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2024-01/focus/nuclear-dangers-2024-election, KL

As the new year begins, the existential risks posed by nuclear weapons continue to grow. A crucial factor in whether one or more of today’s nuclear challenges erupt into full-scale crisis, unravel the nonproliferation system, or worse will be the outcome of the U.S. presidential election.

How the winner of the 2024 race will handle the evolving array of nuclear weapons-related challenges is difficult to forecast, but the records and policies of the leading contenders, President Joe Biden and former President Donald Trump, offer clues.

A major responsibility for any commander in chief is to avoid events that can lead to a nuclear war with Russia over its war on Ukraine and with China over its claims to Taiwan. One indicator of Trump’s more confrontational approach came in 2019 when, at a meeting of senior officials from the five nuclear-armed states recognized under the nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT), China proposed a joint statement reiterating that “a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought.” Two years later, Biden administration officials successfully pressed the group to reaffirm this Reagan-Gorbachev maxim, first enunciated in 1985.

Since then, Russian President Vladimir Putin’s full-scale attack on Ukraine and threats of nuclear use have raised the specter of nuclear conflict. To his credit, Biden has not issued nuclear counterthreats and has backed Ukraine in its struggle to repel Russia’s invasion. In 2022, Biden also joined leaders of the Group of 20 states in declaring that the use of nuclear weapons and threats of their use are “inadmissible.”

Well before Putin’s nuclear rhetoric turned ominous, Trump engaged in an alarming exchange of taunts with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un in 2017. His threats of unleashing “fire and fury” against Pyongyang fueled tensions on the Korean peninsula and provide another clue how he might behave in a crisis with China, North Korea, or Russia in a second term.

Effective U.S. leadership on arms control will be critical to avoid a destabilizing, three-way arms race after the New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty expires in 2026. As the treaty’s first expiration deadline of February 5, 2021, was approaching, Trump refused to agree to simple extension of the pact, focusing instead on a failed effort to cajole China into joining Russian-U.S. arms talks. This left the incoming Biden administration only days to reach a deal with the Kremlin to extend the pact by five years, and it did.

In June 2023, the Biden administration proposed talks with Russia “without preconditions” on a new, post-2026 “nuclear arms control framework.” As long as there is war in Ukraine, the best outcome likely is a simple deal committing both sides to stay below the current limit of 1,550 deployed strategic warheads until a longer-term framework is concluded. Biden also has pursued nuclear risk reduction talks with China, which continues its nuclear buildup begun during the Trump era. In November, senior Chinese and U.S. officials held the first such talks in years.

Meanwhile, Iranian leaders continue increasing their capabilities to produce weapons-grade uranium in response to Trump's 2018 decision to withdraw unilaterally from the 2015 Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action and impose tougher U.S. sanctions to pressure Tehran into negotiating a new deal. They now are threatening to pull out of the NPT if the United States or other UN Security Council members snap back international sanctions against Iran.

Biden’s efforts to restore mutual compliance with the 2015 deal have been stymied by Iranian demands on matters outside the nuclear file and tensions over the war in Gaza. Avoiding a more severe crisis over Iran’s nuclear program will require more sophisticated U.S. diplomacy.

Kim has ramped up North Korean nuclear and missile development and stiff-armed overtures for talks with Washington ever since the disastrous 2019 Hanoi summit, when Trump flatly rejected Kim’s offer to dismantle the Yongbyon nuclear complex in return for limited sanctions relief, then walked out of the meeting. Renewed talks on curbing North Korea’s weapons program will require a recalibration of the U.S. approach.

Concerns about a possible nuclear testing revival also are rising. The Trump administration did not help when it declared in 2018 that the United States did not intend to ratify the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and in 2020 when senior Trump officials discussed resuming explosive testing to intimidate China and Russia. Biden, on the other hand, has reaffirmed U.S. support for the treaty; and his team proposed technical talks on confidence-building arrangements at the former Chinese, Russian, and U.S. test sites.

Most Americans do not vote based on candidates’ positions on nuclear weapons, but they are aware and deeply concerned about nuclear dangers. A 2023 national opinion survey found that large majorities believe that nuclear weapons are the most likely existential threat to the human race.

In 2024, the candidates’ approaches to these dangers deserve more scrutiny than usual. Presidential leadership may be the most important factor that determines whether the risk of nuclear arms racing, proliferation, and war will rise or fall in the years ahead.

### 2NR—!—Climate

#### Trump 2024 causes mass climate change devastation and extinction

**Plumer and Friedman 24’** [(Brad and Lisa, Plumer write about the policies and innovations that governments, companies and people are pursuing to try to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. He reports on a wide range of energy technologies including electric grids, renewable energy, nuclear power, geothermal, carbon capture, hydrogen, electric vehicles and much more. Friedman writes about how governments are addressing climate change and the effects of those policies on communities. She has been a reporter for more than 30 years, half of them covering climate change) “What Trump 2.0 Could Mean for the Environment”, New York Times, 7-16-24, https://archive.is/Q6oOd#selection-4679.0-5235.290]TDI

As president, Donald Trump’s sweeping attempts to roll back federal environmental regulations were often stymied — by the courts, by a lack of experience, even by internal resistance from government employees. But if he retakes the White House in November, Mr. Trump would be in a far better position to dismantle environmental and climate rules, aided by more sympathetic judges and conservative allies who are already mapping out ways to bend federal agencies to the president’s will. “It’s going to be easier,” said Myron Ebell, who led the transition at the Environmental Protection Agency after Mr. Trump won in 2016. “They’re going to have better people, more committed people, more experienced people. They will be able to move more quickly, and more successfully, in my view.” On the campaign trail, Mr. Trump has promised to repeal federal regulations designed to cut greenhouse gas pollution that is rapidly heating the planet. Many of his allies want to go further. They are drafting plans to slash budgets, oust career staffers, embed loyalists in key offices and scale back the government’s powers to tackle climate change, regulate industries and restrict hazardous chemicals. Those plans, while wildly ambitious, may be more attainable next time around. Perhaps the biggest change in Mr. Trump’s favor is that over the past two years, the Supreme Court’s conservative supermajority has significantly curbed the legal authority of the government to impose environmental rules on businesses. (image removed) Mr. Trump may have more success in dismantling environmental protections if he is re-elected, this time aided by more sympathetic judges and conservative allies.Credit...Scott McIntyre for The New York Times At the same time, Mr. Trump has proposed reclassifying tens of thousands of career civil servants, making it easier to fire them. He has said that move, which he tried to implement at the end of his first term, is necessary to “destroy the deep state” that he says secretly worked against his presidency. The result is that a second Trump administration might not face as many legal or bureaucratic guardrails as the first. “Because of the Supreme Court in particular, he’ll be able to get away with a lot more than anyone ever suspected,” said Christine Todd Whitman, who led the Environmental Protection Agency under President George W. Bush. She said the courts have effectively given a second Trump administration a “free hand” to slash regulations. That could mean a drastic transformation of the E.P.A., which was created by a Republican, Richard Nixon, and for five decades has played a powerful role in American society, from forcing communities to reduce smog to regulating the use of pesticides. Businesses and conservative groups have long said that excessive regulation drives up costs for industries from electric utilities to home building. Environmentalists say that handcuffing the E.P.A. now, when time is short to contain global warming, could have dire consequences. A significant weakening of the E.P.A., said Ms. Whitman, is “going to be devastating for the country and the world, frankly, because we all suffer from climate change.” Mr. Trump’s spokeswoman, Karoline Leavitt, said in a statement that “President Trump made America a net exporter of energy for the first time because he cut red tape and gave the industry more freedom to do what they do best — utilize the liquid gold under our feet.” If elected, he would “cancel Joe Biden’s radical mandates, terminate the Green New Scam, and make America energy independent again,” she said. In 2023, the United States pumped more crude oil than any other nation in history and it is the world’s leading exporter of liquefied natural gas. Rolling back regulations Mr. Trump doesn’t detail his plans for the E.P.A., apart from promising to scrap two major Biden administration regulations designed to reduce greenhouse gases from power plants and cars. His allies, however, have laid out specific proposals as part of a transition plan known as Project 2025, spearheaded by the conservative Heritage Foundation. While Mr. Trump has recently sought to distance himself from Project 2025, much of the plan was written by people who were top advisers during his first term and could serve in prominent roles if he wins in November. In a 32-page section on the E.P.A., the plan takes aim at the agency’s authority to tackle global warming, including by revisiting a 2009 scientific finding that says carbon dioxide emissions endanger public health. The blueprint also calls for repealing regulations governing air pollution from factories that crosses state borders and for reconsidering limits on PFAS, toxic compounds known as “forever chemicals” that have been detected in nearly half the nation’s tap water. Project 2025 also calls for eliminating E.P.A.’s office of environmental justice, which focuses on reducing pollution in low-income and minority areas;breaking up an office dedicated to children’s health; resetting scientific advisory boards “to expand opportunities for a diversity of scientific viewpoints”; and appointing a political loyalist as the agency’s science adviser in order to “reform” the agency’s research. “To implement policies that are consistent with a conservative EPA, the agency will have to undergo a major reorganization,” reads the section on the E.PA., which was written by Mandy Gunasekara, the agency’s chief of staff during the Trump administration. Ms. Gunasekara didn’t respond to a request for comment. Image A person at a podium with blue lights shining on them in front of an audience in a large hall. Project 2025 calls for reorganizing the E.P.A. and dissolving the Office of Environmental Justice.Credit...Jose Luis Magana/Associated Press Mr. Trump has also spoken of his desire to get rid of federal employees who might oppose him. Project 2025 proposes that the E.P.A. look for “relocation opportunities” for certain senior employees. As president, Mr. Trump relocated one agency within the Interior Department from Washington, D.C. to Colorado, prompting 87 percent of the affected employees to quit or retire rather than move. Mr. Trump’s plan for agency staff will be to “vilify them, reclassify them, and then fire them,” said Gina McCarthy, who led the E.P.A. under President Barack Obama. Project 2025 also recommends installing political appointees in parts of the E.P.A. that have been dedicated to nonpartisan technical and scientific research, like the National Vehicle and Fuel Emissions Laboratory in Ann Arbor, Mich. That laboratory, where about 140 engineers, chemists, toxicologists, lawyers and economists study vehicle performance and emissions standards, is “the last word on automobile pollution,” said William K. Reilly, who led the E.P.A. under President George H.W. Bush. “If political people are put in there we will find we have destroyed one of the greatest achievements we have in the government.” Some E.P.A. employees are already preparing for a Trump presidency. The American Federation of Government Employees Council 238, a union that represents about 8,000 E.P.A. workers, recently secured a new contract provision that allows workers to file a grievance if they face retaliation for their scientific work. Still, a dramatic reorganization along with new political pressures could drive many career employees to leave, hollowing out the agency, which some say is what a Trump administration would want. “These proposals are basically taking a blender to the agency,” said Marie Owens, president of Council 238. “Frankly, it’s frightening, people are asking, should I leave before all this happens?” Fewer obstacles During his four years in office, Mr. Trump tried to roll back or weaken nearly 100 environmental rules, including Obama-era limits on greenhouse gases from power plants and cars and wetlands protections. But deregulation often proved more challenging than expected. Scaling back federal regulations is an arduous, time-consuming process that requires agencies to lay out detailed justifications for changing rules, respond to public comments and then defend the moves in federal court. Judges often have little patience for rushed or sloppy work. In Mr. Trump’s first term, officials sometimes announced they had erased a regulation only to be reversed by the courts because they had skipped important steps. All told, the administration lost 57 percent of cases challenging its environmental policies, a much higher loss rate than previous administrations, according to a database kept by New York University’s Institute for Policy Integrity. At various points, courts overturned the Trump administration’s attempts to relax restrictions on carbon-dioxide emissions from power plants; blocked a rule that would have limited what scientific studies the E.P.A. could use; and found the administration broke the law when it failed to enact nationwide standards to curb harmful ozone pollution. Judges also rejected attempts to take gray wolves off the endangered species list and to roll back rules that restricted methane leaks from oil and gas wells. Image Smokestacks against a landscape streaked with the red colors of taillights. Mr. Trump has promised to do away with regulations designed to reduce greenhouse gases from power plants and cars.Credit...Natalie Behring/Associated Press Jason Schwartz, the legal director of the Institute for Policy Integrity, said the Trump administration’s regulatory rollbacks often ignored congressional statutes or inflated the costs of regulations on industry. Mr. Trump’s allies have presumably learned from those missteps, experts said. “The first Trump administration came in without having been prepared to take over the government,” said Jeffrey Holmstead, a former senior E.P.A. official in President George W. Bush’s administration who now works as an energy lawyer for Bracewell LLP. “I don’t think they’ll make the same mistakes again.” Have Climate Questions? Get Answers Here. What’s causing global warming? How can we fix it? This interactive F.A.Q. will tackle your climate questions big and small. The courts could also prove more sympathetic next time around. With three Supreme Court justices appointed by Mr. Trump, the court now has a conservative supermajority that has shown a deep skepticism toward environmental regulation. The court has sometimes blocked rules that were still being adjudicated in lower courts or before they were implemented. In June, the Supreme Court overturned the so-called Chevron doctrine, which for 40 years said that courts should defer to government agencies when a law is unclear. That ruling could undercut the regulatory authority of many federal agencies. The Supreme Court also halted E.P.A. rules that limited smokestack pollution blowing across state borders, overturned expanded protections for millions of acres of wetlands and narrowed the agency’s ability to regulate emissions from power plants. Thomas J. Pyle, president of the American Energy Alliance, which supports the fossil fuel industry, said the Supreme Court’s decision on Chevron could help a second Trump administration revoke California’s authority to set stricter tailpipe pollution standards than the federal government, which the state is using to phase out sales of gasoline-powered cars in favor of electric models. Image Members of the media set up in front of a building. Mr. Trump’s ambitions could win support from the Supreme Court’s conservative supermajority.Credit...Jason Andrew for The New York Times A second Trump administration might also find the lower federal courts to be more receptive, after Mr. Trump installed more than 200 conservative judges in his first term. Some of those appointees recently ordered the Biden administration to lift its pause on approvals for natural-gas export terminals and struck down a regulation that would have required states to measure greenhouse gases from transportation. “It’s a much more favorable judiciary for a new Trump administration and his allies,” said Jody Freeman, director of the Harvard Law School Environmental and Energy Law Program. “They’d meet with not just less resistance in the courts, on average, but a certain appetite for doing the things they’d want to do.” To be sure, experts said a second Trump administration wouldn’t enjoy completely free rein. Many E.P.A. rules, for instance, are litigated in the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit, where two-thirds of current judges were appointed by Democrats. And the Supreme Court’s overturning of Chevron might make it harder in some cases to water down existing regulations, said Mr. Holmstead. Some Republicans also downplayed the importance of Project 2025, saying that many businesses aren’t eager to gut the E.P.A. “Industry is no longer debating whether climate change is happening, many are actively working on the energy transition and don’t necessarily want to see climate work at agencies eliminated,” said Samantha Dravis, who served as E.P.A.’s policy chief in the Trump administration. Environmental groups are preparing to fight. Many say they are studying Project 2025 and mapping out legal arguments that might sway conservative-leaning courts. The Natural Resources Defense Council points out that it won 89 percent of its 163 lawsuits against the first Trump administration. “The reason we won those cases is because presidents have to follow the law, and that’s not going to change with the election,” said Michael Wall, chief litigation officer for the Natural Resources Defense Council Action Fund. “We have every reason to think they took lessons from the first term, but it’s also true that we took lessons from their first term.” Still, many environmentalists say that while they might block some moves, they can’t force a Trump administration to adopt policies that will cut greenhouse gases. And the window to limit global warming to relatively low levels is rapidly closing. “There’s no skeleton key that’s going to protect everything Biden has accomplished,” said Sam Ricketts, founder of S2 Strategies, a clean-energy consulting group. “I’d love to say that there is a fail-safe plan to protect the gains we’ve made should Trump be president again. There is not.”

### 2NR—!—NATO Collapse

#### Trump 2024 causes NATO collapse, global prolif, and extinction

**Tannehill 23’** [(Brynn,Naval Academy graduate, former naval aviator, author, and senior defense analyst) “What Donald Trump Really Means When He Says He Wants “Peace””, The New Republic, 5-23-23, https://newrepublic.com/article/172659/donald-trump-really-means-says-wants-peace] TDI

The American public’s most recent chance to see Donald Trump at his worst came during that infamous CNN “town hall” meeting, during which Trump issued a steady, Gish gallop stream of lies. But largely lost in the stream of awfulness of that night were the foreign policy implications of a second Trump term, and how catastrophically disruptive and damaging they would be for global stability and U.S. national interests. One of his biggest whoppers of the night was the repeated claim that he would end the war in Ukraine “within 24 hours,” without providing any details as to how. When moderator Kaitlan Collins pressed him about which side he supported in the war, he refused to support Ukraine. He instead deflected by saying, “I want everybody to stop dying.” However, we know what his plan is. Trump represents an extreme view of the isolationist, pro-Russian school of foreign policy thought. If that were to become U.S. policy in 2024 (and it seems likely it will if he becomes president again), here’s what the world might look like. Based on portions of an interview with Sean Hannity that were edited out, Trump’s plan is to cut off aid to Ukraine and pressure Ukraine into formally ceding Russian-speaking portions of the country to Vladimir Putin. These would most likely be Crimea, Donetsk, Luhansk, Zaporizhia, and parts of the Kherson Oblast. Trump would be giving Putin everything he wanted: These are exactly the areas that Russia claimed to have annexed during the fall of 2022 after holding a rigged referendum. Trump also regurgitated the Kremlin talking points about this war being about liberating oppressed Russian-speaking individuals from a tyrannical Zelenskiy government. (Worth noting: Volodomyr Zelenskiy is a native Russian speaker). It’s no secret that Trump has always favored Russia, echoed its talking points, and had a soft spot for Putin. During the 2016 campaign, he denied that Russia had ever invaded Ukraine, despite the 2014 invasion of Crimea, Luhansk, and Donetsk. Then he rolled back sanctions on Russia and slow-rolled new sanctions after it became apparent Russia had interfered in the U.S. election. Worse, he sided with Putin and against U.S. intelligence and law enforcement agencies on the interference. He refused to divulge what he spoke with Putin about in Helsinki in 2018, keeping U.S. officials in the dark. Trump’s foreign policy plans for his second term are even more despot-friendly than in his first. Multiple sources deep within the former regime, including chief of staff John Kelly, Secretary of Defense Mark Esper, and John Bolton have all confirmed that Trump intended to leave NATO. He also was ready to completely pull the United States out of South Korea. Esper was so dismayed by Trump’s recklessness that he reportedly hoped Biden would win the election. When confronted with these allegations, Trump’s spokesman did not deny them, instead claiming that those speaking out were warmongers and that Trump just wanted peace. When all of these factors are taken together, it’s not hard to trace out how things are likely to go catastrophically wrong very quickly in a second Trump term. For the sake of analysis, let’s presume that he does exactly what he has indicated he will do: namely, cut off Ukraine from aid, pressure Zelenskiy to cede land, withdraw from NATO, and pull all U.S. forces from South Korea. The U.S. provides the vast majority of the total aid to Ukraine. Without U.S. aid, victory for Ukraine likely becomes impossible, though it would almost certainly refuse to end the war on the terms Trump suggests. Instead, it would cast desperately about for more munitions from any source it could get and refuse to accept a humiliating set of ceasefire conditions. The war, as brutal as it is now, would likely drag out even longer than it would with U.S. support. An exhausted Russia lacks the means to push much further into Ukraine and would keep pressuring it to accept the deal offered by a Trump administration. Ukraine would lack the means to expel the invasion, but it would never accept such a humiliating, one-sided deal. If it were forced to it, the Ukrainian government could decide that the only way to secure a durable peace would be by developing its own nuclear weapons, without any security guarantees from the U.S. or NATO. Without the U.S. in NATO, things could disintegrate quickly in Europe. Poland, the Baltics, Sweden, and Finland all feel they are in Russia’s crosshairs. With NATO shattered, Poland could decide that the only way to prevent Russia from finishing off Ukraine, rearming, and moving on to other neighboring countries to rebuild the “Ruskiy Mir” (Russian World, which broadly means all the former Soviet states and Eastern Europe as satellite nations) is to send its own forces to fight beside Ukraine. Again, this is worse than the status quo where NATO forces are not directly involved in the war. It would likely lead to Russia attacking Poland. Poland would also be incentivized to start its own nuclear weapons program, no longer having the conventional or nuclear protection of the U.S. under NATO. It’s also hard to underestimate the absolute panic a U.S. abandonment of Ukraine and withdrawal from NATO would cause among the Baltic states (Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania) and in Finland. These states are likely incapable of defending themselves against Russia without swift and decisive intervention by the U.S. and NATO. And Russia very much considers all of them to be part of the traditional “Russian World.” Which brings up another terrifying possibility: What if Trump wins a second term, forces Ukraine to cede land to Russia for peace, but doesn’t leave NATO? This is less of an improvement than one might think. Suppose Russia invaded the Baltic states after a period of rearming and reorganizing, and the U.S. (along with Putin’s ally Hungary) voted down the Baltic states’ request for NATO to invoke Article 5, which holds that an attack on one NATO nation is an attack on all but which requires unanimous consent to put into force. If Russia knew beforehand that Trump was sympathetic to its claims that the Baltics are traditionally Russian and would veto an Article 5 request, it could leave Europe less prepared for further Russian aggression than if the U.S. had already left NATO. NATO would be caught mostly unprepared by the U.S. acting as a “fifth column” within its ranks. Its member nations would be utterly unready to go it alone outside of the NATO structure. The picture isn’t quite as bleak in the Pacific, but it is still bad. Without the U.S. as a guarantor of security, and with an increasingly belligerent China representing a foe too large to resist without a U.S. alliance, neighbors such as South Korea will be tempted to develop nuclear weapons. It could take its cues from Israel and North Korea, who have used the threat of nuclear war to ward off potential invasions or to gain leverage in negotiations. The sort of global withdrawal Trump wants may not result in new wars but will probably encourage nuclear proliferation. Without the U.S. supporting its global allies, nations such as Russia, China, and North Korea will benefit in the same way Iran benefited from the U.S. pullback from the Gulf region after the withdrawal from Iraq in 2012, the abandonment of our Kurdish allies in 2019, and the unilateral Trump decision in 2020 to rapidly pull out of Afghanistan in 2021. Biden followed through on the agreement to do the last with disastrous results. This destabilization will encourage military aggression. Client states abandoned by the U.S. will likely seek autonomy and security through the only realistic means available: namely, nuclear proliferation. Nations betrayed by a Trump administration may even seek to work together to develop nuclear weapons covertly, in the same way that Pakistani nuclear scientist Abdul Qadeer Khan allegedly helped North Korea, Pakistan, and Iran’s nuclear programs. Trump claims to want to prevent war, build up U.S. security, and “stop the killing.” However, when you trace out the most likely outcomes of his proposed policies, you find they would achieve the exact opposite: more war, more death, an internationally weakened United States, emboldened regional adversaries, and more nuclear weapons held by more countries. In some ways, nuclear proliferation among nations resembles the problem we have domestically with all these guns: The more countries that have them, the more chances there will be for a state that feels backed into a corner to use them.

### 2NR—!—LIO Collapse

#### Trump 2.0 collapses the LIO, destroys alliances, and emboldens Putin and Xi.

Drezner 23’[(Daniel, Professor of international politics for Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy) "Bracing for Trump 2.0", Foreign Affairs, 9/5/23, https://www.foreignaffairs.com/united-states/bracing-trump-possible-return-allies-rivals]TDI

During his first term, Trump scrambled the dense network of alliances and partnerships that the United States had built over the previous 75 years. For long-standing allies in Europe, Latin America, and the Pacific Rim, the United States suddenly exhibited a bewildering array of capricious behavior. Trump blasted allies for not contributing enough to collective security and for allegedly robbing the United States blind on trade deals. He repeatedly threatened to exit previously sacrosanct agreements including NATO, the World Trade Organization, the U.S.-Korea Free Trade Agreement, and NAFTA. By contrast, although U.S. adversaries also had to deal with the occasional tantrum from Trump, it was for them in many ways the best of times. Trump bent over backward to ingratiate himself with Russian President Vladimir Putin, Chinese President Xi Jinping, and the North Korean leader Kim Jong Un. His administration yo-yoed between coercing and accommodating these states, with the latter tactic usually winning out. These autocrats happily pocketed gains from the United States’ strained relations with allies. Xi could go to Davos in 2017 and effectively declare that China, rather than the United States, was the status quo power. Putin could bide his time while the Trump White House withdrew the U.S. ambassador from Ukraine and withheld Javelin weapons systems in an effort to coerce Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky into aiding Trump’s 2020 reelection campaign. There was no need for Putin or Xi to act recklessly when their rival was self-sabotaging. Biden’s victory over Trump in 2020 ended much of this bizarre behavior. Biden has reasserted traditional alliances to an extent not seen since U.S. President George H. W. Bush. As Richard Haass, the former president of the Council on Foreign Relations, has put it, Biden has transformed U.S. foreign policy “from ‘America first’ to alliances first.” Biden consulted widely with European leaders in crafting the U.S. response to Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, resulting in a degree of transatlantic cooperation that has surprised even Putin. Similarly, the administration has garnered support from numerous allies to counter China: imposing export controls in consultation with Japan and the Netherlands; bolstering the Quad, a defense coalition made up of Australia, India, Japan, and the United States; and developing the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework, a U.S.-led talking shop of 14 countries, including Indonesia, South Korea, Thailand, and Vietnam. Public opinion polling conducted across a group of 23 countries as varied as Hungary, Japan, and Nigeria shows that much of the world holds more positive attitudes toward the United States under Biden than it did under Trump. At the same time, rivals such as Russia and China have had to adjust to a U.S. president who walks the walk as well as talks the talk on great-power competition. Trump ranted and raved and lashed out at China, but in the end, he was more interested in making deals than in advancing U.S. interests—demonstrated, for instance, by his push to finalize the Phase One trade agreement with China in early 2020 without pressing Chinese authorities about the emerging COVID-19 pandemic. His approach to Russia was mercurial; Trump himself has said that he was the “apple of [Putin’s] eye.” By contrast, the Biden administration has proved ready and willing to mobilize the federal government to counter both these autocracies—the CHIPS and Science Act and the Inflation Reduction Act are far more ambitious pieces of legislation than anything passed during the Trump years. These measures aim to accomplish what Trump only talked about: “home shoring” critical industrial sectors. Biden has also been far more adept at attracting new allies and partners. NATO has expanded to include Finland and is soon likely to count Sweden in, as well. The trilateral partnership between Japan, South Korea, and the United States in Northeast Asia has been strengthened; the gathering of these countries’ leaders at Camp David in August would have been unthinkable during the Trump years. Biden will sign a strategic partnership agreement with Vietnam during a state visit to Hanoi in September, deepening ties between two countries wary of Chinese expansionism. The AUKUS pact with Australia and the United Kingdom has cemented security cooperation with these key allies. The United States has bolstered bilateral cooperation with Taiwan. Both Russian and Chinese firms are discovering that their ability to freeload off the liberal international order has been compromised. Foreign leaders recognize that a second term for Trump would be even more extreme and chaotic than his first term. As U.S. adversaries find themselves increasingly isolated, many elites in these countries are holding out hope for a future windfall—heralded by Trump’s return to the presidency in 2025. China watchers report hearing more mentions of Trump in their visits to Beijing than they do in the United States. Chinese officials hope that a new Trump administration will fray U.S. alliances again. As for Russia, policymakers in Europe and the United States agree that Putin is unlikely to change his tactics in Ukraine until after the 2024 election. An anonymous U.S. official told CNN in August: “Putin knows Trump will help him. And so do the Ukrainians and our European partners.” Allies in Europe are also contemplating—or, rather, dreading—a second Trump term. Some observers argue that although Trump executed an unconventional foreign policy when he was president, he did not act on his worst impulses. He did not withdraw the United States from either the WTO or NATO, nor did he remove U.S. troops from across the Pacific Rim. These pundits hold that Trump’s second term would just reprise the bluster of his first term. Such equanimity is misplaced. A second Trump term would transpire with countervailing institutions that are even weaker than they were in 2016. Trump would be supported by congressional Republicans who are far more Trumpish in their outlook than the old-guard GOP leadership of five years ago. According to The New York Times, Trump, if reelected, “plans to scour the intelligence agencies, the State Department and the defense bureaucracies to remove officials he has vilified as ‘the sick political class that hates our country.’” Trump’s own foreign policy team would likely feature hardly anyone with a significant record of leadership in diplomacy or the military that could put the brakes on his wildest ideas—in other words, there will no longer be any adults in the room. There will be no James Mattis, the secretary of defense under Trump’s first term, or even a John Bolton, a former national security adviser, to talk Trump out of his rash actions or persuade him that he cannot bomb Mexico or that he is incapable of ending Russia’s invasion of Ukraine in a single day. Trump’s second term would most closely resemble the chaotic last few months of Trump’s first term, when the 45th president came close to bombing Iran and unilaterally withdrawing all U.S. troops from a variety of trouble spots such as Somalia and Syria. As one former German official told The New York Times, “Trump has experience now and knows what levers to pull, and he’s angry.” Another European official compared a second Trump to the Terminator of the second film in the franchise, which featured a cyborg assassin even more lethal and sophisticated than the original played by Arnold Schwarzenegger.

### 2NR—!—Asia Prolif

#### Trump 2024 causes Asian prolif.

**Economist 23** [(Economist, The Economist continues to produce journalism of sometimes radical opinion with a reverence for facts) "Donald Trump poses the biggest danger to the world in 2024," 11-16-23, https://www.economist.com/leaders/2023/11/16/donald-trump-poses-the-biggest-danger-to-the-world-in-2024]TDI

Because MAGA Republicans have been planning his second term for months, Trump 2 would be more organised than Trump 1. True believers would occupy the most important positions. Mr Trump would be unbound in his pursuit of retribution, economic protectionism and theatrically extravagant deals. No wonder the prospect of a second Trump term fills the world’s parliaments and boardrooms with despair. But despair is not a plan. It is past time to impose order on anxiety. The greatest threat Mr Trump poses is to his own country. Having won back power because of his election-denial in 2020, he would surely be affirmed in his gut feeling that only losers allow themselves to be bound by the norms, customs and self-sacrifice that make a nation. In pursuing his enemies, Mr Trump will wage war on any institution that stands in his way, including the courts and the Department of Justice. Yet a Trump victory next year would also have a profound effect abroad. China and its friends would rejoice over the evidence that American democracy is dysfunctional. If Mr Trump trampled due process and civil rights in the United States, his diplomats could not proclaim them abroad. The global south would be confirmed in its suspicion that American appeals to do what is right are really just an exercise in hypocrisy. America would become just another big power. Mr Trump’s protectionist instincts would be unbound, too. In his first term the economy thrived despite his China tariffs. His plans for a second term would be more damaging. He and his lieutenants are contemplating a universal 10% levy on imports, more than three times the level today. Even if the Senate reins him in, protectionism justified by an expansive view of national security would increase prices for Americans. Mr Trump also fired up the economy in his first term by cutting taxes and handing out covid-19 payments. This time, America is running budget deficits on a scale only seen in war and the cost of servicing debts is higher. Tax cuts would feed inflation, not growth. Abroad, Mr Trump’s first term was better than expected. His administration provided weapons to Ukraine, pursued a peace deal between Israel, the uae and Bahrain, and scared European countries into raising their defence spending. America’s policy towards China became more hawkish. If you squint, another transactional presidency could bring some benefits. Mr Trump’s indifference to human rights might make the Saudi government more biddable once the Gaza war is over, and strengthen relations with Narendra Modi’s government in India. But a second term would be different, because the world has changed. There is nothing wrong in countries being transactional: they are bound to put their own interests first. However, Mr Trump’s lust for a deal and his sense of America’s interests are unconstrained by reality and unanchored by values. Mr Trump judges that for America to spend blood and treasure in Europe is a bad deal. He has therefore threatened to end the Ukraine war in a day and to wreck NATO, perhaps by reneging on America’s commitment to treat an attack on one country as an attack on all. In the Middle East Mr Trump is likely to back Israel without reserve, however much that stirs up conflict in the region. In Asia he may be open to doing a deal with China’s president, Xi Jinping, to abandon Taiwan because he cannot see why America would go to war with a nuclear-armed superpower to benefit a tiny island. But knowing that America would abandon Europe, Mr Putin would have an incentive to fight on in Ukraine and to pick off former Soviet countries such as Moldova or the Baltic states. Without American pressure, Israel is unlikely to generate an internal consensus for peace talks with the Palestinians. Calculating that Mr Trump does not stand by his allies, Japan and South Korea could acquire nuclear weapons. By asserting that America has no global responsibility to help deal with climate change, Mr Trump would crush efforts to slow it. And he is surrounded by China hawks who believe confrontation is the only way to preserve American dominance. Caught between a dealmaking president and his warmongering officials, China could easily miscalculate over Taiwan, with catastrophic consequences. The election that matters A second Trump term would be a watershed in a way the first was not. Victory would confirm his most destructive instincts about power. His plans would encounter less resistance. And because America will have voted him in while knowing the worst, its moral authority would decline. The election will be decided by tens of thousands of voters in just a handful of states. In 2024 the fate of the world will depend on their ballots.

# Elections DA---Living Wage---AFF

## 1AR

### 1AR—AT: Elections DA—UQ

#### Trump wins. Their evidence is hype.

Notheis 08-04 [Asher Notheis; Asher Notheis is a social media producer at the Washington Examiner, where he was previously a breaking news reporter. A Liberty University graduate who has spent most of his life in Virginia, Asher started writing articles for his college newspaper before writing stories for the College Fix. After graduating in 2021, he started writing for the Washington Examiner on the breaking news team., 8-4-2024, "David Axelrod says 2024 race is still ‘absolutely’ Trump’s to lose", Washington Examiner - Political News and Conservative Analysis About Congress, the President, and the Federal Government, https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/news/campaigns/3110340/david-axelrod-2024-race-still-absolutely-trump-lose/] TDI

Former Obama adviser David Axelrod cautioned Democrats not to overly celebrate Vice President Kamala Harris’s newfound support, as he predicted the election is currently still former President Donald Trump’s to lose.

Harris has seen an uptick in support since becoming the presumptive presidential nominee for the Democratic Party, with recent polling data indicating she has a slight lead over Trump. However, Axelrod has contended that it is “still a really tight race” and that both sides will have to put up “a hard fight” to claim victory.

“It’s absolutely Trump’s race to lose right now,” Axelrod said on CNN Newsroom. “He is ahead. And he is ahead in most of the battleground states. They’re close; they can be won by either candidate.”

Political Strategist David Axelrod speaks to reporters as he arrives for the John F. Kennedy Profile in Courage Award ceremony, Sunday, May 22, 2022, at the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum in Boston. (AP Photo/Josh Reynolds)

Axelrod argued that Harris’s spike in support stems from “irrational exuberance,” and he stated that the vice president has “a lot of momentum” since entering the 2024 race. He suggested that Democrats were initially feeling despair over the election with President Joe Biden as their nominee.

“Now people feel like there’s a chance,” Axelrod said.

The Democratic adviser’s caution that Trump could still emerge as the victor comes after some have suggested that Harris’s jump in support is merely a “honeymoon” period, which could wear off after a time. Gov. Chris Sununu (R-NH), for example, predicted it will last about 30 days.

Democratic National Committee Chairman Jaime Harrison announced Friday that Harris has received the delegates needed to become the new 2024 Democratic presidential nominee. She is expected to accept the nomination during the party’s convention in Chicago later this month.

While Biden dropped out of the 2024 race after his first debate with Trump, the former president has questioned if he should debate Harris at all ahead of the election, as “everybody knows her, everybody knows me.” Despite this, he stated on Friday evening that he would meet Harris in Pennsylvania next month for a debate hosted by Fox News.

Harris has rejected the idea of debating Trump on Fox, and is instead sticking with a previous plan to have ABC News host the debate. Harris for President communications director Michael Tyler has contended that Trump “needs to stop playing games and show up to the debate he already committed to on Sept 10.”

### 1AR—AT: Elections DA—LT—Plan Popular

#### Plan popular.

ICCR ’23 – [Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility, a coalition of faith- and values-based investors who view shareholder engagement with corporations as a powerful catalyst for change. “INVESTOR SUPPORT FOR a LIVING WAGE FOR U.S. WORKERS” (2023), https://www.iccr.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/FINAL\_Living\_Wage\_Statement-11-15-23.pdf] TDI

According to polls, “84% of Americans believe large companies have a responsibility to pay full-time adult workers in frontline jobs enough to make ends meet."3 63% of voters believe workers need to earn more than $20 an hour to have a decent quality of life, including 71% of Democrats, 56% of Republicans, and 63% of independent/third-party voters.4

CEOs of leading U.S. companies identified their employees as a priority stakeholder and voiced their commitment to fair compensation and benefits in the Business Roundtable’s 2019 Statement on the Purpose of a Corporation, and publicly support increasing the federal minimum wage.5

#### Overwhelmingly so.

Dunn ’21 [Amina Dunn; Amina Dunn is a former research analyst focusing on U.S. politics and policy at Pew Research Center., 2-25-2021, "Most Americans support a $15 federal minimum wage", Pew Research Center, https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2021/04/22/most-americans-support-a-15-federal-minimum-wage/] TDI

About six-in-ten U.S. adults (62%) say they favor raising the federal minimum wage to $15 an hour, including 40% who strongly back the idea. About four-in-ten (38%) say they oppose the proposal, according to a Pew Research Center survey conducted April 5-11.

The Biden administration and many congressional Democrats favor increasing the federal minimum wage to $15 an hour from the current rate of $7.25 an hour, but the proposal’s fate in the Senate is uncertain. Some senators, including several Democrats, support a more modest increase in the wage.

Among the public, those who back a $15 minimum wage are fairly divided over how to approach the issue if there is insufficient support in Congress for an increase to that amount this year. A narrow majority of these Americans (54%) say leaders should focus on passing an increase to the wage “even if it may be significantly less than $15 an hour,” while 43% say the priority should be to work to raise the hourly minimum wage to $15 “even if no increase makes it into law this year.”

Among those who oppose raising the minimum wage to $15 an hour, a substantial majority (71%) say the federal minimum wage should be increased, but that the standard should be less than $15 an hour; those who hold this view account for 27% of the overall public. Only one-in-ten Americans in all say that federal minimum wage should remain at the current level of $7.25 an hour.

Support for raising the minimum wage to $15 an hour is extensive across most demographic groups, according to the survey, which was conducted among 5,109 U.S. adults.

Black adults in particular stand out for their support: 89% favor raising the minimum wage to $15 an hour, including 73% who support the idea strongly.

About three-quarters of Hispanic (76%) and Asian Americans (73%) also favor raising the minimum wage to $15 an hour, with 52% of Hispanics and 43% of Asians saying they strongly support the idea.

White adults, by contrast, are divided: 51% favor raising the minimum wage to $15 an hour – including just 30% who strongly favor it – while 48% oppose it.

About seven-in-ten adults who live in lower-income households (72%) say they favor raising the federal minimum wage to $15 an hour, including about half (52%) who strongly favor such an increase. Smaller majorities of those in middle- (58%) and upper-income households (55%) say they favor a $15 minimum wage.

### 1AR—AT: Elections DA—LT—Turnout

#### Plan increases turnout for Harris.

Dizikes ’22 [Peter Dizikes; M.A. in History from New York University, 2-15-2022, "Study: Higher minimum wages raise voter turnout", MIT, https://polisci.mit.edu/news/2022/study-higher-minimum-wages-raise-voter-turnout] TDI

Many states across the U.S. have raised the minimum wage in recent years. Such measures do not only affect low-wage workers’ pocketbooks, however. As a study by MIT political scientists shows, higher minimum wages also make people more likely to vote in elections.

The study found that in New York City, increases in the minimum wage in the mid-2010s raised voter turnout by 2 to 3 percentage points among those earning close to minimum levels. Additionally, examining U.S. counties nationwide dating back to the 1980s, the researchers found that an 8 percent increase in the minimum wage is associated with an overall voter turnout increase of one-third of 1 percent.

“We found that people who get a raise because the minimum wage goes up become slightly more likely to vote in the next election,” says Ariel White, an associate professor in MIT’s Department of Political Science and co-author of a new paper detailing the findings. “Those people, who are low-income, [become] represented a little better in elections than they typically are, because people with low incomes tend to vote less.”

The paper, “More Money, More Turnout? Minimum Wage Increases and Voting,” appears in the Journal of Politics. The authors are White, who is the Silverman Family Career Development Associate Professor of Political Science at MIT; and Zachary Markovich, a doctoral student in MIT’s Department of Political Science.

Across the U.S., 27 states and the District of Columbia have raised their minimum wages since 2014, an issue that has often become prominent in state and local politics.

The federal minimum wage has remained at $7.25 per hour since it was last raised in 2009. But state minimum wages can surpass the federal level; the highest is the District of Columbia, at $15.20, followed by the state of Washington at $14.49 and Massachusetts at $14.25, according to Department of Labor statistics. At the low end of the scale, Georgia and Wyoming both have minimum wages of $5.15 an hour, applying to some employees not covered by federal regulations.

To conduct the research, White and Markovich used a two-prong empirical strategy. First, they examined the voting records of New York City public employees before and after the city enacted minimum wage increases in 2014 and 2015. The MIT scholars then compared the changes in voting among minimum-wage workers to turnout patterns among those unaffected by the raises, to better isolate the effect of the policy change.

“If everybody’s turnout changes from one year to another, we’re accounting for that,” White says. “We’re focused on the bit of change that is being driven by the minimum wage increase, because it’s driven by this set of [workers].”

The researchers also examined the occupations of the minimum-wage workers in question, to make sure the estimates from a sample of public employees would generalize to other low-wage workers. The minimum-wage employees in question often perform tasks like serving school lunches or cleaning city parks.

Second, White and Markovich examined county-level data from across the U.S. over the years 1980 through 2016, scrutinizing both changes in minimum wages and voter turnout. While this arm of the research did not identify particular voters with the precision of the New York City employees study, it also provided a broad-ranging data set showing a similar trend over a longer time period, in more places.

“We similarly see that when the minimum wage goes up, voter turnout goes up a little bit as well, in aggregate,” White says. “So, that is some indication that this is a broader story than just the New York City data that we worked with.”

And precisely because states have established different minimum wage standards in recent decades, the variation between states — or among counties in a multistate metropolitan area — helps indicate that those policy changes do have an effect.

“From a social science [research] perspective, that kind of policy patchwork is really helpful, because you can compare states that increased their minimum wage to ones that didn’t,” Markovich observes.

As White readily notes, the study does not fully determine exactly why voting increases when minimum-wage workers earn a bit more money. One hypothesis is that better material conditions mean people have slightly more time to vote, or a better logistical capability of doing so. Another hypothesis is that receiving a raise makes minimum-wage voters more open to the value of voting.

“We can imagine a couple of possible mechanisms here,” White says. “One is the possible material or logistical changes that happen when people make substantially more money [and can] afford stable housing and regular transportation. When you have a little more money to live, you have a little more head space to think about going to vote. When you’re struggling with basic needs, you’re going to have a harder time to participate in an election.”

However, White adds, “people could be changing their attitude toward government and what government can do for them, because they just learned that government can raise their pay. So it’s possible that it could be both. We can’t disentangle those things [yet]. But we can pin down the effect.”

At the end of the paper, the scholars write that they would welcome further research specifically about the mechanisms through which better wages increase turnout. Markovich suggests that field work and surveys could help add clarity to this issue.

“What I would like to see is more evidence that arises from talking to minimum wage workers, whether it is more qualitative work involving a lot of interviews, or also possible survey work,” Markovich says. “More of that work would tell us what’s actually going through people’s heads when they see this kind of change. … I think there would be a lot of value to someone doing that.”

### 1AR—State Capacity—AT: Elections DA—LT

#### The plan is popular.

NTEU 24. National Treasury Employees Union. June 17, 2024. “Survey Shows Strong Support for Merit-Based Civil Service.” https://nteu280.org/news/2024/6/17/survey-shows-strong-support-for-merit-based-civil-service. TDI

A whopping 95 percent of Americans believe federal employees should be hired and promoted based on their individual merit and skill rather than their political beliefs, according to a new survey released by the Partnership for Public Service.

The overwhelming response is a strong rebuttal to those who want to remove career federal employees and make room for hiring only a president’s political allies.

While the survey also shows a concerning drop in overall public trust of the federal government, the desire for the civil service to remain independent is powerful and bipartisan. Regardless of political affiliation, 91 percent of Americans agree that “having competent civil servants is important for a strong American democracy” and 87 percent say a nonpartisan civil service is important to democracy.

#### Link turn. Federal employees are a key voting bloc and paying them more makes them vote Blue!

Weisner 24. Molly Weisner. May 10, 2024. “Federal workers, both Democrat and Republican, eager to vote this fall.” Federal Times. https://www.federaltimes.com/fedlife/career/2024/05/10/federal-workers-both-democrat-and-republican-eager-to-vote-this-fall/. TDI

<<FIGURES EXCLUDED>>

The vast majority of federal government employees and retirees responding to a new Federal Times survey are registered to vote and plan to cast ballots in the presidential election this November, with many saying they feel the civil service has become more politicized than in the past.

The federal workforce is a silent constituency, comprised of millions of employees working in every state. This population lives in rural areas and in cities. They work in highly academic fields and in blue collar occupations. It is a ubiquitous group, but it is not monolithic. And when it comes to politics, opinions may differ, but workers are barred from acting on them at work.

Despite its apolitical nature, this population is not one to be taken for granted, said experts interviewed by Federal Times. Like other citizens, they can vote, and they do, according to a poll of more than 1,000 readers.

“I would say it’s an important constituency in our country,” said Max Stier, founding president and CEO of the Partnership for Public Service, in an interview. “There are, at the federal level, limitations on the kinds of political activities that federal employees can engage in, but they do get to vote and therefore their vote does matter.”

Almost all — 98% — of the respondents said they are registered voters, and a whopping 95% told Federal Times they intend on casting ballots for president this fall when incumbent Joe Biden faces the Republican nominee, who almost certainly will be former President Donald Trump. That compares with 92% of registered voters and slightly more than two-thirds of all eligible voters who cast ballots in the 2020 elections nationwide.

The Census estimates there were roughly 122 million active U.S. voters in 2022, of which the federal workforce represents a small fraction: about 2.2 million. But counting millions more retirees, service members, sympathetic family and friends, and state and local government workers, the total government workforce has the potential to be a significant voter base, said Brian Baugus, a professor at Regent University who has studied public sector employees’ influence on elections.

“Government employees vote in disproportionately higher numbers than any other employment category,” he told Federal Times via email. “While they are a bit under 10% of the population, they are regularly 12% to 15% of the electorate.”

Experts surmise there are a few reasons for that. For one, Baugus said government workers have a strong vested interest in the outcome of elections. Simply put: executive branch employees are voting for their boss’ boss. They may also feel incentivized to vote indirectly for the policy proposals and priorities they will later be tasked with implementing.

“They don’t get to make that choice in their workplace,” said Stier. “In the workplace, they have to follow the lead of those people who are elected by the general population. So, their one opportunity to express their views about which direction the country should go in, is the voting booth.”

How powerful are feds as voters?

In recent months especially, Republicans floated campaign planks that would directly impact federal employees’ pay, benefits, telework offerings and career stability. In the survey, most respondents ranked federal salary raises or pay reform as a top concern, followed by retirement issues and then Schedule F.

Baugus said it’s also true that government employees, by virtue of their career, may have an affinity for public policy, or they may simply know more about it than the average voter who needs to make more of an effort to stay ahead on the issues.

“[Government workers’] costs of being an informed voter are lower,” he said. “Higher incentives and lower costs usually lead to more action, in this case voting, especially since they are usually forbidden from being involved in campaigns and electioneering, so voting is their only outlet for political activity.”

It’s also true that even though government employees tend to be concentrated geographically, they are not distributed evenly. In the survey, about 75% of respondents do not live or work in the National Capital Region.

In particularly close races or in low turnout elections, a few thousand votes can be influential, Baugus said.

“[Recent presidential elections] have been close enough that almost anyone can claim to have been the margin of difference, but the stronger case can be made for motivated voting blocs like government employees,” he said.

2020 as a case study

No survey, no matter how scientific (and this one is not), can predict the exact turnout of federal employees on Nov. 5, but if past behavior is any indicator, it seems likely this population will show up.

Federal Times found 96% of respondents “definitely” voted in the 2020 presidential election, which yielded the highest turnout rate of eligible voters in any national election since 1900, according to Pew Research Center.

Respondents with whom Federal Times spoke were not surprised by the high number.

“The [colleagues] I engage with are absolutely engaged voters,” said one employee, who requested anonymity to speak candidly about their political views. “The sense of obligation is definitely there.”

How feds will vote is less clear. The deeply polarized political environment coupled with ripple effects of the pandemic, complex overseas conflicts and social pressures magnified by social media have given voters much to consider.

While most elections are contentious, Stier said the discourse around politics and attitudes on government have struck a different tenor recently.

“I think that, historically, the differences have really been about policy direction,” he added. “And again, by and large, the civil service, they’re going to do their work irrespective of whoever the political leader is. I think what has been put center stage in a much more dramatic way is this question of the nature of our government and to what end does it serve?”

Before they dropped out of the Republican race, Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis made a comment about “slitting throats” in the bureaucracy, and tech entrepreneur Vivek Ramaswamy vowed to reduce the federal workforce by 75%. Former South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley has pitched term limits for civil servants. And Trump, who was able to partially implement a plan to reclassify tens of thousands of federal employees to at-will status known as Schedule F, has said on the campaign trail that he’s concerned about the threat of the “deep state.”

“Normally we would not know how serious a candidate is about such actions — rhetoric is not always reality — but again, Trump is unique,” said Baugus. “We have four years’ experience, and I would think that will be the key in forming expectations.”

Most feds interviewed said a change in administration minimally impacts their day-to-day work, but employees may see policy priorities reflected in what teams are given money to hire and whether agencies backfill vacant positions.

The ‘woke’ bureaucracy? How feds lean

About 43% of respondents said they planned to vote Democrat this year compared to 33% Republican and 16% independent.

Half said they believed the Democratic party best represented the interests of the federal workforce, whereas 22% said the GOP was a better representative. Another 20% said neither were suitable, and 5% said independent third-party candidates were more in line with employees’ interests.

“[Feds] know by practice that the GOP is not worker friendly,” said retired public servant in an interview. “Schedule F initiatives solidified that view, if they weren’t already initiated and prejudiced by prior congressional and presidential temperament.”

When broken down by military service, those who identified as veterans leaned republican, while non-veterans respondents said they would vote democrat.

One combat-disabled veteran interviewed by Federal Times said it is frustrating to see the Biden administration send billions in foreign aid when the U.S. military is struggling with dilapidated barracks, recruiting shortfalls and aging tech.

“We can send money to everybody else, but we don’t have money to do things to help ourselves at home,” he said, adding that he feels there’s been a lack of decisiveness permeating U.S. foreign policy that ultimately costs more, both in dollars and reputation.

“I think that while some people look at [Trump] as being irrational or unpredictable, I think in some ways our enemies respected that,” said one service member who, like others, spoke on the condition of anonymity to protect against retaliation for sharing their personal views.

When it came to other issues, roughly a quarter of respondents said they would switch their party affiliation or consider voting against their usual party of choice come November, and very few said that a conviction of Trump in court would change their opinion of him positively or negatively.

When it comes to Biden’s handling of the situation in Gaza, which has garnered criticism from employee groups in his own cabinet, about 27% said it eroded their support.

The issue of age has also come up, with several respondents telling Federal Times they were frustrated by a lack of new entrants to the race.

Roughly 57% said Biden, 81, is too old to run again, while only 34% said the same for Trump, who will be 78 come Election Day. For both candidates, around 20% said age is irrelevant either way.

‘I love what I do’

Respondents of opposing parties agreed that the civil service felt more politicized today than when they first joined. About 60% of all respondents said they felt that way, and of them, 40% said that made them want to leave government service.

“I don’t like feeling like a powerless pawn in the political mix,” said one respondent.

“Makes me glad I retired,” said another.

Still, almost every employee interviewed by Federal Times echoed the same message: they work on behalf of the American people, and they just want to be given the tools to do that.

“Our role is to support the administration, no matter who it is at 1600 Pennsylvania Ave.,” said one respondent.

And while few said an election is likely to sway long-held beliefs about government, there is an opportunity for the current administration to back up its workers.

“I think the Democrats could be stronger not only to tout their accomplishments, but I think they do have to hit back on some of the bullshit that comes out of the other side,” said one employee.

Government is well-equipped to point at its own problems through audits, watchdog reports and inspectors general, Stier said, but it hasn’t been as good at messaging the things it has gotten right.

“Unfortunately, a lot of Americans don’t see they’re getting that when you ask them about the federal government,” he said. “What they really are thinking about are bickering politicians in Washington. And the best antidote for that is the truth and sunshine and ensuring that more Americans have access to information about what their public servants are doing for them.”

### 1AR—AT: Elections DA—Black Swans

#### It’s too far off---many black swans.

Harlan Ullman 23, PhD, Contributor, The Hill. Senior Advisor, The Atlantic Council, "‘Icebergs’ And ‘Black Swans’ That Can Sink Biden And Trump In 2024," Hill, 07/24/2023, https://thehill.com/opinion/white-house/4114395-icebergs-and-black-swans-that-can-sink-biden-and-trump-in-2024/.

Here is a thought experiment. At lunch on April 14, 1912, what might Edward Smith, Captain of RMS Titanic, and Chief Officer Henry Wilde have been discussing? Reports of icebergs had not yet been received. And colliding with one later that night probably never entered the conversation.

As we know now, catastrophe struck. Now consider a provocative thought experiment regarding the ship of state and the two likely contenders seeking to become or remain captain.

What metaphorical “icebergs” should President Joe Biden and former President Donald Trump be considering that in a year’s time could determine the election and threaten the ship of state?

For this experiment, three potential “icebergs” are arbitrarily chosen, the first two dealing with the election and the third the ship of state. Human factors and the economy may control the election. And a “black swan” event could threaten the ship of state.

Biden must contend with concerns about his age, Vice President Kamala Harris, who is largely denigrated as his vice president, and the misdeeds of his son Hunter, all of which will be fodder for Republican attack ads.

Trump must deal with his alleged illegal conduct and pending indictments, plus one guilty verdict in a civil case. The trial on wrongful possession of classified materials and obstruction of justice is scheduled for May. Will that trial affect the Republican convention in Milwaukee in mid-July 2024? What about other pending indictments related to election interference in Georgia and the Jan. 6 Capitol riot?

Parts of the human factor include whether or not a third-party candidate will run and the nature of the electorate. The turnout of Gen Z (born between 1996 and 2010) might be decisive whether or not Trump faces further convictions. This cohort votes on policy and not ideological grounds that would favor Biden.

Despite today’s polling, how a “No Labels” or third presidential candidate will help or hurt Biden and Trump is unknowable. Conventional wisdom suggests that it benefits Trump. However, Republicans who cannot support Trump may be inclined to vote for the third choice in greater numbers than Democratic defectors. No matter, the human factor is a looming iceberg for both candidates.

The economy can determine the election. Enormous amounts of money have been pumped into the economy by the Inflation Reduction Act and the Chips and Science Act, plus residual funding leftover from COVID. If that takes hold, the economy will be strong and possibly booming.

One shorthand metric for determining the winner in 2024 is the Dow Jones Index. If it’s above 35,000, it is likely to be Biden. If the Dow is in the low 30,000s, Trump will be advantaged. Another iceberg?

Last is the most speculative of icebergs — a foreign policy black swan. China, Russia, North Korea and Iran — along with environmental catastrophes — cannot be discounted as black swans. In July 2024, the 75th anniversary of NATO will be celebrated at the summit in Washington marking the signing of the treaty creating the alliance. If the war in Ukraine is still ongoing, it will be a potential and menacing black swan.

### 1AR—AT: Elections DA—No Impact

#### Trump will be constrained.

Eric Posner 23, JD, MA, Kirkland & Ellis Distinguished Service Professor, Law, University of Chicago. Fellow, American Academy of Arts & Sciences. Member, American Law Institute, "A Trump Dictatorship Won’t Happen," Project Syndicate, 12/07/2023, https://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/trump-might-try-to-be-dictator-but-would-fail-again-by-eric-posner-2023-12.

CHICAGO – Americans have worried about their presidents becoming dictators (or, in the old days, tyrants) ever since the Unites States was founded. The framers of the US Constitution understood that in classical democracies and republics, leaders often tried to seize power from legislatures and other assemblies. That is why they created a system of checks and balances on government power.

So far, so good. No US president has ever been a dictator. Nonetheless, accusing the other side’s candidate of seeking dictatorial powers has become a quadrennial ritual, one that has started early this time around. In a widely circulated *Washington Post* commentary last week, Robert Kagan, repeating his earlier prediction that former President Donald Trump would become a fascist leader, warned that he would become a dictator if he is elected again in 2024. Kagan likens a Trump victory to an asteroid crashing into the earth, echoing the widely ridiculed commentary by Michael Anton, who likened a Hillary Clinton victory in 2016 to a suicide attack on an airliner.

Trump was and is many things, most of them bad. But he wasn’t a fascist when he was president, and he won’t be a dictator if he is elected a second time. Far from a strongman, Trump was weak throughout his previous term. His main accomplishments – a tax cut, a stimulus package during the pandemic, and appointments of conservative (but largely mainstream) judges – all went through normal constitutional procedures, with Congress fully involved. Meanwhile, Congress thwarted Trump’s promises to repeal the Affordable Care Act (“Obamacare”) and to build a wall on the border with Mexico.

Likewise, Trump’s most notable attempts to act unilaterally – to end the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals immigration program, add a citizenship-status question to the census, and cut environmental regulations – were all blocked by the courts or whittled down in response to judicial challenges. Trump’s own subordinates disobeyed his orders to block investigations of his activities and bring frivolous lawsuits against his opponents. And Trump’s most consequential foreign-policy decisions – withdrawing from the Paris climate agreement and the Iran nuclear deal, for example – were solidly within the tradition of presidential authority in that domain.

Trump was a weak president because most voters disliked him. Every Democrat and even a few Republicans could afford to oppose him. Unable to achieve majority popular support, he could only pretend. Though he tried to bully the judiciary, those efforts failed. “My judges,” as he called them, ruled against him over and over when he challenged the 2020 presidential election results. He couldn’t get the huge federal bureaucracy to do his bidding because he lacked the wisdom and patience to manage it.

Trump attempted to reverse the 2020 election by spreading lies and riling up a mob. But he failed completely, again thwarted by his top subordinates and the courts, as well as by election officials from both parties. Today, Trump and his henchmen have been indicted, his lawyers are facing disciplinary proceedings, and hundreds of his supporters have been sentenced to prison.

Kagan replies that this time is different. The Heritage Foundation, a leading right-wing think tank, is compiling a list of thousands of right-wing radicals who will fill slots in the federal bureaucracy – especially the Department of Justice – that Trump will have freed up by way of a novel legal maneuver. It has also produced a conservative wish list called Project 2025. But the notion that Trump will pay attention to think-tank proposals and white papers is fanciful – has no one learned anything?

Kagan is on stronger ground arguing that Trump will order investigations and trials of his political opponents – a typical move from the dictator’s playbook. Trump has indeed threatened as much, vowing to prosecute his own former attorney general, William Barr, and his former chief of staff, John Kelly, among others.

But if we have learned anything about Trump, it is that we should take his promises with a grain of salt. He never did “lock up” Hillary Clinton, after all, and he already tried to empty the federal bureaucracy with the notorious “Schedule F” executive order toward the end of his term. Nothing came of it except bureaucratic confusion.

#### Feaver is wrong. Internal constraints prevent disasters. Not enough right wing advisors.

Eric Posner 23, JD, MA, Kirkland & Ellis Distinguished Service Professor, Law, University of Chicago. Fellow, American Academy of Arts & Sciences. Member, American Law Institute, "A Trump Dictatorship Won’t Happen," Project Syndicate, 12/07/2023, https://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/trump-might-try-to-be-dictator-but-would-fail-again-by-eric-posner-2023-12.

The problem for Trump and his inner circle is that there are just not enough competent right-wing lawyers and policymakers who could come into an unfamiliar agency and redirect it effectively. Agency heads, given conflicting orders to implement draconian Trumpian policy and replace thousands of experienced staff with hacks, will most likely accomplish neither, instead finding themselves embroiled in lawsuits from fired employees.

Moreover, Trump has already announced that he doesn’t want Federalist Society lawyers in his government, since too many of them – including his two attorneys general, Jeff Sessions and Barr – turned out to be more loyal to the country than to him. But where, then, will he find legal expertise? With the Federalist Society having established itself as the main source of ambitious conservative lawyers, Trump has committed himself to a vanishingly small pool of talent.

Trump neither knows nor cares that a president cannot simply order the federal bureaucracy around. A president must cajole, compromise, and plead. But even if Trump does that, government investigators and prosecutors will not bring cases against people like Barr and Kelly, who have committed no crimes. If they are somehow forced to, expect mass resignations, leaks, public repudiations, and a field day for the press. Judges will throw out the cases, and juries will not convict. Kagan thinks that if Trump wins his current trials, judges will be afraid to rule against him if he becomes president. This both overstates Trump’s current legal jeopardy and vastly underestimates the integrity of the judiciary.

Make no mistake: a second Trump term won’t be pretty. But expect turmoil (again), not dictatorship.

### 1AR—AT: Elections DA—! Turn

#### He will end democracy.

Tim Reid 3-9-2024, Journalist at Thomson Reuters. "Trump predicts the end of U.S. democracy if he loses 2024 election." Reuters. https://www.reuters.com/world/us/trump-predicts-end-us-democracy-if-he-loses-2024-election-2024-03-17/. DL

WASHINGTON, March 16 (Reuters) - Donald Trump said on Saturday if he does not win November's presidential election it will mean the likely end of American democracy.

The Republican presidential candidate, speaking to supporters in Ohio, made the claim after repeating his baseless assertion that his 2020 election defeat to Democratic President Joe Biden was the result of election fraud.

During an outdoor speech that was whipped by strong winds and punctuated by some profane language, Trump predicted that if he does not win the Nov. 5 general election, American democracy will come to an end.

"If we don't win this election, I don't think you're going to have another election in this country," Trump said.

Trump, who is under criminal indictment in Georgia for trying to overturn the result of the 2020 election there, this week won enough delegates to mathematically clinch the Republican nomination.

A general election rematch with Biden is likely to be extremely close. A Reuters/Ipsos poll last week found the two candidates in a statistical tie with registered voters.

Trump opened his remarks in Dayton with a tribute to his supporters who are currently in jail for rioting at the U.S. Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021, as they sought to block certification of Biden's 2020 election win.

Trump saluted and called them "patriots" and "hostages".

The former Republican president has been using increasingly dystopian rhetoric in his campaign speeches about the state of the country.

In the middle of a section in his speech about placing tariffs on imported cars, and foreign competition for the U.S. auto industry, Trump declared: "If I don't get elected, it's going to be a bloodbath for the whole country."

#### Extinction.

French ’20 [David; September 22; visiting professor at Lipscomb University, J.D. from Harvard University; Divided We Fall: America's Secession Threat and How to Restore Our Nation, “A World On Fire,” p. 130-136]

A World on Fire

The moment the United States split apart; every world leader knew a single, simple truth: Pax Americana was over. The peace that had been maintained through the overwhelming military and economic might of the United States would not hold. The security guarantees of a confused and broken nation meant nothing. Carrier battle groups that previously had ruled the seas sat in port while the new, opposing nations of the North American continent negotiated their fate.

American squadrons returned home as their pilots and crews chose sides in the Great Divorce. The portion of the North American continent that retained the name “United States of America”—while still economically powerful—was simply incapable of maintaining the military force or the security guarantees of a united nation, especially in the year following the split.

The United States tried to maintain deterrence in hot spots like South Korea, but rival great powers knew that the United States was in no condition to project meaningful force overseas. Even worse, the entire Western alliance had grown utterly dependent on U.S. logistical assets to move any kind of significant force beyond their own borders. Britain’s two carrier battle groups and France’s single aircraft carrier were insufficient to maintain any deterrent posture in the Far East, and they were barely adequate to project any real strength in the Atlantic.

Thus arrived a period that Russian and Chinese military planners quickly dubbed the “golden years.” They knew that the divided American nations would eventually settle on a security strategy. They knew that allied powers would ramp up their own military spending and eventually replace a large portion of the lost American power. But the key word was “eventually.” This would take time.

Modern weapons—including aircraft, main battle tanks, and ships—are extraordinarily complex. They can’t be produced at scale immediately, even if panicked national governments authorize emergency procurement programs. The divided American nations arranged hasty sales of prepositioned equipment, but it would still take time to recruit and train men and women to operate new weapons.

Consequently, China believed it could reclaim Taiwan without triggering a conflict with the United States. Russia knew that it could swallow the Baltic states and the Russian ethnic enclaves in southeastern Ukraine while NATO remained paralyzed. Russia moved first. Latvia and Lithuania fell to an influx of “little green men”—Russian soldiers in unmarked uniforms and vehicles—who took key airports and city centers within seventy-two hours, with hardly a shot fired.

Estonia was different. Estonia resisted fiercely, and so it received the full weight of the 8th Guards Mechanized Corps. The conflict was intense but brief. In one week, the Russians secured every major population center. In three weeks, every element of the Estonian military larger than a company was destroyed. After a month, only small bands of partisan fighters remained, and they could mount only sporadic attacks.

NATO did nothing. It could do nothing, aside from engage in furious denunciations and impose (ultimately short-lived) economic sanctions. The UN was utterly ineffectual, with China joining Russia to veto any meaningful Security Council resolutions. American airpower had largely returned home. American naval assets were in port in North America. And without American support, neither Britain, France, nor Germany could project any meaningful force to Estonia or any other Baltic state. So they stayed put rather than face sure, bloody defeat.

A Russian-engineered coup toppled the Western-allied government of Ukraine, and just like that, NATO withered. The old Eastern Bloc nations realized their vulnerability and—over time—entered into new security and trade agreements with their old Russian “allies.” Russia regained control of its near abroad, the old great power rivalries flared again, and for the first time in nearly a century, the world noticed the stirrings of German militarism as Germany rearmed as fast as possible to face a renewed and immediate Russian threat.

Events in Europe were destabilizing, but with the exception of thousands of dead in Estonia, they were relatively bloodless. The cost was largely strategic and economic, as the disruptions of the Great Divorce gutted Western economies even as they faced substantial new defense obligations.

The Far East wasn’t so fortunate. From the moment Chinese planners saw the United States reneging on its NATO commitments, they knew that Americans would not and could not aid Taiwan. There was not a single American carrier at sea west of Pearl Harbor. Not a single American surface ship was in position even to offer itself up as a “tripwire” to trigger an American response.

And so, China determined to transform its “one China” policy from political fiction to practical fact. It demanded Taiwan’s surrender as it began an immense, open, and obvious military buildup across the Taiwan Strait. The intent was clear—to convince Taiwan that resistance was futile.

But Taiwan had advantages that Estonia did not. First, there was the significant matter of the roughly hundred-mile-wide strait separating the island from the mainland. The second was the fact that Japan was shocked out of its isolation at the prospect of a united, hostile China with no American ally present to guarantee its security.

Japan mobilized its undersized (though technologically advanced) military, warned China against aggression, and then reached a fateful decision—to race to develop a nuclear deterrent. In spite of its unique history as the target of the world’s only atomic attacks, Japan knew that it had to rely on its own power to guarantee its security, and when facing a nuclear-armed China, Japan needed its own deterrent, urgently.

China believed that Japan was bluffing. Its planners refused to believe that the nation would transition from ingrained pacifism to outright militarism so quickly, and in the absence of any direct threat to Japanese sovereignty. So, China pressed ahead.

Taiwan rejected China’s demand for surrender as decisively as possible. Working with the Japanese military it re-created the surprise attacks of 1941 at scale, with the most modern and sophisticated weapons money could buy. China’s open preparations, designed to cow its rivals into submission, turned into the nation’s military Achilles’ heel. Japanese military doctrine, from Port Arthur to Pearl Harbor, emphasized the importance of the first strike, and strike first it did.

In part because of Chinese mistakes (after all, it had not fought a major conflict against a first-rate power since the Sino-Soviet border clashes in 1969) and in part because of Japanese tactical brilliance, Japanese and Taiwanese pilots achieved almost complete surprise. Missile and air strikes arrived virtually simultaneously, sinking Chinese naval craft and blanketing Chinese air bases with explosions. In a single day, Japanese and Taiwanese forces rendered an amphibious assault virtually impossible.

Humiliated and furious, Chinese leaders refused the immediate offer of peace and launched a massive conventional air and naval counterattack designed to destroy the Japanese and Taiwanese militaries, crush their economies, and make them sue for peace. Thus began the most significant Pacific air and naval conflict since World War II, one that eventually also drew Australia into the fray—while a wary South Korea mobilized its reserves and remained neutral as two old foes fought bitter battles in the seas and skies all around.

For months air raid warnings were routine in many of China’s and Japan’s great cities. Commercial shipping ground to a halt. International trade crashed. Chinese forces fully invaded and occupied Hong Kong. The global economic disruption that had been called the “American Recession” after the Great Divorce became the “Pacific Depression” as two of the world’s largest economies ground each other into the dust in the midst of an all-out air and naval war.

After maintaining a public posture of ambiguity regarding its nuclear program—an ambiguity designed to deter Chinese escalation—Japan dramatically announced its entry into the nuclear club with an underground test of a substantial 250-kiloton device. South Korea quickly followed suit. Taiwan indicated that it reserved the right to build its own bomb. Australia did not test a weapon, but it formally withdrew from both the Nuclear NonProliferation Treaty and the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty—two documents that had become all but meaningless in world affairs. The world began a round of runaway nuclear proliferation, as advanced nations in multiple world regions reached for their own arsenal of ultimate weapons.

In the meantime, the conventional war raged on. Slowly but surely, the Japanese gained superiority in the sky and on the seas. The Taiwanese air force, lacking either the F-35 or the F-15, struggled to defend its home island, but the Japanese exacted a fearful toll on Chinese aircraft, shooting them down far faster than Chinese industry could replace the losses. One by one, the Japanese sank China’s few aircraft carriers, and after six months of conflict, the Chinese navy was [destroyed] ~~crippled~~, with its surface ships rarely venturing out from their heavily guarded ports.

A land war in China was unthinkable. Neither Taiwan nor Japan wanted to commit an entire generation of young men to large-scale ground combat, so the goal was air and naval superiority, followed by economic strangulation.

The war reached its end stage just as Japanese and Australian forces launched an ambitious series of amphibious landings designed to seize each and every disputed island in the Spratly and Senkaku island chains. With Chinese aircraft chased from the skies and the Chinese navy largely at the bottom of the sea, a military and economic noose was tightened in the South China Sea and East China Sea. Large sections of China were routinely plunged into blackout conditions by relentless attacks on the nation’s power grid, and economic deprivation was creating internal unrest.

Desperate to stop the fighting, China rattled the nuclear saber. It declared that the continued invasion of Chinese-claimed territory and the continued air strikes on the Chinese mainland represented an existential threat to the nation’s existence. Firebrands inside China urged leadership to use its nuclear arsenal while it still possessed a strategic edge—claiming that while China could absorb terrible losses, Japan would be effectively destroyed by a Chinese attack.

Unwilling to repeat the traumas of 1945, Japan stood down. It agreed first to a cease-fire in place, then to a negotiated withdrawal from seized Chinese territory—based on a Chinese agreement to completely demilitarize its disputed island possessions. China refused to enter into a lasting peace agreement with Taiwan. There was only an armistice. A humiliated China raced to rebuild its decimated navy and air force. In response, Japan built up its own air and naval forces to a size and power not seen since its days of empire.

As for Taiwan, it effectively declared its independence from China by successfully testing its own hydrogen bomb and building its own nuclear arsenal.

Europe and Asia were not the only flash points. With America in full retreat, Iran attempted to sprint to its own nuclear bomb, a move blocked— at least temporarily— by a series of Israeli air strikes that triggered Hezbollah rocket barrages into northern Israel.

With the eyes of the world focused elsewhere, Israel responded with overwhelming military force, unleashing its full arsenal on Hezbollah positions, invading southern Lebanon yet again, crushing Hezbollah, and driving its remnants out of missile range of Israeli civilians.

For the first time since Israel’s war for independence, there was no international outcry. The great powers were panicked by the reality and danger of much larger conflicts much closer to home. Saudi Arabia was quietly pleased at the blow to Iranian power, and after Hezbollah’s initial missile volleys, the militant group proved ineffectual in the face of a fully mobilized IDF.

By the time the reduced United States and the new nations of North America reconstituted truly functioning militaries, reached sustainable security agreements, and began to claw back from economic depression, the world had changed. It was as if the clock had spun back more than a century, to the multi-power world that existed before the First World War— except with more great powers, more potential flash points, and far more terrible weaponry.

In 1914, the great powers had been concentrated in Europe, with Japan rising in the East. Now India, China, South Korea, Taiwan, and Japan all possessed formidable economies, growing militaries, and nuclear weaponry. China still coveted union with Taiwan (and revenge for its humiliating defeat). South Korea increasingly considered forceful unification with the unstable North. Japan and China nursed their ancient grudge, and Chinese and Indian forces clashed along their disputed boundary.

Back home in the old United States, global instability damaged economic prosperity. Americans who had once decried globalism and scorned American alliances now saw and experienced the high cost of lost international institutions. But even the terrible war in the Pacific seemed distant. A nation in the midst of dissolution had no time for worry about faroff conflicts. It pulled back into itself, dealt with its own upheaval from the great internal migrations, and each new North American division generated its foreign policy only after it fought back to economic stability.

Truth be told, there were Americans who liked the new world. They had always resented international dependence on American arms and American lives. They were glad to pull back to their new borders and had little interest in crises overseas. They saw the new nations as more in keeping with the intentions of the original Founders of the old United States, avoiding foreign entanglements and staying out of foreign wars. Freed from the burden of defending the world, the new nations believed they could pour their resources into their own people. Standing armies diminished. The new navies still sailed the seas, but the fleets were smaller. There were fewer carrier battle groups. There was no need to project overwhelming force, only to deter attacks.

And so the world settled into its new reality. Great-power conflict was no longer unthinkable, shifting alliances played havoc with international travel and international trade, and world economies became more unstable. Militaries abroad planned for future conflicts that Americans hoped and believed would not reach across the oceans to touch their shores. Isolationist and polarized Americans had broken the world their forefathers made, and they could not, ever, put it back together again.

III To Save America, Chart James Madison’s Course

15 Pluralism, a Beginner’s Guide

The scenarios outlined in the preceding three chapters represent a projection of what may happen if the polarizing trends I’ve outlined in this book continue unabated while the nation is subject to foreseeable, even predictable severe stress. The Calexit scenario is based on existing progressive fears that minority rule (empowered by the Senate and the Electoral College) will degrade national legitimacy at the same time that continued right-wing extremism degrades progressive self-governance. The Texit scenario, by contrast, is based on existing conservative fears that majority rule—unmoored from the principles of the founding—will discard the Bill of Rights, fundamentally rewrite the Constitution, and destroy conservative liberty and conservative communities.