# \*\*Base Politics DA\*\*

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### File Notes

The Base Politics Disadvantage argues that the plan will have negative political repercussions. According to the disadvantage, President Trump is maintaining support from his core base of voters now, but flip-flopping on education policy and approving increased spending and/or federal regulation will alienate his supporters, causing him to lose the support of his base. The impact of the disadvantage is that unpopular presidents are more likely to create diversionary conflicts abroad in order to gain support at home. Affirmative answers are included in the bottom of this file. On the uniqueness level, the aff has two options; they can either argue that Trump is losing the support of his base now or that support of his base is inevitable. Please note that both of these arguments should not be read simultaneously, as they contradict each other. On the link level, the aff can argue that the base will actually like the plan or that it may not be big enough to get noticed. On the impact level, the aff can argue that diversionary conflict is unlikely, both in general and in the context of specific scenarios provided by the neg (China, Iran, and North Korea).

### Glossary

Base: In politics, the term base refers to a group of voters who almost always support a single party's candidates for elected office. Base voters are very unlikely to vote for the candidate of an opposing party.

Betsy DeVos: American businesswoman, politician, and activist who is the 11th and current United States Secretary of Education.

Common Core: The Common Core State Standards are a clear set of shared goals and expectations for the knowledge and skills students need in English language arts and mathematics at each grade level so they can be prepared to succeed in college, career, and life. These standards are controversial for a variety of reasons.

Diversionary War: A diversionary foreign policy, or a diversionary war, is an International Relations term that identifies a war instigated by a country's leader in order to distract its population from their own domestic strife.

GOP: The Republican Party, commonly referred to as the GOP (abbreviation for Grand Old Party), is one of the two major contemporary political parties in the United States, the other being its historic rival, the Democratic Party.

Greg Gianforte: U.S. Representative for Montana's at-large congressional district. He was recently elected in a special election for the seat.

Pivot Counties: Counties that swung from Obama to Trump between the 2012 and 2016 elections.

Poll: A study in which people are asked for their opinions about a subject or person

Ralph Norman: Member of the U.S. House of Representatives from South Carolina's 5th congressional district. He recently won his seat in a special election.

Rex Tillerson: The 69th and current United States Secretary of State, serving since February 1, 2017.

Robert Mueller: An American lawyer and civil servant who was the sixth Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, serving from 2001 to 2013. He is currently head of the Special Counsel investigation of Russian interference in the 2016 United States elections.

Social conservative: Social conservatism (often contrasted with social liberalism) denotes an attitude that tends to favour beliefs seen as traditional in regard to social affairs. This can include moral issues.

Wag the dog: The phrase 'Wag the Dog' is used to indicate that attention is purposely being diverted from something of greater importance to something of lesser importance.

## 1NC

### 1NC – Base Politics DA (1/3)

#### A. Uniqueness: Trump’s base has his back – special elections prove

Debenedetti 6/21. Gabriel, political reporter for POLITICO, 6-21-2017, "7 lessons from the 2017 elections," POLITICO, http://www.politico.com/story/2017/06/21/georgia-special-election-handel-ossoff-239788 //saenl

The GOP base is still with Trump Much has been made of Trump’s historically low approval ratings. But he remains popular among base Republicans, and far more popular than any alternative at the moment. In her suburban district, Handel avoided saying the president’s name altogether most days. But she didn’t entirely shun him either. What worked for her was an anti-Democratic message that was enough to fire up Republicans who trickled into her events wearing Trump hats and buttons. And though she didn’t even say the word “Trump” on election night, her mention of “The president of the United States” drew the loudest cheers of all. Handel’s victory on the back of a big Republican turnout — combined with strong wins from more overtly pro-Trump candidates like Gianforte in Montana and South Carolina’s Ralph Norman — is simply more evidence the GOP is nowhere near ready to break with the president. “In 2016, Trump — according to the Democrats — was going to cost Republicans the House, and [he] didn’t,” said Ohio Rep. Steve Stivers, chairman of the National Republican Congressional Committee. “Now, in 2018, the Trump presidency was going to cost Republicans the House. And in four special elections, we’re 4-0 and they’re 0-4.”

#### B. Link: The plan alienates the base – they empirically rally against federal involvement in K-12 education

Klein 4/26. Rebecca, Rebecca Klein is the education reporter for HuffPost, focusing on K-12 issues,"Trump's New Order Says He Wants Local Control Of Schools, But Doesn't Do Much Else," HuffPost, <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/trump-education-department-executive-order_us_5900e506e4b0af6d718aecfa> //dgd

President Donald Trump issued an [executive order](https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2017/04/26/presidential-executive-order-enforcing-statutory-prohibitions-federal) on Wednesday that seeks to reduce federal intervention in education. It builds on vows he made during the campaign to dismantle the Common Core State Standards and hand greater control of schools back to states and localities. But initially, at least, the order doesn’t do much. The order directs Education Secretary Betsy DeVos to identify examples of federal overreach in her bailiwick, senior Education Department official Rob Goad said on a call with reporters. For the next 300 days, DeVos and a team of department staffers will analyze regulations and guidance to determine whether they legally overstep the department’s authority. “For too long the federal government has imposed its will on state and local governments. The result has been education that spends more and achieves far, far, far less. My administration has been working to reverse this federal power grab,” Trump said on Wednesday. It’s not clear what policies Education Department officials will actually finger, and a [federal law](https://mobile.nytimes.com/2015/12/11/us/politics/president-obama-signs-into-law-a-rewrite-of-no-child-left-behind.html) passed in late 2015 already returns a degree of education power to the states. But some of Trump’s supporters are hoping the administration acts quickly to roll back the federal government’s support of Common Core, as well as Obama-era guidance related to students’ civil rights. The [Common Core standards](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/common-core-parents_us_58c8060be4b0598c6699c7ba) are a set of education benchmarks that the Obama administration incentivized states to adopt. They were designed to make sure that kids received similar schooling across state lines. Conservatives, however, have rallied against them as an example of federal interference in local schools. During his campaign, Trump repeatedly said he would work to erase them.

### 1NC – Base Politics DA (2/3)

#### C. Impact: Loss of core support causes Trump to lash out militarily – risks nuclear escalation

Street 16. Street, Tim. Senior Programme Officer on the Sustainable Security programme at Oxford Research Group and has worked for many years on the politics of nuclear disarmament and the arms trade. "President Trump: Successor to the Nuclear Throne," <http://www.oxfordresearchgroup.org.uk/publications/briefing_papers_and_reports/president_trump_successor_nuclear_throne>

With the former, Trump’s recent [comment](http://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-trump-idUSKBN13H1DZ) that he now has an ‘open mind’ about the importance of the Paris climate agreement—having previously said climate change is a ‘hoax’—is unlikely to assuage fears that he will seek to dramatically expand the US’s extraction and reliance on fossil fuels. With the latter, strong doubts have been raised over whether the new President is capable of responsibly handling the incredible power that will be at his fingertips. Moreover, several commentators are already raising concerns that a Trump administration will pursue policies that will aggravate and disappoint his supporters, a situation that could increase the possibility of the US engaging in a ‘diversionary’ war. In order to consider what we can expect from a Trump presidency, as well as noting whom Trump empowers as members of his cabinet and those whom he draws on for advice, it is vital to study the track record of recent administrations and appreciate the powers Trump will inherit. In doing so this briefing focuses on the question of what a Trump presidency might mean for international relations with a focus on nuclear arms, including doctrine and disarmament. This means reviewing policies relevant to the US’s nuclear arsenal and pressing international challenges such as non-proliferation, including in East Asia and the Middle East, as well as the US’s relationship with Russia and its role in NATO. The power and responsibilities of the nuclear monarch The US President is solely responsible for the decision to use the near-unimaginably destructive power of the nation’s nuclear arsenal. Thus, as Bruce Blair—a former intercontinental ballistic missile launch control officer—makes [clear](http://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2016/11/trump-north-korea-nuclear-crises-214457), ‘Trump will have the sole authority to launch nuclear weapons whenever he chooses with a single phone call.’ The wider political meaning of the bomb for the world is aptly [summarised](https://books.google.co.uk/books/about/Bounding_Power.html?id=3XUp-TaG26UC&redir_esc=y) by Daniel Deudney, who describes nuclear weapons as ‘intrinsically despotic’ so that they have created ‘nuclear monarchies’ in all nuclear-armed states. Deudney identifies three related reasons for this development: ‘the speed of nuclear use decisions; the concentration of nuclear use decision into the hands of one individual; and the lack of accountability stemming from the inability of affected groups to have their interests represented at the moment of nuclear use’. Similarly, Elaine Scarry has [explained](https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=YgTGAgAAQBAJ&pg=PP1&lpg=PP1&dq=Thermonuclear+Monarchy:+Choosing+between+Democracy+and+Doom&source=bl&ots=FEUjd5cNWx&sig=j46RxuVMZVlVo0KGYxxTb52lLCo&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwjAv-KAqLrQAhViJMAKHbf1C5A4ChDoAQgtMAM) in stark terms in her 2014 book Thermonuclear Monarchy: Choosing between Democracy and Doom, how the possession of nuclear weapons has converted the US government into ‘a monarchic form of rule that places all defense in the executive branch of government’ leaving the population ‘incapacitated’. In response to this situation, Scarry argues that the American people must use the Constitution as a tool to dismantle the US nuclear weapons system, thereby revitalising democratic participation and control over decision-making. Scarry also outlines the incredible might the president wields, with each of the US’s fourteen nuclear-armed submarines alone carrying ‘enough power to destroy the people of an entire continent’, equivalent to ‘eight times the full-blast power expended by Allied and Axis countries in World War II’. Nuclear specialist Hans Kristensen has [described](https://fas.org/programs/ssp/nukes/publications1/WarPlanIssueBrief2010.pdf) how the US’s strategic nuclear war plan ‘if unleashed in its full capacity’ could ‘kill hundreds of millions of people, devastate entire nations, and cause climatic effects on a global scale’. This war plan consists of a ‘family of plans’ that is aimed at ‘six potential adversaries’ whose identities are kept secret. Kristensen understands that they include ‘potentially hostile countries with nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons (WMD)’, meaning China, North Korea, Iran, Russia and Syria as well as a terrorist group backed by a state that has conducted a catastrophic WMD attack. The ‘dominant mission’ for US nuclear weapons within these plans is termed counterforce, meaning strikes on ‘military, mostly nuclear, targets and the enemy’s leadership’. Despite these plans, the US’s nuclear arsenal is often described by mainstream commentators as being solely intended to ensure mutual assured destruction (MAD), i.e. as part of the ‘balance of terror’ with Russia, in order to prevent armed conflict between the two nations and to ensure a response in kind to a surprise nuclear attack. However, as Joseph Gerson and John Feffer [explain](http://fpif.org/empire_and_nuclear_weapons/), rather than deterrence just being about enough nuclear forces surviving a surprise first strike attack to ensure MAD, US military planners have also understood it to mean ‘preventing other nations from taking “courses of action” that are inimical to US interests’. David McDonough thus [describes](https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=pnf2U2Czsp0C&pg=PA7&lpg=PA7&dq=David+McDonough+us+nuclear&source=bl&ots=A7vG_CQTZF&sig=VVi5UJfjl70NGAgVgqB3ytPQuo0&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwidxu_j877QAhXMB8AKHSKmCgkQ6AEIRTAJ#v=onepage&q=David%20McDonough%20us%20nuclear&f=false) the ‘long-standing goal of American nuclear war-planners’ as being the achievement of the ability to launch a disarming first-strike against an opponent- otherwise known as nuclear superiority. This has been magnified in recent years as the US seeks to ‘prevent’ or ‘rollback’ the ability of weaker states—both nuclear and non-nuclear powers—to establish or maintain a deterrence relationship. Taking all this into account, the new commander-in-chief’s apparently volatile temperament thus raises deep concerns since his finger will be on the nuclear trigger as soon as he assumes office on 20th January 2017. Given his past experience, Bruce Blair’s [statement](http://time.com/4523386/hillary-clinton-ad-nuclear-launch-donald-trump/) that he is ‘scared to death’ by the idea of a Trump presidency is but one further reason why urgent discussion and action, both in the US and globally, on lessening nuclear dangers—and reviving disarmament—is vital. A recent [report](http://www.ploughshares.org/sites/default/files/resources/10-big-nuclear-ideas.pdf) by the Ploughshares Fund on how the US can reduce its nuclear spending, reform its nuclear posture and restrain its nuclear war plans should thus be required reading in Washington. However, as the Economist has rightly [noted](http://www.economist.com/news/briefing/21709999-mr-trump-will-soon-control-americas-nuclear-codes-donald-trump-and-nuclear-codes), ‘It is not Mr Trump’s fault that the system, in which the vulnerable land-based missile force is kept on hair-trigger alert, is widely held to be inherently dangerous’ since, as they point out, ‘no former president, including Barack Obama, has done anything to change it.’ Over sixty years after the nuclear attacks on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, nuclearism thus remains very much embedded in the nation’s strategic thinking. Yet the election of Obama, and the rhetoric of his 2009 [Prague speech](https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/remarks-president-barack-obama-prague-delivered), in which he stated ‘America's commitment to seek the peace and security of a world without nuclear weapons’ led many to think that a real change was on the cards. Obama’s visit to Hiroshima earlier this year to commemorate the bombings was thus a painful reminder of how wide the gap is between the [rearmament](https://www.sipri.org/media/press-release/2016/global-nuclear-weapons-downsizing-modernizing) programmes that the US and other nuclear weapon states are engaged in and the disarmament action that they are legally obliged to pursue under the nuclear non-proliferation treaty (NPT). Obama himself [said](https://www.armscontrol.org/blog/ArmsControlNow/2016-05-27/In-Hiroshima-Obama-Says-Nukes-Require-Moral-Revolution) in Japan that, ‘technological progress without an equivalent progress in human institutions can doom us. The scientific revolution that led to the splitting of an atom requires a moral revolution as well.’ For this statement to be meaningful it is necessary to identify who is responsible for the existing, highly dangerous state of affairs. In short, the US government’s recent record supports Scarry’s suggestion that a democratic revolution is what, in reality, is most needed if the US is to make substantial progress on nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament. Short-term reforms towards the democratic control and ultimate dismantlement of the US’s nuclear arsenal have been [outlined](http://www.ploughshares.org/sites/default/files/resources/10-big-nuclear-ideas.pdf) by Kennette Benedict, who writes that the next administration should: place our nuclear weapons on a much lower level of launch readiness, release to the public more information about the nuclear weapons in our own arsenals, include legislators and outside experts in its nuclear posture review and recognize Congress’ authority to declare war as a prerequisite to any use of nuclear weapons. Assessing Obama’s nuclear legacy In order to properly appreciate what a Trump presidency may bring, we need to revisit the range and types of powers bequeathed to the commander-in-chief by previous administrations. Despite the military advances made by China and Russia in recent years, it is important to recognise that the US remains far and away the biggest global spender on conventional and nuclear weapons and plans to consolidate this position by maintaining significant technological superiority over its adversaries, which will, as is well appreciated, push Beijing, Moscow—and thus other regional powers—to respond. Yet spending on nuclear weapons alone is set to pose significant budgeting [difficulties](https://www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/USNuclearModernization) for future US governments. According to a 2014 [report](https://www.nonproliferation.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/140107_trillion_dollar_nuclear_triad.pdf) by the James Martin Center, the Departments of Defense and Energy plan to spend approximately $1 trillion over the next 30 years ‘to maintain its current nuclear arsenal and procure a new generation of nuclear-armed or nuclear capable bombers and submarines’ as well as new submarine launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs) and inter-continental ballistic missiles (ICBMs). Arms Control Today has [found](https://www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/USNuclearModernization) that total Defense Department nuclear spending ‘is projected to average more than $40 billion in constant fiscal year 2016 dollars between 2025 and 2035, when modernization costs are expected to peak’. Including costs for the Department of Energy’s National Nuclear Security Administration’s projected weapons-related spending during this period ‘would push average spending during this period to more than $50 billion per year’. If anywhere near these sums are spent, then the modest reductions to the US’s nuclear stockpile achieved during the Obama presidency will be entirely overshadowed. Moreover, as analyst Andrew Lichterman [notes](http://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/resources/publications-and-research/publications/5712-assuring-destruction-forever-nuclear-weapon-modernization-around-the-world), the US’s continued modernisation of its nuclear forces is ‘inherently incompatible’ with the ‘unequivocal undertaking’ given at the 2000 NPT Review Conference to eliminate its nuclear arsenal and apply the ‘principle of irreversibility’ to this and related actions. For Lichterman, the huge outlays committed to the nuclear weapons complex were part of a political ‘bargain’ made by the Obama administration with Republicans. This ensured that the New START nuclear arms control treaty would pass in the Senate whilst also not disturbing the development of missile defense and other advanced conventional weapons programmes. New START is a bilateral agreement between Russia and the US, which Steven Pifer [describes](https://www.brookings.edu/blog/order-from-chaos/2016/02/04/new-start-turns-five/) as ‘one of the few bright spots’ that exists in these nations’ relationship. Under the treaty Moscow and Washington must, by 2018, reduce their stockpile of operationally deployed strategic nuclear warheads to 1,550. Furthermore, both must keep to a limit of 700 deployed strategic launchers (missiles) and heavy bombers, and to a combined limit of 800 deployed and non-deployed strategic launchers and heavy bombers. Despite New START ‘proceeding smoothly’ according to Pifer, Hans Kristensen [recently](http://www.nytimes.com/2014/11/02/sunday-review/which-president-cut-the-most-nukes.html) produced a report comparing Obama’s record with that of the previous presidents holding office during the nuclear age, which found that, hitherto, Obama has cut fewer warheads—in terms of numbers rather than percentages—than ‘any administration ever’ and that ‘the biggest nuclear disarmers’ in recent decades have been Republicans, not Democrats. Kristensen thus drily [observes](http://fas.org/blogs/security/2014/10/stockpilereductions/) of this situation that, a conservative Congress does not complain when Republican presidents reduce the stockpile, only when Democratic president try to do so. As a result of the opposition, the United States is now stuck with a larger and more expensive nuclear arsenal than had Congress agreed to significant reductions. As his presidency draws to a close, presumably as a means of securing some sort of meaningful legacy in this area, it has been reported that Obama considered adopting a no first use (NFU) policy for nuclear weapons, something which, whilst reversible, could act as a restraint on future presidents. Yet this was apparently abandoned, [according](http://www.nytimes.com/2016/09/06/science/obama-unlikely-to-vow-no-first-use-of-nuclear-weapons.html) to the New York Times, after ‘top national security advisers argued that it could undermine allies and embolden Russia and China’. Furthermore, according to [Josh Rogin](https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/global-opinions/allies-unite-to-block-an-obama-legacy/2016/08/14/cdb8d8e4-60b9-11e6-8e45-477372e89d78_story.html?utm_term=.846529b5720e) of the Washington Post, the governments of Japan, South Korea, France and Britain all privately communicated their concerns about Washington adopting NFU. Defense Secretary Ashton Carter is also said to have argued that such a move would be unwise because ‘if North Korea used biological weapons against the South the United States might need the option of threatening a nuclear response’. However, as Daryll Kimball [explains](https://www.armscontrol.org/ACT/2016_07/Focus/Take-Nuclear-First-Use-Off-the-Table), the US’s ‘overwhelming’ conventional military advantage means that ‘there is no plausible circumstance that could justify—legally, morally, or militarily—the use of nuclear weapons to deal with a non-nuclear threat’. Such resistance to NFU is thus deeply disappointing given that, as Kimball goes on to note, this move would go some way to reassuring China and Russia about the US’s strategic intentions. It would also be an important confidence-building measure for the wider community of non-nuclear weapon states, showing that the US is willing to act in 'good faith' towards its disarmament obligations under the NPT. <<card continues>>

### 1NC – Base Politics DA (3/3)

<<card continues>> Thinking about the causes of proliferation more widely requires us to understand what drives weaker states to seek deterrents, if their reliance on them is to be reduced. For example, as Dr Alan J. Kuperman [observes](https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/libya/obamas-libya-debacle), NATO’s bombing and overthrow of Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi in 2011 ‘greatly complicated the task of persuading other states such as Iran and North Korea ‘to halt or reverse their nuclear programs’. The lesson Tehran and Pyongyang took is thus that because Gaddafi had voluntarily ended his nuclear and chemical weapons programmes, the West now felt free to pursue regime change. When assessing the importance of the Iran nuclear deal, which is often hailed as one of Obama’s landmark achievements, and which the next President must not be allowed to [derail](http://www.politico.com/story/2016/11/donald-trump-iran-nuclear-deal-231419), it is thus important also to consider carefully what behaviour by the most powerful states will enable existing or potential nuclear possessors to embrace disarmament and reduce their interest in seeking non-conventional deterrents. The inability of Washington to make substantial progress towards reducing the salience of nuclear weapons at home and abroad is all the more noteworthy when one considers the state of US and Russian public opinion on nuclear arms control and disarmament. As John Steinbrunner and Nancy Gallagher [observe](https://www.armscontrol.org/print/2615), ‘responses to detailed questions reveal a striking disparity between what U.S. and Russian leaders are doing and what their publics desire’. For example, their polling found that: At the most fundamental level, the vast majority of Americans and Russians think that nuclear weapons have a very limited role in current security circumstances and believe that their only legitimate purpose is to deter nuclear attack. It is highly consistent, then, that the publics in both countries would favor eliminating all nuclear weapons if this action could be taken under effective international verification. Another important measure which the US has failed to hitherto ratify is the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT). This is despite President Obama stating in 2009 that he [intended](https://www.ctbto.org/press-centre/press-releases/2009/ctbt-in-the-limelight-at-thecarnegie-conference-onnonproliferation/) to pursue Senate ratification of the treaty ‘immediately and aggressively’. Once more, there is notably strong public support–82% [according](https://www.thechicagocouncil.org/sites/default/files/Global%20Views%202010.pdf) to a 2010 poll by the Chicago Council on Global Affairs—for the US joining the CTBT but, again, the Republican-controlled Senate has [blocked](https://www.brookings.edu/blog/order-from-chaos/2016/09/26/whats-the-deal-with-senate-republicans-and-the-test-ban-treaty/) the treaty at every opportunity. Overall, the gap between the public’s will and the government’s inaction on nuclear issues is alarming and redolent of the wider democratic deficit in the US. On a more positive note, the fact that the citizenry supports such measures suggests that groups advocating arms control and disarmament initiatives should continue to engage with and understand the public’s positions in order to effectively harness their support. Stepping back from the brink In terms of priorities for the incoming administration in the US, stepping back from military confrontation with Russia and pushing the threat of nuclear war to the margins must be at the top of the list. Whilst much has been made of a potential rapprochement between Trump and Putin, the two have, [reportedly](https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2016/nov/14/vladimir-putin-donald-trump-phone-call), only just spoken for the first time on the phone and still need to actually meet in person to discuss strategic issues and deal with inevitable international events and crises, including in relation to Ukraine and Syria. As of now, whilst the mood music from both sides might suggest a warming of relations, as has been seen with previous administrations, unless cooperation is rooted in a real willingness to resolve problems (which for Russia includes US ballistic missile defense deployments in Eastern Europe and NATO expansion) then tensions can quickly re-emerge. Another related question concerns how Trump will conduct himself during any potential crisis or conflict with Russia or another major power, given the stakes and risks involved, as highlighted above. Whilst we must wait to find out precisely what the new administration’s approach to international affairs will be, in the past week, NATO’s Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg [told](http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/americas/donald-trump-nato-alliance-strongly-committed-u-turn-jens-stoltenberg-obsolete-a7435966.html) the BBC that he had been personally informed by Donald Trump, following the election, that the US remains ‘strongly committed to NATO, and that the security guarantees to Europe stand’. Trump had previously shaken sections of the defence and foreign policy establishment by [suggesting](http://cnnpressroom.blogs.cnn.com/2016/03/29/full-rush-transcript-donald-trump-cnn-milwaukee-republican-presidential-town-hall/) that NATO was ‘obsolete’ and that countries such as Japan (and by extension others such as South Korea and Saudi Arabia) ‘have to pay us or we have to let them protect themselves’, which could include them acquiring the bomb. One reason why some in Washington have, in the past, not wanted their regional allies to develop their own nuclear weapons is because the US might then become dragged into an escalating conflict. Moreover, if an ally in one region seeks the bomb, this may cause others elsewhere to pursue their own capabilities- an act of strategic independence that might make these states harder to influence and control. The US’s key relationships in East Asia and the Middle East illustrate why, if a future US President wishes to take meaningful moves towards a world free of nuclear weapons, then developing alternative regional political agreements, including strategic cooperation with China and Russia, will be necessary. As Nancy Gallagher rightly [notes](http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/10736700.2011.583121), the ‘weaknesses of existing international organizations’ thus requires ‘more inclusive, cooperative security institutions’ to be constructed regionally ‘to complement and someday, perhaps, to replace exclusive military alliances’, alongside progressive demilitarisation. Such confidence-building measures would also support efforts to halt missile and nuclear tests by states such as North Korea, which may soon be [capable](http://www.iiss.org/en/politics%20and%20strategy/blogsections/2016-d1f9/november-b3f2/on-trump-and-north-korea-762c#.WDhZZfh9rS4.twitter) of striking the US mainland. Imagining the next enemy As well as mapping out the US’s current nuclear weapons policies and its regional relationships, it is important to reflect upon how domestic political dynamics under a Trump presidency might drive Washington’s behaviour internationally, particularly given the nuclear shadow that always hangs over conflicts involving the US. For example, in the near-term, Trump’s economic plan and the great expectations amongst the American working class that have been generated, may have particularly dangerous consequences if, as seems likely, the primary beneficiaries are the very wealthy. Reviewing Trump’s economic plans, Martin Wolf of the Financial Times [concludes](https://www.ft.com/content/31b062e8-a842-11e6-8898-79a99e2a4de6) that ‘the longer-term consequences are likely to be grim, not least for his angry, but fooled, supporters. Next time, they might be even angrier. Where that might lead is terrifying’. Gillian Tett has also [highlighted](https://www.ft.com/content/606db7bc-acb5-11e6-9cb3-bb8207902122) the ‘real risks’ that Trump’s policies could ‘spark US social unrest or geopolitical uncertainty’. Elsewhere, George Monbiot in the Guardian, makes the stark [assertion](https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2016/nov/23/donald-trump-climate-change-war) that the inability of the US and other governments to respond effectively to public anger means he now believes that ‘we will see war between the major powers within my lifetime’. If these warnings weren’t troubling enough, no less a figure than Henry Kissinger [argued](http://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/b082r9wx/newsnight-trumps-america-a-newsnight-special) on BBC’s Newsnight that ‘the more likely reaction’ to a Trump presidency from terror groups ‘will be to do something that evokes a reaction’ from Washington in order to ‘widen the split’ between it and Europe and damage the US’s image around the world. Given that Trump has already vowed to ‘bomb the shit out of ISIS’ and [refused](http://thehill.com/policy/national-security/290538-nuke-fears-grow-over-trump) to rule out the use of nuclear weapons against the group, it goes without saying that such a scenario could have the gravest consequences and must be avoided so that the US does not play into the terrorists’ hands. Looking more widely, President-elect Trump’s existing and potential cabinet appointments, which Glenn Greenwald has [summarised](https://theintercept.com/2016/11/12/dissecting-a-trump-presidency/) as ‘empowering…by and large…the traditional, hard, hawkish right-wing members of the Republican Party’ also point to the US engaging in future overseas conflicts, rather than the isolationism which many in the foreign policy establishment criticised Trump for [proposing](http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2015/oct/26/donald-trumps-isolationist-foreign-policy-attacked/) during the presidential campaign. William Hartung and Todd Harrison have drawn [attention](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/william-hartung/trumps-pentagon-plan-coul_b_12085172.html) to the fact that defence spending under Trump could be almost $1trillion (spread over ten years) more than Obama’s most recent budget request. Such projections, alongside Trump’s election [rhetoric](http://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/statements/2015/jun/18/donald-trump/donald-trump-says-our-nuclear-arsenal-doesnt-work/), suggest that the new nuclear monarch will try to push wide open the door to more spending on nuclear weapons and missile defense, a situation made possible, as we have seen, by Obama’s inability to implement progressive change in this area at a time of persistent Republican obstruction. Conclusion The problem now, for the US and the world, is that if Trump does make good on his campaign promises then this will have several damaging consequences for international peace and security and that if Trump does not sufficiently satisfy his supporters then this will likely pour fuel on the flames at home, which may then quickly spread abroad. The people of the US and the world thus now have a huge responsibility to act as a restraining influence and ensure that the US retains an accountable, transparent and democratic government. This responsibility will only grow if crises or shocks take place in or outside the US which ambitious and extremist figures take advantage of, framing them as threats to national security in order to protect their interests and power. If such scenarios emerge the next administration and its untried and untested President will find themselves with a range of extremely powerful tools and institutional experience at their disposal, including nuclear weapons, which may prove too tempting to resist when figuring out how to respond to widespread anger, confusion and unrest, both at home and abroad.

## Uniqueness

### Base Support High – 2NC

#### Trump still has strong base support but it’s on the brink

Blake 8-27-17 (Aaron, senior political writer, "What if Trump ditched the GOP?" Washington Post) https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/the-fix/wp/2017/08/26/what-if-trump-ditched-the-gop/?utm\_term=.0a2686c07724

Those divisions already lie somewhat beneath the surface, but there are cracks starting to show in Trump's base (as Trump's own pollster has confirmed). Polls show between 75 and 80 percent of Republicans still approve of Trump, but some of that approval is soft, with slightly more than half of Republicans “strongly approving” — 53 percent in one poll and 61 percent in another. That seems about as good a measure of who might stick by Trump if he went the independent route, at least initially.

#### Base support high – Mueller provides cover from Russia scandal

Kudlow 5/19—(Larry, 5/19/17, “Don’t Bet against Tax and Health-Care Reform in 2017,” http://www.nationalreview.com/article/447817/donald-trump-and-gop-congress-will-get-tax-reform-done-despite-russia-probe, Accessed 6/23/17, HWilson)

Amid all the Russia controversy, Trump and the GOP Congress can get it done. If the smart-money folks on Wall Street think a special counsel to oversee the Russian probes spells defeat for business tax cuts, they’re leaning well over their skis. The market sold off over 300 points on Wednesday, but it may have come back to its senses with a 140-point gain on Friday. And while there’s never 100 percent probability in forecasting political risk, it seems the likelihood of health-care reform by the summer and tax reform by year end (or early 2018), is quite high. Paradoxically, special counsel Robert Mueller will provide cover for President Trump, as it will take him many months to complete his investigations. The leaks are going to dry up. By law, information on the probe must be protected. So whatever the outcome, Trump will have months without the attack headlines in which to sell his tax-cut plan. Meanwhile, amid all the controversies, the GOP Congress knows it could get whacked in next year’s midterms if it doesn’t govern. A big incentive. And Trump still has the backing of his core base, which is at least 40 percent of the electorate. These disenchanted voters may not agree with everything he says. But they still strongly believe Trump is their best chance to drain the swamp — to overturn the Beltway elites, to deliver border security, to improve trade deals, and to cut taxes and regulations to deliver the full-fledged, deeply rooted, sustainable prosperity we haven’t seen in 20 years. Warts and all, Trump and his polices is still their vote. (He needs to go out there and rally these folks.)

### Base Support High – 2NC

#### Trump’s popularity among base continues to grow despite media negativity

Schlafly 5/24. Andy, General Counsel for the Association of American Physicians & Surgeons, 5-24-2017, "Despite Record Reporting Bias, Trump’s Base Remains Solid," Townhall, https://townhall.com/columnists/andyschlafly/2017/05/24/despite-record-reporting-bias-trumps-base-remains-solid-n2330980 //saenl

A recent Harvard study confirms that there has been record-breaking reporting bias against President Donald Trump. An astounding 80% of the stories about Trump by the mainstream media during his first 100 days in office have been negative. The real story, however, is how Trump’s base remains solid, unfazed by the persistent media negativity. Trump’s approval rating has not fallen to the low ratings of former President George W. Bush and Vice President Dick Cheney, the prior Republicans in the White House. For many of Trump’s supporters, the unrelenting bias against him simply confirms the nature of the problem facing America. The swamp known as D.C. and their allies in the media are protesting too much, to paraphrase Shakespeare’s famous expression from Hamlet. Their hysteria against Trump underscores the urgency for someone to stand up against the entrenched interests in D.C. This unfolding battle reinforces how our country needs someone strong enough to get the job done against all odds. There are 206 counties that voted for Obama in 2008 and 2012 but then for Trump in 2016, which Ballotpedia calls “Pivot Counties.” Located in 34 states, these Pivot Counties comprised a total of 7.5 million votes in 2016, which was 5.5% of the electorate and provided the margin of difference for Trump to prevail. The Allott Brothers are studying a subset of these Pivot Counties as a project of the Washington Examiner. Their work illustrates that Trump’s most important support is not from the stereotypical rich white males as Trump’s detractors pretend. On Monday Daniel Allott released his analysis of Robeson County, North Carolina, which switched from voting for Obama in both of his elections to voting for Trump last November. It is the state’s largest county, and was one of the six Pivot Counties in North Carolina that went from thoroughly blue to bright red, i.e., from Democrat to Republican, thereby enabling Trump to carry the state. Obama had carried Robeson County by a landslide margin of 17 points in 2012, but then Trump carried it by 4 points in 2016. That is a 21-point swing in just four years. Robeson County, like many of the Pivot Counties, is awash in poverty and what Daniel Allott calls “cultural despair.” Prior to Trump, a Republican presidential candidate had not won the county since 1972. Robeson County is not overwhelmingly white in race as one might mistakenly think. To the contrary, Robeson County is racially diverse, with more than half of its voters either American Indian or African American. It has been devastated by the loss of manufacturing jobs, and its average income is only $30,000 today, far less than the national average. This is one of hundreds of counties in the United States which has been ravaged by the so-called “free trade” that deprives Americans of good jobs while enriching Wall Street. Two-thirds of our country contains at least one Pivot County, and the biggest clusters of them are in Iowa and Maine. Pennsylvania, Wisconsin, Michigan, and Illinois all have their share of these counties too. Equally telling are the states that have no Pivot Counties, where voters are so locked into the Democratic machine that not even a charismatic candidate like Trump can dislodge the grip. Liberal strongholds of California, Massachusetts, and Nevada, for example, did not have a single county that switched from Obama to Trump. Western Pennsylvania is the region perhaps most crucial to the presidential election in 2020, as the prize of 20 electoral college votes from that state is difficult to make up elsewhere. When it became apparent that Trump had won Pennsylvania last November, the keys to the White House were his. Trump’s popularity in Western Pennsylvania has even increased amid all the media-bashing of his presidency. A 60-year-old Democrat from the area, Robert “R.J.” Sokol, was quoted recently as saying “I think he's doing what he thinks is best for the country.” Sokol is a supervisor at a chemical plant, so he knows a thing or two about the need for manufacturing jobs. As to Trump’s firing of FBI Director James Comey, Sokol said, “This country needs a shake-up.” Statewide, Trump’s approval rating in Pennsylvania has risen nearly to that of its Democratic Senator Bob Casey, who is up for reelection. Given that Democrats have an advantage of nearly one million registered voters more than Republicans in Pennsylvania, it is phenomenal that Trump does so well there as a Republican, and Trump’s approval rating has even improved significantly there since he took office. A Washington Post poll reveals that 96% of Trump voters would cast their ballots for him again, while only 85% of Hillary voters would. The more Trump is unfairly disparaged by the elite, the more his supporters rightly stand by their man.

### Base Support High – 2NC

#### Base support holding steady

Balz and Clement 4/23/2017 (Dan Balz is Chief Correspondent at the Washington Post, Scott Clement is Polling Manager for the Washington Post, “Nearing 100 days, Trump’s approval at record lows but his base is holding”, The Washington Post, April 23, 2017, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/nearing-100-days-trumps-approval-at-record-lows-but-his-base-is-holding/2017/04/22/a513a466-26b4-11e7-b503-9d616bd5a305_story.html?hpid=hp_hp-top-table-main_poll-1202am%3Ahomepage%2Fstory&utm_term=.467a71919c66>, accessed 6/27/2017, \*LD)

President Trump nears the 100-day mark of his administration as the least popular chief executive in modern times, a president whose voters remain largely satisfied with his performance, but one whose base of support has not expanded since he took the oath of office, according to a new Washington Post-ABC News poll. Trump’s first months in office have produced some tangible successes. Beyond the continued enthusiasm of his most loyal supporters, a small majority of Americans see him as a strong leader. A bigger majority approves of his efforts to pressure U.S. companies to keep jobs in this country. Those who say the economy is getting better outnumber those who say it’s getting worse by the biggest margin in 15 years in Post-ABC polling.

#### Support is currently rock solid

Collins 4/23. Kaitlan, White House Correspondent for the Daily Caller, 4-23-2017, "Only Two Percent Of People Regret Voting For Donald Trump," Daily Caller, <http://dailycaller.com/2017/04/23/only-two-percent-of-people-regret-voting-for-donald-trump/> //saenl

Donald Trump’s base is rock-solid. According to the results of the latest poll from the Washington Post, only two percent of his supporters regret voting for him last November. At least ninety-six percent of those surveyed still believe it was the right thing to do. Though Trump’s approval rating in the Washington Post poll is 42 percent — the lowest recorded at this stage of a presidency since Dwight Eisenhower was in office — the number above shows that support from his base hasn’t wavered. That same poll — which surveyed 1,004 adults nationwide — also found that 73 percent of voters support Trump pressuring companies to keep jobs in the United States.

### Base Support High – A2: Broken Promises

#### Trump is perceived as fulfilling base promises now – Paris media attention proves

Matthews 6/1/2017 (Susan Matthews is, “The Planet’s Loss Is Trump’s Gain”, Slate, June 1, 2017, http://www.slate.com/articles/news\_and\_politics/politics/2017/06/trump\_doesn\_t\_care\_about\_america\_earth\_anyone\_but\_  
himself.html, accessed 6/25/2017, \*LD)

It is unfortunate how shortsighted the president is, because the government is supposed to be able to take the longer view. Taking the long view to create sustainable solutions to problems—think our interstate highway system, the railroads, or public investment in medical research—is actually good strategy when you have the credit and money to do it, which the United States government does. The Paris Agreement was not perfect, but it at least attempted to start the world down this path. In announcing that he would withdraw, Trump’s message was extremely clear: America is not interested in sacrificing anything, even dead industries, to create a better future. We will not yield. We deserve everything now, later be damned. This is particularly sad because most Americans actually do want a better future. In March last year, 64 percent of Americans said they were worried “a great deal or fair amount” about climate change, an eight-year high. Seven out of 10 Americans thought we should stay in the Paris Agreement. In general, Americans recognize that things are going south with the environment—69 percent think that climate change ­­is either already harming people or will harm people in the next few years. While some may still have a hard time using the words climate change because of how politicized the science on it has become in this country, programs to increase “resilience”—the new neutral code word for the fight against climate change—are on the upswing. In the end, as Alex Kaufman noted in the Huffington Post on Wednesday, Trump’s decision elevated his personal ideology above not only what’s right, but what’s popular. Trump’s short-term-ism extends beyond the economic lens to the even shorter-term goal of scoring a political win. “For an embattled president,” Kaufman wrote, “it does do one thing: It fulfills a campaign promise popular with his base.” In fact, immediately after the announcement, Trump sent out an email to supporters with the subject line “Promise Kept—Paris Climate Deal,” accompanied with video of parts of Thursday’s speech, stamped with another big red “promise kept” sign.

### Base Support High – A2: Charlottesville

#### Trump still has base support – Charlottesville remarks won’t affect it

Atkins 8-18-17 (Dennis, national affairs editor, "Opinion: Donald Trump’s support base unwavering in face of crises" Courier Mail) [www.couriermail.com.au/news/opinion/opinion-donald-trumps-support-base-unwavering-in-face-of-crises/news-story/be96b706c8c1dba7cb3f48080946cff1](http://www.couriermail.com.au/news/opinion/opinion-donald-trumps-support-base-unwavering-in-face-of-crises/news-story/be96b706c8c1dba7cb3f48080946cff1)

IN THE whirlwind of talk about race, hate and violence in the United States following last weekend’s deadly riots in Charlottesville, Virginia, one remark stood out, cutting to the quick of the politics at play. Steve Bannon, the rumpled counsellor to President Donald Trump and former boss of the Right-wing propaganda news outlet Breitbart, said the important thing was not what the white supremacists did but how the Democratic Party responded. “The Democrats, the longer they talk about identity politics, I got ’em,” said Bannon, talking to the American Prospect magazine. “I want them to talk about racism every day. If the Left is focused on race and identity and we go with economic nationalism, we can crush the Democrats.” This is brutal political calculus spelt out in a way seldom seen. Bannon also mocked the so-called “alt-Right” (a term he sometimes claims credit for) which massed on the streets of Charlottesville. “Ethno-nationalism – it’s losers,” he scoffed. “It’s a fringe element. “I think the media plays it up too much, and we gotta help crush it, you know, uh, help crush it more. “These guys are a collection of clowns.” This won’t play well for Bannon in his and Trump’s heartland – although these voters seem to be some of the most forgiving ever seen. In many cases, these executive actions and announcements do not actually lead to anything. They rub up against reality and the legal system but for Donald Trump (left) and Steve Bannon (right) that doesn’t matter. It sends the right message to the base. Photo: AFP However, it’s important to study Bannon’s remarks in the context of not just what Trump said in the wake of Charlottesville, when he equivocated and gave moral equivalence to fascists and anti-fascists, but also in how he won the white working-class voters and works to keep them. Let’s not forget, Trump carved out his political place on the national stage by challenging the birthright of the United States’ first African American president, Barack Obama. He continued this for years and only gave up in the dying days of the presidential campaign last year, by which time he had a lock on the votes of whites who felt alienated, anxious and angry. Questions about whether Trump is achieving anything or whether the Russian scandal amounts to anything don’t rate in the suburbs and rural towns where the President still rides high. One of Trump’s earliest actions was his travel ban, which was clearly aimed at Muslims and, despite the legal hurdles it has had to navigate, keeps him popular in the heartland. While Immigration and Customs Enforcement troops have been raiding Hispanic communities and ripping families apart, funding for sanctuary cities – major American metropolises that provide welcoming shelter to illegal immigrants – has been slashed. Also playing to this base are voter suppression measures such as the current election integrity commission, which looks and acts like an assault on the rights of minorities. The rights agenda has also taken a beating from Trump’s reversal of the Obama policy to allow transgender military personnel to serve, and, most recently, by Attorney-General Jeff Sessions’ moves to wind back affirmative action admissions for colleges. In many cases, these executive actions and announcements do not actually lead to anything. They rub up against reality and the legal system, but for Trump and Bannon, that doesn’t matter. It sends the right message to the base and gets the Democrats worked up about identity politics, forcing them to defend people and positions that are unpopular in the general community. These people are fighting demography, and they are not going to give up.

### Base Support High – A2: Russia Scandal

#### Russia scandal won’t hurt Trump with his base

Edwards-Levy 7-13-17 (Ariel, staff reporter and polling director, “Majority Thinks Trump Jr.’s Meeting Was Inappropriate, Poll Finds" Huffington Post) [www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/trump-jr-russia-poll\_us\_5967a821e4b0a0c6f1e6dd8a?u71](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/trump-jr-russia-poll_us_5967a821e4b0a0c6f1e6dd8a?u71)

HUFFPOST While stories about the Trump campaign’s alleged ties to Russia during the 2016 election have repeatedly dominated the news cycle, they have more or less failed to move the needle on public sentiment about the issue, including after the latest development involving Trump Jr. Forty-six percent of the public considers the Trump administration’s relationship with Russia “a legitimate issue,” entirely unchanged from the percentage who said so in a survey taken last week, before the newest story broke. Those who consider the administration’s Moscow ties to be a very serious problem (34 percent) or to be at least a somewhat serious problem (48 percent) are also little changed from what polls have shown since this spring. HUFFPOST Views about the Trump administration’s Russia connections remain deeply segmented along political lines, with Trump voters largely unbothered by the issue, Clinton voters almost universally outraged and the rest of the nation concerned, but paying relatively little attention. Even among Trump voters who think that the meeting was inappropriate or who aren’t sure about its propriety, just 24 percent consider the administration’s Russia ties to be even a somewhat serious problem. The latest controversy also doesn’t seem to have affected Trump’s overall approval rating, which stands at an average of 41 percent as of Thursday afternoon, close to where it’s been since June. Russia continues to rank relatively low on the public’s list of priorities. Twelve percent of Americans currently name Trump’s relationship with Moscow as one of the two issues most important to them, ranking it behind health care (49 percent), the economy (37 percent) and immigration (20 percent), and on par with the environment (13 percent) and the way things work in Washington (12 percent).

### A2: Uniqueness Overwhelms Link

#### The margin is thin – Trump’s decision on Paris, the Russia scandal, and health care prove Trump’s base support does waver

Boehlert 6/13. Eric, Senior Fellow for Media Matters, 6-13-2017, "It’s time to puncture the media myth about Trump’s unwavering base," <https://www.mediamatters.org/blog/2017/06/13/it-s-time-puncture-media-myth-about-trump-s-unwavering-base/216886> //saenl

Like Wonder Woman’s Amazonian shield, President Donald Trump’s loyal base of supporters has magical powers to protect the new president from peril -- at least according to the Beltway press. It’s his loyal base that supposedly gives Trump so much cover and allows him to embrace a deeply radical agenda. The theory holds that regardless of how Democratic and independent voters view Trump (and they overwhelmingly view him unfavorably), as long as Trump maintains the support of his strongest political backers, his support is “stable” -- he “has held onto the support of the voters who put him in the White House,” and his base is "steady." “President Donald Trump is banking on his loyal base of supporters to help him through the tangle of the Russia turmoil,” The Associated Press reported last week, in the latest round of base coverage. Over and over, we see the media suggesting that because Trump’s “base” is standing with him, he can likely weather all storms. Even if emerging evidence doesn’t support the claim. That mythical pull of the Trump base is why so many journalists have spent so much time interviewing his supporters this year, especially journalists at The New York Times, who have relentlessly focused on Trump’s most ardent backers. Indeed, the press’s obsession with Trump’s base has emerged as one of the oddest political press trends this year. Again and again, political events are viewed through the prism of Trump’s base. Following the recent deadly terror attack in London and Trump’s inexplicable attack on the mayor of London, ABC’s Rick Klein wrote, “The president's aim – again – is his base.” So it persists, this odd, sustained narrative that no matter what Trump does, no matter how erratic he acts or how radical his initiatives, he’ll always have a rock-solid base to support him because he enjoys an almost superhuman loyalty among them. While Trump definitely has a core group of followers who are ensconced in the president’s propaganda media bubble and will seemingly stick by his side no matter what he does, the press overstates the size and influence of that group of people. In recent weeks, some cracks in Trump’s support have emerged surrounding three crucial issues: Russia, climate change, and health care. To date, a handful of media commentators have noticed the trend. But the myth of Trump’s all-obedient base, and the supposed political cover that grants him, really needs to be more broadly punctured. For starters, the Trump base just isn’t big enough to exert any defining clout, at least not to the extent all the hype would suggest. And it’s certainly not big enough to ensure Trump’s political success. Just in terms of electoral math, “Trump can hang on to most — if not all — of his base, and Democrats could still clean up in the midterm elections,” Harry Enten recently argued at FiveThirtyEight. Enten noted that having lost the popular vote, Trump began his presidency with an unusually small base. As he explained: The GOP’s problem again comes back to Trump’s base being relatively small to begin with compared to the base support of past presidents. The latest poll from YouGov, for example, shows 88 percent of respondents who said they voted for Trump approve of his job performance. But 88 percent of the 46 percent of 2016 voters who chose Trump is just 40 percent. Overall, the YouGov survey found 54 percent of registered voters disapprove of Trump so far. If every person who currently disapproves of Trump’s job performance voted against the Republican Party’s House candidates in 2018, Democrats would almost certainly take control of the chamber. Not exactly a sweeping mandate. Meanwhile, FiveThirtyEight founder Nate Silver argued in a May piece that there has been “a considerable decline in the number of Americans who strongly approve of Trump, from a peak of around 30 percent in February to just 21 or 22 percent of the electorate now.” And it’s not just a shift in the voters who strongly approve. Look at Ipsos/Reuters polling that has tracked Trump’s approval rating among Republican voters this year. Back in February, the poll found that 85 percent of Republicans supported Trump. Most recently, that number had dipped to 75 percent. For a base that’s advertised by the press as being impossible to move off its pro-Trump positions, note that just 67 percent of Republicans support Trump’s decision to withdraw the United States from the Paris climate accord. <<card continues>>

### A2: Uniqueness Overwhelms Link

<<card continues>> And 31 percent of Republicans think “more needs to be done to address climate change,” while 49 percent are very or somewhat concerned about climate change, according to a recent Quinnipiac poll. Meanwhile, 35 percent are very or somewhat concerned about Trump’s relationship with Russia. Nearly the same percentage of Republicans think the alleged Russian interference in the 2016 election is a very important or somewhat important issue. A hefty 63 percent approve of the appointment of Robert Mueller to investigate any possible coordination between President Trump's campaign and the Russian government, while 47 percent support an independent commission to investigate the same sprawling scandal. (All via Qunnipiac.) As for health care, only 42 percent of Republicans approve of the Republicans' signature health care plan that was passed by the House and is now being reviewed by the Senate, and just 49 percent support proposed federal funding cuts for Medicaid. That lack of Republican support is why, overall, the Republican health care plan receives such abysmal ratings: View image on Twitter View image on Twitter Follow Fox News ✔ @FoxNews Poll: View of the American Health Care Act. 1:14 PM - 9 Jun 2017 7,910 7,910 Retweets 12,635 12,635 likes Twitter Ads info and privacy Elsewhere, a majority of GOP voters say Trump tweets too much. And nearly one-third think it is inappropriate that Trump’s son-in-law, Jared Kushner, plays a significant role in the White House. These are definitely not the numbers of a president who enjoys a political backstop of supporters who will buttress his every move indefinitely.

#### His base is optimistic – but they’re not diehard

Foran 1/20. Claran. Foran is an associate editor at The Atlantic. “The Optimism and Anxiety of Trump Voters.” January 20, 2017 https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2017/01/trump-inauguration-popularity-voters-approval/513602/

Interviews with Trump voters as well as recent polling data suggest that his supporters feel optimistic about the future and have high expectations for his presidency. There are indications, however, that a significant segment of Trump’s coalition is not entirely enchanted with his actions or public persona, while other Trump voters remain skeptical of the power of the incoming administration to improve the quality of life in America.

### A2: Uniqueness Overwhelms Link

#### Trump’s base is deep but narrow – there’s no cushion of goodwill

McManus 2/1. McManus, Doyle. Columnist at LA Times, "Trump has no cushion of goodwill," https://www.abqjournal.com/939980/trump-shouldnt-overlook-the-benefits-of-goodwill.html

By most mainstream accounts, President Trump’s first week in office was chaotic, dominated by needless arguments over inauguration crowds, mythical millions of illegal voters and a Twitter fight with the president of Mexico. That’s how it looked to many of us, anyway. But there’s a counter-narrative out there, too, among Trump supporters and on conservative media outlets such as Fox News and Breitbart. To the Trump faithful, the real news is that the president is doing what they wanted: He’s keeping his campaign promises. Consider this a list of “alternative facts,” if you want – except in this case, the facts are real. Trump jawboned U.S. companies to stop exporting jobs and persuaded some to promise new jobs at home. He formally withdrew from President Obama’s 12-country trade deal with Asia, the Trans-Pacific Partnership. He reaffirmed his intention to build a wall on the border with Mexico, banned refugee admissions from Syria and ordered “extreme vetting” for would-be refugees from other countries. He instructed federal agencies to minimize any effort to make Obamacare work. He removed obstacles to the Keystone XL and Dakota access pipelines, and ordered that they be built with American steel. Not bad for five business days. Other things went well, too, and got even less attention. All Trump’s Cabinet picks appear to be headed toward confirmation in the Senate, even though they suffered through rough hearings. That’s unusual; President Obama lost three nominees in his first months. And at their policy summit in Philadelphia, the Republican leaders of Congress sang Trump’s praises, even though many of them differ with him on important issues from trade agreements to reining in the federal deficit. For the moment, the president is fully in charge of his own party. There’s a practical reason for that. “He is more popular in most Republican districts than any other Republican,” noted John Feehery, a Republican strategist. “Republican leaders have no choice but to listen to their new president because their constituents demand it.” Indeed, only one week in, there’s evidence that Trump has deepened his support among Republican voters. A Quinnipiac Poll released Thursday found Trump’s job approval among all Americans at an anemic 36 percent, a result far worse than any incoming president in modern history. But inside the survey was a striking contradictory trend: Trump’s rating has actually improved among Republicans since his inauguration. Two weeks ago, the same poll found that 76 percent of Republicans approved of the job Trump was doing; now that number is at 81 percent. Among Democrats, his rating sank from 10 percent to a barely measurable 4 percent. Now that he’s in office, in other words, Trump is alienating yet more Democrats, but solidifying his hold on Republicans. Over the short run, that may be all Trump and his strategists need. A strong base of Republican support will help the president keep GOP members of Congress in line. But to succeed over the long run, Trump will have to appeal to a larger share of Americans. Trump won the presidential election mainly because he poached just enough “Trump Democrats,” working class white voters in states like Michigan and Wisconsin, to prevail in the electoral vote. Henry Olsen, a conservative scholar at the Ethics and Public Policy Center, told me that Trump must find a way to add those voters more durably to his coalition. “He’s not talking to the voters who said, I’m not sure about him, but I don’t like Hillary,” Olsen said. “He’s still narrowcasting to the minority of true believers.” Of course, it’s far too early to judge how the Trump presidency will look four years from now. “Ultimately this is about governing,” former House Speaker Newt Gingrich told The New York Times. “There are two things he’s got to do between now and 2020: He has to keep America safe and create a lot of jobs. … If he does those two things, everything else is noise.” Gingrich is right: Nothing succeeds like success. The furors over crowd sizes and phantom voters will soon be forgotten – unless, of course, Trump insists on keeping them alive. Trump’s first week suggests that he may well manage, with the help of a pliant Congress, to implement much of his agenda. But he will be operating with a handicap: a base that’s deep but narrow. If he runs into trouble – from misjudgment or bad luck – he has no cushion of goodwill.

### A2: Uniqueness Overwhelms Link – Media Echo Chamber

#### The echo chamber isn’t permanent – Trump’s right-wing media support is already unraveling

Burnett 6/16. Bob, retired Silicon Valley executive; best known as a founder of Cisco Systems, an American multinational technology worth 49.24 billion USD, 6-16-2017, "When Will Trump Lose His Base?," HuffPost, <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/when-will-trump-lose-his-base_us_5943d6c6e4b024b7e0df4b02> //saenl

After the Trump White House careened through another terrible week, Washington insiders wonder how long Trump can survive. The answer is: as long as he holds his base. Trump and his voters are locked in a deadly embrace: his base desperately wants to believe he will address their grievances and Trump is willing to lie to keep their support. In her latest insightful Trump analysis, in the New York Review, Elizabeth Drew observed, “Trump is, for all his deep flaws, in some ways a cannier politician than [former President] Nixon; he knows how to lie to his people to keep them behind him ... People can have a hard time recognizing that they’ve been conned. And Trump is skilled at flimflam, creating illusions.” Despite Trump’s “flimflam,” his approval ratings steadily decline. FiveThirtyEight finds that 56 percent disapprove of the job trump is doing versus 38 percent that approve. Nonetheless, 82 percent of Republicans approve of Trump. Elizabeth Drew asks the question that most Trump opponents have been pondering: “When, or will, Trump’s voters realize that he isn’t delivering on his promises, that his health care and tax proposals will help the wealthy at their expense, that he isn’t producing the jobs he claims?” There are four factors that determine Trump’s base support: the first is his health. Donald is 71, overweight, with a poor attitude towards food, sleep, and exercise. During his recent overseas junket, his staff described him as “exhausted.” (Trump is limiting further trips because of the exhaustion.) During a sojourn in Italy, Trump wasn’t able to walk to a restaurant with other world leaders and travelled the short distance in a golf cart. Some of Trump’s erratic behavior could be the result of poor physical health. If his health deteriorates further ― for example, he is unable to travel overseas or to attend campaign rallies ― then Trump will be labeled as “weak,” “frail,” “incompetent,” and “pathetic.” The second factor that could impact Trump’s support is media coverage. While the mainstream media (MSNBC, CNN, New York Times, Washington Post...) has reported adversely on Trump’s behavior, the right-wing media (Fox, Breitbart...) has been supportive. (When Trump said he was “vindicated” by James Comey’s testimony before the Senate Intelligence Committee, the mainstream media scoffed but the right-wing media echoed Trump’s sentiments.) What could cause the right-wing media to shift? Elizabeth Drew noted that Trump is a “cannier” politician than Nixon. “He can ... make use of social media, Fox News, and friendly talk shows to keep [his base] loyal.” Trump has the ability to dominate the daily news by means of a tweet or a call to a conservative talk-show host. However, as the Trump-Russia investigation has accelerated he has lost some of this advantage. (For example, during the week of June 5th the news was dominated by James Comey not by Donald Trump.) If Trump continues to fail to perform ― if, for example, the Senate is unable to make progress on health care ― or if evidence of his physical limitations becomes more obvious, then the right-wing media will turn on him.

## Links

### Link – CTE

#### CTE funding causes Trump base backlash – K-12 trades off with workforce retraining

Hansen 2016 – Michael Hansen, The Herman and George R. Brown Chair and Director - Brown Center on Education PolicySenior Fellow - Governance Studies (“2016: The education election nobody saw coming,” https://www.brookings.edu/blog/brown-center-chalkboard/2016/12/27/2016-the-education-election-nobody-saw-coming/) bhb

And while these discussions about college are worthwhile to have, they likely do not resonate with people in Trump’s core areas of support. These include voters in rural communities, who may view higher education with ambiguity – a boon in human capital for the community as long as those pursuing it, in fact, return to the community. Similarly, voters in communities adversely affected by trade would probably be happier to see greater interest in helping mid-or late-career adults learn new skills for other industries, rather than making sure that young adults can avoid tuition. The U.S. Department of Education under the Obama administration has made some strides in promoting vocational and technical education, but these efforts were probably too little too late. And one could argue they’ve focused more on helping minorities see opportunity in STEM fields and less on helping struggling adults in the country. Though there were plenty of other important issues that framed both the campaign and election results in 2016, education now takes on greater importance in hindsight. Taken together, all of these arguments make me think that perhaps education turned out to be a key issue hiding in plain sight.

**Link – Desegregation**

**Executive desegregation policies spark massive controversy**

**Finn, 2-16**-2017, (Chester E Finn, Jr Senior fellow at the Hoover Institute, Stanford University, President Emeritus @ Fordham University) "Should Trump Bother with an Education Agenda?," Journal of School Choice Vol 11(1), http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/15582159.2016.1272901, ach

Legislation and bully pulpit aside, the Trump team faces plenty of opportunities on the regulatory and deregulatory front, not just in sanely implementing programs like ESSA and IDEA without constraining state flexibility but also—especially—in the civil rights realm. There the Education Department Office for Civil Rights (OCR), often teamed up with the Justice Department, has gone wild in pushing schools and districts around, via both formal regulations and menacing “dear colleague” letters, in far-flung realms from student discipline to bathroom access. OCR has long been in the hands of zealots committed both to “progressive” social policies and to such appalling doctrines as “disparate impact” (whereby an even-handed policy or practice is suspect if the results of its application vary by race, gender, whatever). This won’t be an easy omelet to unscramble, especially in today’s hyper-racialized climate of mistrust and even violence, but there’s no part of federal education policy in greater need of redirection—and none that is more subject to unilateral action by the executive branch.

### Link – Education Funding

#### Increasing funding causes base backlash – violates GOP education strategy

Ulrich Boser, 3-6-2017, fellow at the Center for American Progress, "Education policy fights don’t focus enough on teaching and learning," ThinkProgress, https://thinkprogress.org/its-the-classroom-stupid-education-reform-needs-to-focus-on-teaching-and-learning-c5f67457ba7c, DOA 6-26-2017, //GCN

For their part, Republicans have a set of education issues that do well with their base. If a GOP policymaker comes into office, they’ll talk about free markets and promote vouchers and tax credits. In contrast, Democrats talk about opportunity and advocate for more school funding, new academic programs, and free college. Whatever the merits of these policy proposals — and there are many — they generally overlook the nature of teaching and learning. They ignore the growing body of science on how people best acquire new skills and knowledge. Textbook reform is a great example: In my research with colleagues, I’ve found that curriculum changes can provides tremendous gains for students. Indeed, switching textbooks can provide the same academics gains as moving from an average teacher to a great teacher. But policymakers rarely use textbooks as a lever to improve teaching and learning. What’s worse, the polarized nature of today’s politics works to corrode the few efforts that might actually improve classroom practice. Consider the Common Core standards. In the early years of the initiative, policymakers on the left and right praised the effort to create a common set of academic expectations. Many believed that the standards would help instruction by defining clear academics goals for students. But the standards soon became another political football. Many Republicans began attacking the Common Core, arguing it was “government overreach,” and public opinion soon began to dip. This meant that many teachers didn’t get enough training, and some educators still feel like they lack instructional support for the new academic expectations, according to a recent study. The media is to blame, too, and reporters are often more interested in political debates than covering better ways for teachers to teach. I recently finished a book on the new research on learning, and sometimes I had a hard time pitching the topic to education reporters. Indeed, one journalist told me that I should pitch the book to the science desk instead of the education desk. It’s easier to pass a law than change the culture of a classroom, and efforts to improve teaching and learning are difficult endeavors. It’s a matter of shifting day-to-day practice, and that means a lot of time and training. Instructional reforms also require political capital, as policymakers have to defend curricular shifts. Some policymakers have taken up the cause. States like New York have helped develop next-generation instructional tools, while Louisiana has been evaluating curricula to help educators sort the textbook wheat from the textbook chaff. A few years ago, the American Federation of Teachers began an online effort to support better curricula, while, my employer, the Center for American Progress, created a thoughtful campaign to professionalize the teaching workforce called TeachStrong.

### Link – Federal Regulation

#### Trump’s supporters rally around states’ rights – his base rests on a revival of traditional republicanism and southern pride that revolts against federal control

Jones 16. Robert P., CEO of the Public Religion Research Institute and writer for the Atlantic, 8-14-2016, "How Donald Trump Remixed the Republican 'Southern Strategy'," Atlantic, https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2016/08/how-trump-remixed-the-republican-southern-strategy/495719/ //saenl

Trump seems to have missed the memo. His anti-immigrant and anti-Muslim stances, along with his waffling denunciation of white supremacists like David Duke and insensitivity to concerns about the police killings of unarmed black Americans, are the antithesis of the big-tent recommendations of the Republican establishment. Trump has developed a reputation for being un-strategic, and it’s certainly true that he tends to be pulled forward by his own off-the-cuff reactions to slights or his late-night Twitter impulses. But, particularly over the past two months, Trump’s campaign seems less like a haphazard effort, and more like a deliberate and conscious attempt to resurrect these discarded GOP tactics, recasting them for the current moment. One glaring, underreported clue about the method behind the post-primary Trump madness is his selection of Paul Manafort as chair of his national campaign. Manafort’s appointment, followed by the ousting of Corey Lewandowski in June, was widely seen as a move to professionalize Trump’s disorganized campaign staff just ahead of the convention. But along with credentials earned from working with top GOP politicians (and a raft of international dictators from the Philippines to Somalia), Manafort also brought decades of experience as an overseer of the Southern Strategy. Since the 1980s, Manafort’s business partners have included Charles Black, who helped launch the Senate career of outspoken segregationist Jessie Helms, and Lee Atwater, who was behind the infamously racist Willie Horton ads run by the George H. W. Bush campaign. And it was Manafort who arranged for Ronald Reagan to kick off his post-convention presidential campaign at the Neshoba County Fair just outside of Philadelphia, Mississippi, where three young civil rights workers were brutally murdered in 1964. In his relatively short speech, Reagan declared, “I believe in state’s rights…And I believe that we’ve distorted the balance of our government today by giving powers that were never intended in the constitution to that federal establishment. And if I do get the job I'm looking for, I'm going to devote myself to trying to reorder those priorities and to restore to the states and local communities those functions which properly belong there.” To the all-white audience at the Neshoba County Fair, still simmering about a host of federal civil rights interventions, the location of the speech and the language of “states’ rights” sent an unmistakable message about restoring an imbalance of power in their favor. Trump’s campaign seems…like a deliberate and conscious attempt to resurrect these discarded GOP tactics. Notably, all eight of the men who were convicted of involvement in these murders would have been free to attend Reagan’s speech. Seven were convicted in 1967, but the longest jail sentence any of them served was six years, and the person who orchestrated the murders—a Baptist preacher named Edgar Ray Killen—was not convicted until the case was reopened in 2005. As in much of the South, the inability of courts in Mississippi to seat juries that would carry out meaningful justice for the perpetrators of these murders is a good indication of racial attitudes that persisted even late into the 20th century. Given this background, Manafort’s presence also helps explain the somewhat abrupt turn Trump took in his convention speech to claim the mantle of “the law and order candidate.” Early in his sprawling 75-minute convention speech, Trump talked about threats to “our way of life” and made this dramatic claim: “I have a message for all of you: the crime and violence that today afflicts our nation will soon—and I mean very soon—come to an end. Beginning on January 20th 2017, safety will be restored.” These messages could have been ripped almost directly from the speeches of Richard Nixon, the original “states rights” and “law and order” candidate, who polished George Wallace’s overtly racist appeals for mainstream use in the Republican campaign playbook. And here is one more clue about just how much life this resurrected strategy may yet have in it, at least among Trump’s core supporters. <<card continues>>

### Link – Federal Regulation

<<card continues>> A survey by the Public Religion Research Institute, of which I’m the CEO, conducted just after Trump declared his candidacy in the fall of 2015, asked Americans whether they see the Confederate flag more as a symbol of southern pride or as a symbol of racism. More than three-quarters of Republicans, including 83 percent of white working-class Republicans, reported that they see the Confederate flag more as a symbol of southern pride, compared to more than six in ten Democrats who said they see it more as a symbol of racism. To be sure, Trump has not simply exhumed and dusted off the old Southern Strategy. He has characterized illegal immigrants rather than black Americans as a threat to white women’s safety. And he has redirected the Christian Right’s focus away from its preoccupation with a “godless Communism.” In its place, Trump has exploited the perception of Islam’s growing power abroad against a backdrop of genuinely declining white Christian influence at home, where the U.S. finds itself for the first time a minority white Christian nation. And, significantly—in a demonstration of just how successful the old strategy was—he’s discarded the dog whistle in favor of a bull horn. Despite the efforts of RNC leaders to move on, Trump’s campaign is demonstrating how difficult it may be to disavow decades of cultural investment. Trump’s unlikely success with these old tactics is demonstrating William Faulkner famous aphorism: “The past is never dead. It’s not even past.”

#### Eliminating the federal role is a key campaign promise

Newman 12-7-16 (Alex, Alex Newman is an international journalist, educator and consultant. He has a degree in journalism from the University of Florida and has worked for numerous publications in the U.S. and abroad. He is co-author of the book "Crimes of the Educators: How Utopians Are Using Government Schools to Destroy America's Children.", "Trump Team Touts “National Standards” After Opposing Common Core," The New American, <https://www.thenewamerican.com/culture/education/item/24794-after-local-control-talk-trump-team-touts-national-standards>) //dgd

While some of Donald Trump’s appointments so far have been celebrated by his supporters, the president-elect’s nominee for U.S. education secretary, Betsy DeVos (shown), has raised serious concerns, even among Trump’s most loyal backers. From concerns about her involvement with pro-Common Core organizations and establishment figures, to growing doubts about whether President-elect Trump’s administration intends to follow through on pursuing candidate Trump’s call for shutting down the unconstitutional U.S. Department of Education, the controversy has only grown in recent days. Trump’s team even said in a statement that it was pursuing “higher national standards.” DeVos has tried to ease concerns by speaking out against Common Core, and some conservative education leaders have called for giving her a chance. Others have vowed to fight her nomination to the end. On the campaign trail, Trump was crystal clear in his opposition to Common Core. “Common Core is a total disaster,” he said in a video during the election. “We can't let it continue.” In a separate video, he vowed to end the radical scheme, which is being used to nationalize and even globalize American education. “We’re going to end Common Core, we’re going to have education an absolute priority,” Trump promised. In one of many, similar comments, Trump also suggested he would work to shut down the unconstitutional U.S. Department of Education. “A lot of people believe the Department of Education should just be eliminated. Get rid of it,” Trump said. “If we don't eliminate it completely, we certainly need to cut its power and reach.” The solution, he suggested, would be to go back to what the Constitution explicitly requires — absolutely no federal role. “Education has to be run locally,” Trump said. “Common Core, No Child Left Behind, and Race to the Top are all programs that take decisions away from parents and local school boards. These programs allow the progressives in the Department of Education to indoctrinate, not educate, our kids. What they are doing does not fit the American model of governance. I am totally against these programs and the Department of Education. It’s a disaster. We cannot continue to fail our children — the very future of this nation.” In separate comments, asked what departments he would cut, Trump said: “I may cut Department of Education. Common Core is a very bad thing. I think that it should be local education.” He then blasted Jeb Bush and other candidates, who he said “want children to be educated by Washington, D.C. bureaucrats.”

### Link – Federal Regulation

#### Supporters consider decreasing the federal role in education critical

Lambert 4-26 (Lisa, reporter at Reuters, "Trump seeks to shrink federal role in education with new order," Reuters, http://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-education-trump-idUSKBN17S2U8)//dgd

President Donald Trump on Wednesday ordered Education Secretary Betsy DeVos to review the U.S. government's role in school policy, which supporters cheered as the first step in creating more local control in education and critics worried could lead to lower quality schools in poorer neighborhoods. DeVos has 300 days "to review and, if necessary, modify and repeal regulations and guidance issued by the Department of Education with a clear mandate to identify places where D.C. has overstepped its legal authority," said Rob Goad, a Department of Education official, according to a transcript of a White House call with reporters. The second most powerful Republican in the House of Representatives, California's Kevin McCarthy, said the federal government had in recent years exceeded its legal authority in creating regulations and guidance "Different people in different states and communities will have different goals and ways of achieving those goals. That is something we should celebrate and enable, not try to stop," he said in a statement. The Democratic National Committee, though, said the order was politically motivated, with Trump wanting something to show in school policy in his first 100 days. The head of the American Federation of Teachers union, Randi Weingarten, said the current education law, Every Student Succeeds Act, already reduces federal power over schools, especially when it comes to standards and teacher assessments. "What the new law doesn’t do is abandon the requirement for the federal government to protect the civil rights of our students, even if those rights run counter to what states and districts want to do," she said in a statement.

#### Conservative opposition to the federal role in education is strong

Berry 15 (Dr. Susan, contributor @ Breitbart, 3/9, “Jeb Bush Retrofits Facts of Common Core To Boost Conservative Credibility”, <http://www.breitbart.com/big-government/2015/03/09/jeb-bush-retrofits-facts-of-common-core-to-boost-conservative-credibility/>)

Bush’s **attempt to infuse** his **views on education reform with** a dose of f**ederalism in order to salvage his credibility with the conservative base seems obvious**. The former Florida governor is pushing for the reauthorization of NCLB, the latest version of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), first enacted by Lyndon Baines Johnson as part of his “War on Poverty.” **Bush describes ESEA as a “critical piece of legislation that sets out the role of the federal government in school funding and policy.” Conservatives, of course, would like to see no role for the federal government in education, as per the Constitution.** “[T]he Obama **administration has issued a patchwork of waivers and side deals, given out by fiat and without consistency**,” Bush continues. “No wonder parents and state and local leaders question Washington’s motives when it comes to our schools.”

#### States’ rights conservatives oppose federal involvement in education

Whitman 15 (David, Sept., Contributing Editor at Education Post and was a reporter for nearly two decades for U.S. News & World Report. From June 2009 to November 2014, he was chief speechwriter for U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan, “The Surprising Roots of the Common Core: How Conservatives Gave Rise to ‘Obamacore’”, https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/Surprising-Conservative-Roots-of-the-Common-Core\_FINAL.pdf)

Last but not least—and irrespective of previous conservative efforts to develop voluntary national standards—**some Tea Party leaders and Common Core critics remain purists about federalism.** **They firmly oppose the Common Core State Standards on constitutional and ideological grounds for infringing on state and local control of education**—**an unenumerated power they believe is reserved solely to individual states under the 10th amendment**, and not to consortiums of states or to the federal government. Last year, Governor Nikki Haley**, a Tea Party favorite, signed a bill requiring South Carolina to adopt new standards replacing the Common Core State Standards**. “We don’t ever want to educate South Carolina children like they educate California children,” Haley said.

### Link – Federal Regulation

#### It’s a key issue for the base – they hate the plan

Education Views.org 15 (6/13, “No Child Left Behind Rewrite To Face Another Showdown in House”, https://www.educationviews.org/child-left-rewrite-face-showdown-house/)

As Breitbart News reported in late February, **GOP leadership pulled the Student Success Act from the House floor after it was determined the legislation lacked sufficient support. Grassroots conservative parent groups seeking to eliminate federal involvement in education voiced concerns that the rewrite still required excessive federal intrusion into the right of states to set their own education policies**. The Washington Examiner reports conservative House members say they will not support the measure without significant changes. **GOP leaders, however, have said they have no intentions to make alterations to the bill, but will put it back on the House floor exactly as it was in February**. **Republican leaders seem poised to resume attempts to convince the conservative base of their party that the bill will reduce federal involvement in education and return it to the states and localities.**

### Link – Flip-flop

#### The plan decimates Trump’s base – it’s perceived as ideological flip-flopping and playing nice with Washington

Rahn 6/8. Will, Managing Editor for CBS Politics, 6-8-2017, "Commentary: What is Trump's way forward?," CBS News, <http://www.cbsnews.com/news/commentary-what-is-trumps-way-forward/> //saenl

Trump's approval ratings hover somewhere in the mid thirties, although Wall Street is quite happy with his performance, what with his embrace of regulatory reform and a (still theoretical) tax cut for top earners. But Trump wasn't elected to please Wall Street and the Gary Cohns of the world. He was supposed to be a populist, yet the only populism we've seen so far comes in the form of the flighty symbolism of travel bans and exiting treaties. So why not a firmer populist approach, one that produces real results for the Middle Americans who form Trump's base? Well, there are problems with this strategy, too. The first is that populist economics, and the state intervention it requires, would need bipartisan support. Domenech theorizes that, by giving left-wing Democrats like Bernie Sanders and Elizabeth Warren more concessions than any normal Republican president would, Trump could refashion the health-care bill into something more workable and more likely to be passed. Since Trump has few options at this point when it comes to health care, it might be wise for the White House to heed this advice. But broadly speaking, bipartisanship in the Trump era is a risky proposition. Obviously Trump is hated by the liberal grassroots, and any Democrat mulling a 2020 run, which is at this point might be a majority of Democratic lawmakers in Washington, would need a lot of courage to embrace any proposal arising from this administration, regardless of how moderate or populist it seems. Democratic voters want obstructionism on a massive scale, so for your average progressive politician, there's very little incentive to work at all with Trump. The second thing to consider is how much Trump relies on his right flank right now. The GOP leadership in Congress doesn't like him and doesn't really want to defend him. The calculus is different, however, from more hardcore conservatives who represent districts that went overwhelmingly for Trump. Their voters like Trump, therefore they like Trump, and feel obliged to defend him and help him. At the same time, this right flank would be opposed to any ideological adventurism. They don't want tariffs and New Deal-esque work programs and all the other things Steve Bannon was fantasizing about in the halcyon days after the election. And, as a group, Trump probably can't afford to lose them – look at the trouble they already caused in the health care fight. He needs to keep the right in his corner, particularly should the Russia matter explode and impeachment starts looking like a real possibility. It would seem, then, that the most plausible way forward for Trump, given both the political realities of the moment and his own personal idiosyncrasies, is to just keep doing what he's been doing. Call it the Jake LaMotta strategy – take the punishment, remain standing, attack viciously at every opportunity, and exhaust your opponents. Trump's fans want him to fight with Washington, and regardless of whether his wins or loses, they'll cheer if he keeps taking and delivering blows. You never got me down, Schumer! Would this be sustainable? It's hard to think it would be, at least in the long run. But it's also extraordinarily difficult to think of plausible alternatives. At this point, Trump's fortunes may entirely rely on Democratic incompetence rather than some kind of pivot. That's not a great place to be, but given the recent track record of America's center-left party, it just might be enough to keep him in office.

### Link – Liberal Policies

#### The plan’s move to the left triggers GOP backlash---wrecks his popularity with the grassroots

Zurcher 12-7-2016 – US analyst @ BBC (Anthony, “Trump: Five political minefields facing president-elect,” <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-38227937>)

It's still more than a month before Donald Trump takes the oath of office, but it's not too early to think about the challenges he will face in the White House.

The new president will have formidable assets at his disposal. The chief executive has broad unilateral powers, and his party controls both chambers of Congress. As long as Republicans stay unified, they will be able to advance a broad range of conservative priorities that have been on the back-burner for more than a decade. The danger, however, is that they could choose a losing battle - or a winning one whose victory comes at too high a price. The history books are littered with presidents whose electoral mandates crumbled in the early days of their presidency. Barack Obama and Democrats saw their large governing majorities in 2009 vanish two years later after a bruising fight to pass healthcare reform. A push for universal healthcare also cost Bill Clinton dearly in 1993. George HW Bush's presidency ran aground, in part, due to tax concessions he made to Democrats in the 1990 budget negotiations. Ronald Reagan's tax reforms early in his presidency sank his approval ratings before an economic recovery changed his fortunes. As Mr Trump looks ahead to his presidency, there are countless opportunities - but the path to success is a veritable minefield, where one false step could lead to ruin. Here's a look at five particularly dangerous potential pitfalls. Medicare privatisation Donald Trump campaigned on repealing Barack Obama's healthcare reform programme, and the Republican Congress seems eager to follow through (timeline to be determined, of course). What Mr Trump didn't campaign on, and yet congressional Republican leadership seems enamoured with, was any kind of modification or privatisation of the government-run healthcare programme for the elderly, Medicare. In fact, Mr Trump was quite clear that he wouldn't touch the social safety net that provides retirement and medical care for the poor, disabled and elderly. "Every Republican wants to do a big number on Social Security, they want to do it on Medicare, they want to do it on Medicaid," candidate Trump said at a Republican forum in 2015. "And it's not fair to the people that have been paying in for years and now all of the sudden they want to be cut." Yet changing Medicare from a government-run, single-payer programme to a state-managed voucher-backed premium support system has long been a goal of House Speaker Paul Ryan. "Medicare has got some serious problems because of Obamacare," Mr Ryan said a few days after Mr Trump was elected. "Those things are part of our plan to replace Obamacare." Mr Ryan is the leader of a segment of conservatives who view Medicare as a means of fostering dependence on government - a fortified expansion of centralised power that presents a growing financial burden on the federal budget. The challenge for Republicans, however, is that, unlike the heavily politicised Obamacare reforms, Medicare is immensely popular. A 2015 poll found 60% of Americans viewed the programme as "working well", and 77% said the programme was "very important". Back in 2004, newly re-elected President George W Bush and a Republican-controlled Congress made a similar run at privatising Social Security, the government-managed retirement programme. Those efforts collapsed without so much as a legislative vote, thanks to withering opposition from Democrats and a sceptical public. It marked the beginning of Mr Bush's sharp decline in popularity that culminated in sweeping Democratic victories in the 2006 mid-term elections and President Obama in 2008. Ann Coulter, a fervent Trump backer, succinctly summed up the shape of the pitfall that now may await her party. "Medicare IS NOT WHAT THE ELECTION WAS FOUGHT OVER," she tweeted. "If Ryan wants to change Medicare, then run for president on that and see how far you get." Mind the mine: Misinterpreting your mandate for change is classic post-election overreach danger. Tax cuts Although he didn't regularly dwell on it at his campaign rallies, candidate Trump had a fairly detailed tax-cut plan. Perhaps the reason for his reticence was that the benefits - according to the nonpartisan Tax Policy Center - would be showered primarily on the wealthy. The average tax cut was pegged at $2,940 per person, amounting to an after-tax income increase of 4.1%. Those earning over $3.7m, however, would receive a tax cut of roughly $1.1m, for an after-tax income boost of 14%. During the first presidential debate, Hillary Clinton called this "trumped up trickle-down economics" - the theory, first embraced by President Ronald Reagan, that the benefits of tax cuts for the rich would eventually filter onto the lower-income brackets through increased spending. The label didn't stick (and was, in fact, mocked as being forced), but the attacks may sting if they accompany hard figures in legislation signed by the man who won the White House as a champion of the working class. There's some sign that the forthcoming Trump administration may already be backing away from this particular political landmine - and heading toward a new one, instead. During a recent interview Treasury Secretary nominee Steve Mnuchin said that any tax reform would be benefit-neutral for the wealthy. "Any reductions we have in upper-income taxes will be offset by less deductions, so that there will be no absolute tax cut for the upper class," he said. While that sounds inoffensive, the two biggest individual tax deductions are also two of the most beloved by the American middle class - for home mortgage interest and charitable donations. Any politicians, Republican or Democrat, touch those at their political peril. Mind the mine: Mr Trump campaigned against a moneyed global elite. If they reap the rewards of Republican tax reforms, he may lose some of his populist lustre. Imperial overreach One of the ways Mr Trump framed himself as a different kind of Republican presidential candidate was by condemning his party's military adventurism. Where just a decade earlier his party had marched in lockstep behind George W Bush in defending the Iraq War, now Mr Trump stood on a Republican primary debate stage, condemned the action as misguided and won. He said Libyan intervention was a mistake and that the US should let Russia shoulder more of the military burden in Syria. While he criticised Chinese trade practices, he said US allies in Asia must shoulder more of the costs of their own defence. Positions like these were largely why the Republican foreign policy establishment abandoned the Trump campaign in droves and why the president-elect has seemed hard-pressed to settle on a nominee for secretary of state. One man already on the Trump White House team, however, is retired General Michael Flynn - and he appears to support the kind of robust, interventionist foreign policy that Mr Trump dismissed. In his recent book, The Field of Fight: How We Can Win the Global War Against Radical Islam and Its Allies, the man who is tabbed to become Mr Trump's national security adviser writes that the US is already fighting a global war. "We face a working coalition that extends from North Korea and China to Russia, Iran, Syria, Cuba, Bolivia, Venezuela and Nicaragua," he writes. "We are under attack, not only from nation-states directly, but also from Al Qaeda, Hezbollah, Isis and countless other terrorist groups." If Mr Flynn is joined on Mr Trump's foreign policy team by someone like John Bolton - an Iraq War architect whose name has been linked to the secretary of state job - President Trump may be considerably more hawkish on foreign policy than Candidate Trump ever was. Mind the mine: The American public will follow a president into battle, but war is also an easy way to destroy a presidency. Just ask George W Bush. Or Lyndon Johnson. Or Harry Truman. Going rogue Mr Trump turned heads this week when he sat down with former Democratic Vice-President Al Gore to discuss climate change and global environmental issues. He shocked many of his conservative backers a few weeks earlier when, after meeting with Mr Obama, he expressed support for some portions of the president's healthcare reform. During the campaign he unveiled a childcare and maternity leave proposal that, in the words of conservative columnist Charles Krauthammer, "out-Democrats the Democrats". In other words, Mr Trump - who was a Democrat as recently as 2009 - has shown a proclivity for entertaining issues and positions that run counter to Republican orthodoxy. There's certainly an upside for being a president who's willing to buck his own party and reach across the aisle for support. It was at the heart of Bill Clinton's "triangulation" strategy during his presidency, when he adopted and moderated popular Republican positions on welfare reform and crime-fighting to boost his own standing. Such a course comes with its own set of risks, however, particularly for someone like Mr Trump. Embracing a liberal position could jeopardise his Republican backing in Congress and among the party's grass-roots supporters. <<card continues>>

### Link – Liberal Policies

<<card continues>> Even with his best efforts, however, he will be hard-pressed to attract much love from the political left. His divisive presidential campaign has made him too much of a villain among Democrats for that to happen. Mind the mine: Only Nixon could go to China, as the saying goes. Mr Trump could decide to break the partisan logjam and advance a popular progressive priority. Then again, when Nixon became mired in scandal, he was left with few Republican allies to protect him. It's not a happy place for a president to be.

### Link – Title I

**Increased Title 1 funding is unpopular – it’s perceived as federal overreach**

Bryan **Shelly, 2-7**-2017, (president AEM, "DeVos's power is limited," Advanced Education Measurement, <http://www.aemkids.com/commentary-list/2017/2/7/devoss-power-is-limited>, Mtan)

**The federal government has** relatively **little** direct **power over K-12** public education. **Federal funding makes up only ~10 percent of total funding** to K-12 public education. Legally, for over 40 years, the Supreme Court has maintained that school districts are creations of, and thus subject to the control of, state governments, and that the federal government has no grounds to directly compel states or school districts to follow federal education policy except in extremely limited situations. Since 2000, what **change the federal government has been able to accomplish has come through conditions on grant money. In order to access Title 1 and other funding streams, the federal government will demand schools and** states comply with, for example, No Child Left Behind (NCLB) or Race to the Top (RttT). Expect the Trump Administration to pursue a similar strategy with regards to things like school choice. I expect a new law or regulation soon that allows students to use Title 1 funding in voucher programs. Title 1 funding makes up roughly 5 percent of all government funding for K-12 education. This low percentage means that vouchers based solely on Title 1 funds are unlikely to disrupt public education anywhere but inner cities, where limited funding from other sources means that Title 1 funding makes up a larger share of per-pupil spending. Advocates for inner city districts might look at how Ohio's voucher program has affected education in Cleveland. They should keep in mind that Ohio's voucher program comes from state funding so that individual vouchers are much larger than any voucher constructed strictly with Title 1 money could possibly be. Also **remember** that **many federal programs like NCLB, RttT, and the Common Core of State Standards were very unpopular**. A large part of **their unpopularity came from the perception that they represented unwarranted federal intrusion into state and local affairs. People like their local schools and always rally against any federal program that threatens to disrupt them.**

### A2: Link Turn

#### Trump’s popularity is at its ceiling---only a risk the plan derails it

Masket 2/27/17 (Masket, Seth. Seth Masket is a professor of political science at the University of Denver. “Trump’s Approval Ratings Have Finally Stabilized, but What Does That Mean?” https://psmag.com/trumps-approval-ratings-have-finally-stabilized-but-what-does-that-mean-93c8314781ed#.oz6t3fbef)

As has been reported extensively, Donald Trump’s job approval ratings started low relative to other new presidents and have declined ever since. Yet, as [Patrick Egan](https://twitter.com/Patrick_J_Egan/status/834799451734671360) has noted, those ratings seem to have stabilized over the past few weeks, with an average approval rating [around 43 percent](http://elections.huffingtonpost.com/pollster/trump-job-approval). Has Trump found his floor? His ceiling? What does this mean?

There are a few ways to think about this. First, it’s worth noting that Barack Obama’s approval ratings were in the mid-40s for [most of his presidency](http://elections.huffingtonpost.com/pollster/obama-job-approval). They didn’t start there, of course — he was in the low 60s at this point in his first term — and his approval went up considerably during his last year in office. But we should keep in mind that the economy was expanding, the crime rate was dropping, and the United States was at relative peace with other nations for most of Obama’s presidency. Those are conditions most presidents would pay a high price for, and yet they didn’t seem to benefit Obama much politically until the very end. Why? To a large extent, it’s because we’re living in a very polarized era. Partisans tend to view new political information in a way that’s advantageous for the party they like and disadvantageous for the party they don’t like. Obama had the approval of 81 percent of Democrats [even in 2010](http://www.gallup.com/poll/148394/obama-averages-approval-june-par-2010-2011.aspx), when the Democrats got shellacked in the mid-term elections. He had 13 percent approval among Republicans that year. [Trump right now](http://www.gallup.com/poll/204050/trump-job-approval-points-below-average-one-month-mark.aspx) has the support of 87 percent of Republicans and 8 percent of Democrats. This suggests that, in such a polarized era, it’s hard to do a whole lot worse than 40 percent, and it’s hard to do a whole lot better than 50 percent. Your party will support you, the other party will oppose you, and it’s really just a matter of independents moving around. But that’s not really the whole story. George W. Bush also governed during a very polarized era, and he managed to have approval highs near 90 percent and lows near 20 percent. The difference there was that the fundamental conditions of the country, which were relatively calm during Obama’s presidency, really did rocket back and forth under Bush. His highs came right after the 9/11 attacks (even Democrats were willing to rally behind him for a while), and his lows came during a recession and a prolonged war with Iraq (when even Republicans began to abandon him). It takes a lot to shake partisans, but it does happen. Part of what’s driven Democrats and independents away from Trump so quickly is Trump’s own behavior. He hasn’t made any of the bipartisan overtures new presidents typically make, and he seems to have gone out of his way to anger and alienate people who weren’t part of his electoral coalition. That behavior really isn’t alienating many Republicans, 90 percent of whom voted for him after more than a year of similar behavior. But it’s likely suppressing his support. It’s worth recalling that his election odds improved in early November of last year at the time he went relatively quiet on Twitter. [Trump’s Supporters Still Support Trump—So What? Of what value is it to just retain one’s base?psmag.com](https://psmag.com/trumps-supporters-still-support-trump-so-what-c07fc9bc7820) But it’s also quite possible that Trump is operating close to his ceiling right now. With each passing week, he is given greater credit or blame for the fundamental conditions of the country. And given that economic growth has been strong so far this year, inflation and gas prices remain low, we’re not at war, crime remains low, etc., and he’s still in the 40s, it’s unlikely things will get a whole lot better for him. It’s certainly possible a 9/11-like tragedy could induce a rally effect for Trump, but it’s not obvious that it would.

### A2: Plan is Small

#### Even small dips in popularity among the base spiral towards broader hatred

Hecht 12-16-2016 - Massachusetts State Representative for the 29th Middlesex District. Born in Cambridge, Massachusetts (Jon, “Donald Trump's Lack Of Popular Support Matters For A Reason You Wouldn't Expect,” Bustle, https://www.bustle.com/articles/200338-donald-trumps-lack-of-popular-support-matters-for-a-reason-you-wouldnt-expect)

Trump promises some seriously controversial policies that he will need Congress's help to enact. His proposals on, for instance, deporting millions of undocumented immigrants, cutting taxes on the rich, repealing Obamacare, and cutting federal regulations fighting climate change, are unpopular with many Americans. And while Trump doesn't have to run for reelection on policies like those until 2020, every member of the House of Representatives will have to in 2018. This is made even more difficult by the political trends that usually come into play during midterm elections. The party in the White House has lost seats during midterms every time in the past century except 1934, 1998, and 2002 (which all had outlier factors to the political landscape — the Great Depression, a failed attempt to impeach Bill Clinton, and the post-9/11 renewed patriotism, respectively). That trend is highly related to the popularity of the president. If the president is unpopular, his or her party can take massive losses. There's actually a lot of daylight between Trump and his party on numerous issues. You can especially see it in the way Congressional Republicans are bucking the incoming president on the issue of Russian hacking. For Trump to get anything in Congress done, he's got to convince the rest of his party that they'll be more likely to get reelected if they go with him than if they go against him. That only works if he's popular. For the moment, Trump is pretty popular among Republicans — his unpopularity comes from nearly all Democrats continuing to hate him, even as his own party has rallied to nearly normal levels. But if the unpopularity he has overall stops him from accomplishing much, he'll probably become even more disliked, setting off a vicious cycle. President Obama, like many presidents, was most popular when he first became president, with his approval rating quickly fading. Trump has quite an uphill climb ahead, and Republicans may be walking into a 2018 threshing floor.

## Internal Links

### Promises Key to Base

#### Breaking campaign promises decimates legitimacy with his base

consensus of psychological data proves the link comparatively outweighs any link turn

at: he’s broken promises – method flip flops don’t trigger the link

Walsh 1/20. PhD candidate in political science at Rutgers University, and a veteran of the U.S. Marine Corps (David Hunter Walsh, “Yes, Trump will face a backlash if he doesn’t deliver on his promises,” https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2017/01/20/yes-trump-will-face-a-backlash-if-he-doesnt-deliver-on-his-promises/?utm\_term=.250bb333ed24

President-elect Donald Trump built his campaign on promises to put a wall on the Mexican border, [“utterly destroy”](https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/trump-vows-to-utterly-destroy-isis--but-he-wont-say-how/2016/09/24/911c6a74-7ffc-11e6-8d0c-fb6c00c90481_story.html?utm_term=.8845ff428551) the Islamic State, and accelerate economic growth to heights never before seen outside of [wartime](https://qz.com/834096/donald-trumps-policies-are-based-on-economic-growth-typically-only-seen-during-wartime/). Days before he won the presidency, Trump [told](https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/i-will-give-you-everything-here-are-282-of-donald-trumps-campaign-promises/2016/11/24/01160678-b0f9-11e6-8616-52b15787add0_story.html?utm_term=.fdeaf40f1f04) his supporters he would give them “every dream you ever dreamed for your country.” Trump’s penchant for sweeping promises — and the likelihood that he may have [trouble](http://www.newsweek.com/keeping-score-donald-trump-campaign-promises-526391) keeping them — has Republicans concerned about what would happen if he doesn’t or can’t follow through. “If we’re given the White House and both houses of Congress and we don’t deliver,” Texas Sen. Ted Cruz [said](http://www.cnn.com/2016/11/27/politics/ted-cruz-pitchforks-donald-trump-promises/) recently, “I think there will be pitchforks and torches in the streets.” Although Cruz’s vision of a violent uprising may be an exaggeration, my research suggests that Trump would indeed face a backlash if he fails to deliver on key promises. That conclusion rests on one of the most robust theories of modern psychology, [prospect theory](https://books.google.com/books/about/Prospect_Theory.html?id=dooib4ynMQsC&printsec=frontcover&source=kp_read_button#v=onepage&q&f=false). Prospect theory argues that in our minds, perceived losses outweigh perceived gains in ways that profoundly affect our decision-making. In a political context, this means that when the president surprises you by doing something you like, you’re happy about it. But that happiness is not nearly as powerful as the disappointment — or even sadness or anger — that you experience when the president does something you hate. One implication is that the backlash a president faces for breaking a promise to his supporters may be much stronger than whatever positive reactions come from voters who are pleasantly surprised by his decision not to pursue that campaign pledge. For Trump, a shift away from some of the radical positions he has staked out may in fact please even a majority of Americans. But any positive reaction will likely be muted, while the disappointment of his original supporters will be amplified. He could find himself losing some of his supporters without picking up the same number from the other side — which could leave him even more [unpopular](http://www.realclearpolitics.com/epolls/other/trump_favorableunfavorable-5493.html) than he already is. Let’s take [Medicare](https://www.washingtonpost.com/national/2017/live-updates/health-care/obamacare-affordable-care-act-definitions/what-is-medicare/?tid=a_inl), for example. Trump highlighted his deviation from Republican orthodoxy by [campaigning against](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/medicare-donald-trump_us_58483c8de4b0d0df18375293) cuts and privatization. But his appointment of Rep. Tom Price (R-Ga.), [a privatization champion,](https://www.thenation.com/article/donald-trump-is-coming-for-your-medicare/) as Health and Human Services secretary suggests he may be open to an overhaul. If Trump embraced privatization or another significant reform, he could risk angering people who voted for him and who like Medicare as it is. Assuming that most Americans expect Trump to keep his promise not to fundamentally alter the program, those who would approve (certainly [nothing close](http://www.gallup.com/poll/4708/healthcare-system.aspx) to a supermajority) would likely discount it as a gain, while opponents would view it as a loss. The backlash could be stronger than the enthusiasm among backers of privatization. Here’s how I did my research Survey data from the American National Election Studies (ANES) help highlight this dynamic. Over various periods in the ’70s, ’80s, and ’90s, the ANES repeatedly asked the same people where they thought the president and presidential candidates stood on a variety of issues. These people were also repeatedly asked where they themselves stood on these issues, and how they rated the president or candidate on a feeling thermometer. I examined cases in which a president is perceived as shifting from a slightly liberal position to a moderately conservative one on the issue of government services, analogous to a potential Trump shift on Medicare. In those cases, liberals’ negative reactions are 77 percent stronger on average than conservatives’ positive reactions; if liberals and conservatives were equal in number and they all perceived such a shift, Trump’s approval rating would drop, by between 3.6 and 9.9 points as I have modeled it. The only way a shift on Medicare would not harm Trump’s approval rating is if the public favored his policy by at least a 60-40 split. A similar story is told by the data on most other issues, regardless of the direction of the shift and from where the president is moving. A shift of moderate magnitude on defense spending costs the president 7.4 points on average when the public is split on the issue. On welfare policy, the average hit to a president’s approval is 9.2 points. These are [big league](http://www.nytimes.com/2016/10/25/us/politics/trump-bigly-big-league-linguists.html) effects for just one policy change. The consequences of disappointing a president’s supporters can be massive, while the positive reactions of voters he might be hope to win over sometimes fail to register at all. <<card continues>>

### Promises Key to Base

<<card continues>> These “expectation costs” are a result of having led the electorate to expect certain policies that then shape how they evaluate future outcomes. It is important to note that these effects cannot be explained by simultaneous changes in the voter’s opinion of the president due to other factors, nor are they altered by media exposure or political knowledge. So long as the individual has a consistent opinion on the issue and does perceive the president as being inconsistent on it, this costly dynamic appears inescapable. Trump’s supporters take him seriously but not literally. But on which promises? With Trump, one question is what issues are most likely to generate disappointment among his supporters. This is especially relevant since many of the people who voted for him seem to take him seriously, but [not literally](http://www.nytimes.com/2016/06/23/upshot/dont-assume-donald-trumps-supporters-believe-his-promises.html). Do they really expect him to keep any of his promises? And if so, which ones? The key factor seems to be whether the promise relates to means or to ends. If the president merely changes how he will go about securing some outcome, then people will not care much one way or the other (unless, of course, they really care about pursuing that outcome in a certain way). So far, Trump’s reversals have largely taken this change-of-methods form — just recently, after all, he [claimed](http://www.msn.com/en-us/news/politics/trump-vows-%E2%80%98insurance-for-everybody%E2%80%99-in-obamacare-replacement-plan/ar-AAlTSAO) that, whatever reforms he eventually decides on, the outcome will be “insurance for everybody” (and, indeed, reversals on the issue of government insurance do not seem to generate measurable expectation costs, given the available data). The reaction to Trump’s reversals thus far suggests that, much to the chagrin of orthodox partisans on both sides of the aisle, most voters do not care much about specific policy tools like deregulation or building physical walls against immigration. Expectation cost theory strongly suggests, though, that Trump’s promises do matter, because they generate strong expectations regarding certain outcomes. If Trump fails to deliver on them one way or another, then he will pay an additional and substantial cost for having made them.

### Promises Key to Base

#### The plan breaks Trump’s grand campaign promises – that costs him his base

Whitesides 16. Whitesides, John. Reporter for Reuters. “Supporters to Trump: break campaign promises at your peril” http://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-election-trump-promises-idUSKBN1362AC November 11, 2016

After listening to his speeches and casting her vote for him, she expects Trump to toughen immigration laws, restore lost jobs, upend a corrupt political system, build a wall on the border, and be, as the millionaire put it, the "greatest jobs president that God has ever created." "We expect him to move forward on all the items he has promised to move forward on," said Stellmack, 69, a retiree in West Palm Beach, Florida. "And if he doesn't, we will hold his feet to the fire." After a presidential race fueled by brash but constantly shifting policy proposals, Trump's millions of followers -- from social conservative activists to struggling blue-collar workers to hardline militant groups -- say if he does anything less than take a wrecking ball to business-as-usual Washington, they will be disappointed. "We'll be watching, Mr. Trump," said Stellmack. Trump's promises have been hard to pin down, with many policy details left elusive and vague. NBC News identified 141 "distinct shifts" on 23 major issues since Trump announced his candidacy on June 16, 2015. Still, his fiery rhetoric had an unmistakable message of ending big government and the entrenched power of establishment elites in both parties. That inspired hope that Trump can break through Washington's gridlock to make progress on plans to invigorate the economy, eliminate terrorist threats, rip up trade agreements and repeal President Barack Obama's healthcare plan known as Obamacare. "I totally trust him," said Laura Czarniak, 56, of Manistee, Michigan, a Rust Belt state that leans Democrat in presidential elections but which flipped to Trump on Tuesday. "I know he'll build the wall. I know he'll take care of the Syrian refugee problem. I know he'll get rid of Obamacare. There is not a chance in hell he won't do those things," she said. But even with Republicans retaining control of Congress, Trump will have to accept limits and compromises on some of his plans. Many Republicans, for example, are wary of his proposals to scrap trade deals and boost spending on infrastructure improvements. Some of his plans have already been rolled back. Trump faces his highest expectations on the issue of immigration, given his intense focus on attention-grabbing campaign proposals like forcing Mexico to pay for a border wall, and temporarily banning Muslims from entering the country. But he recently indicated he would at first deport only criminal undocumented immigrants, after previously pledging to deport all undocumented aliens, while the Muslim ban has softened into "extreme vetting" of immigrants from some countries. He told the Wall Street Journal in an interview on Friday that he would consider keeping parts of Obamacare intact -- easing off his calls for a total repeal -- after Obama spoke to him on the issue at the White House on Thursday. Mark Morris, a leader of the Colorado-based Three Percent United Patriots militia group, said he understood Trump would need time on some issues, but he expected quick movement on repealing Obamacare and appointing a conservative Supreme Court justice to fill the seat of the late Antonin Scalia. He said he hoped Trump would stand with ranchers in their disputes with the federal government over fees charged for cattle grazing on public land – a call to arms for many in the patriot and militia movement. Morris warned Trump should not count on his followers to stay with him if he did not produce results. "People voted with a lot of faith that he will come through," he said. "I don’t think it is going to work out very well if he doesn’t get the things done and he comes back at the end of four years and says I need four more years to accomplish what I need to accomplish."

### Base Key to Trump Legitimacy

#### Trump’s base approval in key congressional districts is critical for his ability to exercise leadership – breaking promises is the thing that will alienate supporters

Lauter 2/13. David. Los Angeles Times Chief. “Trump has gotten even less popular while in office,” http://www.latimes.com/politics/la-na-pol-trump-polls-20170213-story.html

One of the enduring myths of [President Trump](http://www.latimes.com/topic/politics-government/donald-trump-PEBSL000163-topic.html)’s political career is the belief that “nothing matters” — that the controversies that surround him have no effect on his standing with the public. The three weeks since Trump’s inauguration have once again proven that untrue: Trump has lost significant ground in public approval in the aftermath of a rough start. Without question, Trump, who won the presidency with a minority of the votes cast, has retained a strong hold on his core supporters, whose loyalty remains ardent. [Republicans](http://www.latimes.com/topic/politics-government/republican-party-ORGOV0000004-topic.html) are more approving of his personal qualities than they were in the fall, according to several ratings. And Trump has plenty of time to turn around the current negative trend in his overall ratings. But the pattern is consistent: After a brief increase in popularity early in his transition, almost all public polls show a decline in Trump’s support, though the exact amount varies. In Gallup’s surveys, Trump’s job approval has gone from an even split the week of his inauguration, with 45% of Americans approving and 45% disapproving, to a 10-point deficit in the latest average, 42% to 52%. Gallup has tracked every American president since Franklin D. Roosevelt, and before Trump, none hit 50% disapproval for months, sometimes years. Trump has fallen below all but the lowest points for President Obama and into territory plumbed by Harry Truman, Richard Nixon and Jimmy Carter. Asked about specific qualities of leadership, Americans in Gallup’s surveys give Trump strong marks for keeping his promises and being a “strong and decisive” leader. But majorities rate him negatively on inspiring confidence, managing the government effectively and being honest. On each of those measures, a vast gulf separates the mostly positive views of Republicans from the negative views of most Democrats. In addition to Gallup, other polls showing a decline in Trump’s job approval include a GOP favorite, Rasmussen, which has shown Trump dropping from a 14-point net approval rating when he started to four points now; YouGov, which has found a 13-point decline; and Quinnipiac, with a 17-point drop. Among major nonpartisan surveys, the only one to depart from the pattern is the Reuters/Ipsos poll, which had Trump’s approval at a two-point deficit when he started and now has him barely in positive territory, with 48% approving and 47% disapproving. For now, what matters most to Trump is holding the support of his core voters. That’s key to his strength in Congress, especially in the House, because his popularity remains high in most Republican-held congressional districts. But if his decline persists, it could weaken Trump’s sway in the Senate, where members need to run statewide. Whether Trump’s approval rating will drop further depends largely on independents and Republicans — he has almost no support to lose among Democrats. If those voters do sour on him, that could pose a threat to Republicans in the midterm election in 2018. The incumbent president’s approval rating historically serves as a good predictor of how many seats his party will lose at midterm.

### Base Key to Trump Legitimacy

#### Trump’s rabid base is the lynchpin for GOP compliance with his initiatives

Benen 6/20. Steve, 6-20-2017, producer for MSNBC's "The Rachel Maddow Show" and an MSNBC contributor, "New polling shows Trump's support slipping among Republicans," MSNBC, http://www.msnbc.com/rachel-maddow-show/new-polling-shows-trumps-support-slipping-among-republicans //saenl

Donald Trump wants to be seen as a popular president, which leads him to seek out polling data, cherry-pick the outlier results that tell him what he wants to hear, and tout the satisfying data with great vigor. In reality, however, Trump continues to struggle in ways we’ve never seen in a new American president. At 36 percent, Mr. Trump’s approval rating is now his lowest in CBS News Polls since becoming president. Fifty-seven percent now disapprove. The drop in the President’s approval rating is partially due to ebbing support among Republicans. Seventy-two percent approve of the job Mr. Trump is doing, a decline of eleven points since April. It’s that second part that stands out as notable. The fact that the CBS News poll shows the president’s overall approval rating in the mid-30s isn’t especially noteworthy – that’s roughly in line with most other major polls of late – but the more Trump’s support slips with voters from his own party, the more significant the political impact. CBS News’ report added that other recent presidents have seen their support drop to similar levels with their party’s voters, which is true. What’s also true, however, is that Trump’s recent predecessors didn’t have a 72% approval rating among their ostensible partisan allies five months into their first term. To be sure, this is obviously just one poll, but it’s not the only one that’s shown Trump’s support among Republicans looking shaky, and if other surveys start pointing in this direction, the White House will have a problem for which there is no solution. Remember, rank-and-file GOP lawmakers on Capitol Hill have a very strong incentive to toe the party line and follow Trump’s lead: the most rabid contingents of the Republican base support the president, and GOP officials who break ranks risk a backlash – or a primary challenge. But the more Trump’s standing among Republican voters slips, the less Republican lawmakers feel electoral pressure to be a “team player.”

## Impacts

### Yes Diversionary War – Base Key

#### Loss of base support causes Trump to lash out militarily to try to gain them back

Danner 3/23. Mark, is Chancellor’s Professor of English and Journalism at the University of California at Berkeley and James Clarke Chace Professor of Foreign Affairs and the Humanities at Bard. The New York Review of Books, “What He Could Do” MARCH 23, 2017 http://www.nybooks.com/articles/2017/03/23/what-trump-could-do/

If it remains to be seen whether we are truly “witnessing…the birth of a new political order,” it is clear, a month into Trump’s ascension, that we are all his prisoners, held fast in the projected drama of his mind. As the battle over that new political order is enacted on the national stage, we have all become the dragooned antagonists in the play. This is what it is to live in the realm of the Big Man: his drama perforce is ours. Relentless political struggle, permanent revolution, shattering of norms, scandal and controversy, the capital hip-deep in broken crockery: this is what his supporters signed on for and this is what he is determined to give them; perhaps he knows how to give them little else. To him they are everything, his base: “This is a beautiful movement!” “They’ve never seen a movement like this in our country before.” They are his creation, permanent suppliers of the adulation and self-affirmation he craves.2 Now they cheer and hoot and scoff while their hero, saber in hand, slashes and hacks at his enemies among the hated status quo. The latter include not just Stephen Bannon’s “handful of media elites” but many others who are appalled and outraged and find themselves forced to live under the pall of permanent political anxiety that hangs over the nation’s cities. It is our outrage, our disgust, our knee-jerk shock and condemnation that animate the play and give verisimilitude to the battle being fought. We are the enemy and our screams of dismay are vital to the drama. Behind the controversies about crowd size and alternative facts and illegal voters and Muslim bans, all the shock and alarm and political fatigue can be reduced to a dawning horrified recognition that President Trump is indeed…Donald Trump. His uttering a thirty-five-word oath of office did not magically make him into someone else; he is determined to change the office much more than the office could ever change him. How could anyone have doubted that President Trump would be Donald Trump plus great power and not Donald Trump plus great restraint? And that he would be determined to use that newfound power to begin to do pretty much what he told his base he was going to do? And—a final irony—that his very determination to break crockery and spread chaos and disruption is a major obstacle standing between him and the “new political order” whose birth his Svengali Bannon claims he will oversee. The necessity for continual disruption, constant outrage, maintaining an iron grip on the news cycle, and sheer winning without ever retreating means he has a grand proclivity for getting in his own way—“stepping on his own dick,” in political parlance—and we need, not for the first time, to let ourselves be grateful for that. It has thus far proved to be the hated status quo’s most important protection—not least because in very short order he has managed to produce a growing cadre of adversaries within the government itself. Most important, Trump’s aggressive and reckless sallies against intelligence professionals have secured him powerful enemies within the national security apparatus, who have increasingly been making use of their contacts in the elite press—particularly The Washington Post and The New York Times—to fight back and undermine his new administration. This is an important part of the so-called Russia scandal: that the “intelligence services,” in the words of Connecticut Senator Chris Murphy, “seem to be at war” with the new president.3 That war has already claimed a high-level casualty in the person of General (retired) Michael Flynn, the president’s first national security adviser, who was fired after only twenty-four days in the job. Though Trump has railed against “illegal leaks” and declared that Flynn “was treated very unfairly by the media,” this side of the story—the bureaucratic war being waged against Trump from within the government—by its nature cannot be adequately told in the press itself, because reporters, however much they resist acknowledging it, in effect are vital players. This storyline is obscured, one might say, by the storytellers’ own shadows. Four weeks of the Trump ascendancy have been an ongoing seminar on where norms end and laws begin, on how much of what we had relied on when it came to the president’s conduct rested largely on a heretofore unquestioned foundation of centuries-old custom. That the president would express respect for the prerogatives of Congress and the judiciary, that he would acknowledge the country’s need for an independent press, that he would generally tell the truth and hold in respect the public record: in little more than the time it took to recite the oath of office much of this has been swept away. Donald Trump is a proud shatterer of these norms, and the louder the crash and splatter the better: for to his supporters such norms are nostrums, antiquated excuses for the elite’s own self-protection, and the wails of outrage and protest mean their hero is doing what they sent him to Washington to do. The norms are gone, perhaps never to be fully restored, and we have advanced now to the laws. The dividing line is surprisingly murky. That the president would not use his office to promote his personal business, for example, depends not only on the so-called emoluments clause of the Constitution but a good many subsidiary norms that Trump began shattering some time ago, when he refused to release his tax returns during the campaign. (His long-standing vow to release them once an audit was completed has been quietly abandoned.4) It seems plain now that in the near term the emoluments clause has in common with these norms that it requires political animation: that it has life only to the degree that those in power are willing to enliven it. Thus far Republicans in Congress, still stunned to find themselves enjoying an undreamed-of monopoly on power and struggling to craft a workable political program not based solely on ressentiment, have shown themselves uninterested in pressing Trump on his business entanglements and seem willing to stand by and let the presidency become a source of great wealth for the Trump family. Thus do sacred cows perish, not with a bellow but with a whimper. Ours is famously said to be a government of laws, not of men, and yet we find in the Age of Trump that the laws depend on men and women willing to step forward and press them and that such are not to be found in the dominant party in Congress. Republicans are too divided and too focused on the main chance to move to protect what suddenly appear to be abstract principles. In an age when their party cannot muster a national popular vote majority they find themselves unaccountably in full possession of two branches of government and face the task of mastering their divisions sufficiently to pass a political program that won’t further doom them to the wilderness. <<card continues>>

### Yes Diversionary War – Base Key

<<card continues>> This means adopting policies of opposition designed to cultivate and harvest resentment, such as repealing Obamacare, which provides health insurance to more than twenty million Americans, while somehow shaping them into a positive program that they can present to constituents as having improved their lives. It is a daunting task and thus far they show few signs of being up to it. Untroubled by norms, President Trump required only two weeks to come face-to-face with laws in the form not of Congress but of three judges of the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals. Once again banning Muslims was what he had promised his base he would do. That the executive order itself was a legal mess in its drafting and in its execution stemmed both from the modus operandi that the Trump team has adopted—policies closely held, drafts jealously sheltered from the eyes of those even in the departments or agencies responsible for carrying them out (taking a page from Dick Cheney’s post–September 11 playbook)—and perhaps from the desire of the president and his advisers to stage a fight with a major institutional force not yet recumbent before him: the judiciary. Thus the president’s assertion of his “unreviewable” powers in the face of “so-called” judges was not just absurd or ignorant but a bit of bait, establishing the basis for blaming the judiciary for any terrorist attack that was to come. On this he tweeted indefatigably and repeatedly: “Just cannot believe a judge would put our country in such peril,” he said in his most explicit tweet. “If something happens blame him and court system. People pouring in. Bad!” Then: “I have instructed Homeland Security to check people coming into our country VERY CAREFULLY. The courts are making the job very difficult!” “People,” of course, are not “pouring in,” certainly not from the seven countries targeted. But the phrase links once again the country’s vital security to the complex of issues at the heart of Trump’s “America First” politics: trade, immigration, and terrorism. Fortress America is being assailed by foreigners who pour into the country and take our jobs, by elite technocrats (“stupid people”) who negotiate trade deals that leave our borders unprotected, by traitorous businessmen who move factories abroad, and by terrorists who take advantage of the nonexistent immigration safeguards to penetrate our shores. Everywhere the Other threatens. Everywhere the stupid, ineffectual, corrupt, self-dealing elites do nothing to protect the Forgotten American, in effect allying themselves with the threatening outsiders, becoming, in reality if not intent, traitors. As Trump proclaimed from the Capitol scarcely a month ago, “this stops, right here and right now.” But now “so-called judges” stand in the president’s way. The president will likely get his immigration ban, in one form or another, by backing up, rewriting the executive order, and proclaiming victory. Commentators will bemoan the fiasco that his first immigration rollout became. But Trump will have established the precedent of saddling the judiciary with responsibility for the next attack. Jack Goldsmith, the former head of the Justice Department’s Office of Legal Counsel under George W. Bush and now a professor at Harvard Law School, notes that “Trump is setting the scene to blame judges after an attack that has any conceivable connection to immigration.” He goes on: If Trump loses in court he credibly will say to the American people that he tried and failed to create tighter immigration controls. This will deflect blame for the attack. And it will also help Trump to enhance his power after the attack. After a bad terrorist attack at home, politicians are always under intense pressure to loosen legal constraints. (This was even true for near-misses, such as the failed Underwear bomber, which caused the Obama administration to loosen constraints on its counterterrorism policies in many ways.) Courts feel these pressures, and those pressures will be significantly heightened, and any countervailing tendency to guard against executive overreaction diminished, if courts are widely seen to be responsible for an actual terrorist attack. More broadly, the usual security panic after a bad attack will be enhanced quite a lot—in courts and in Congress—if before the attack legal and judicial constraints are seen to block safety. If Trump assumes that there will be a bad terrorist attack on his watch, blaming judges now will deflect blame and enhance his power more than usual after the next attack.5 One might add that Trump’s executive order and the presidential Twitter assault on the judiciary that followed have set up the judiciary to be blamed following any attack, not just one having “any conceivable connection to immigration.” In his followers’ view Trump has acted to protect the country and “political” judges have blocked him. He has put them in a position to take the fall. Perhaps this was not the original plan but with Trump, it is safe to say, there will likely never be an original plan that plays out to the end. As the hapless Jeb Bush observed, Trump was “a chaos candidate and he’d be a chaos president.” Better to say that Trump uses chaos as a vital element in his tactics, perhaps having learned during his long career to capitalize on the chaos that his recklessness, ignorance, and aggression inevitably create. One might call the resulting tactics “shock and opportunity”: Trump uses chaos to shock his opponents into varying crouches of outrage and contempt and then lunges forward amid the tumult wherever he sees an opportunity presenting itself. No wonder he thinks of himself as the supreme “counter-puncher.” His virtuosity is in his opportunism. It is against this reality that we must see the likelihood of a crisis as the vital springboard of a Trump presidency, especially an increasingly shaky, unpopular, and unstable one. The lower his poll numbers, the more outlandish his lies, the greater the resistance from opponents within the bureaucracies, the thicker his scandals and chaos, the likelier he will be to seek to use a crisis and all the opportunities it offers to lever himself from a position of defensiveness to that of dominating power. It is impossible to say when such a crisis might present itself or what it might be: A confrontation with Iran in the Persian Gulf? A dust-up with China over its claimed possessions in the South China Sea? A terrorist attack on American soil? There is no way of predicting, but it is worth taking very seriously that some sort of crisis will come and that, given Trump’s past behavior, his ruthless opportunism, and his drumbeat emphasis on “protecting the country,” such a crisis might well serve as a turning point in a Trump presidency, particularly one that is increasingly under siege. Consider the possibility of a terrorist attack on American soil, even a failed one. Not only would such an attack, as noted, put Trump in a perfect position to strike out at the judiciary, a major countervailing institution, it would offer him the political leverage to put down various rebellions within the bureaucracy, particularly within the intelligence agencies. There is no way to know whether such an attack will come but one can say that Trump, by attempting to strike out at Muslims generally, as he had vowed to do, has managed to place the Islamic State in the tempting position of being able to affirm, by attacking the United States, that it is the avenger of all Muslims. No accident that its propagandists have been nothing short of exultant, dubbing Trump’s executive order “the blessed order” and thus raising it to the level of the United States’ “blessed invasion” of Iraq as a miracle savior of its cause. <<cacrd continues>>

### Yes Diversionary War – Base Key

<<card continues>> If, as the Islamic State has asserted, the goal of its attacks in the West has been to “eliminate the gray zone”—to place “Muslims in the West…between one of two choices,” to either “apostatize or [migrate] to the Islamic State, and thereby escape persecution from the Crusader government and citizens”6—then Trump’s immigration ban goes far toward accomplishing the same thing: isolating Islamic communities, placing them all among a besieged minority whose travel is restricted and whose loyalty to their adopted countries is put in question. Already several jihadist tweeters asserted that the prophecy of the late Anwar al-Awlaki, the American-born cleric killed in a drone attack in Yemen in 2011, that the “West would eventually turn against its Muslim citizens,” had been fulfilled.7 If one sought to design a policy to encourage radicalization, it would be hard to suggest a better one. One needn’t posit an administration master plan to notice that a further attack, even an unsuccessful one, will find the political ground well prepared. The panic over security that follows will open the way to a variety of measures to “protect the country,” few or none of which might have been necessary to prevent the attack in the first place. As we have seen, after an attack politicians seize the opportunity to act, not least to deflect blame from themselves, and we can expect President Donald (“The hour of action has arrived!”) Trump, after his repeated vows to keep the country safe, to act aggressively and comprehensively. How far he might go would depend on the severity of an attack, the ambitions of the administration, and perhaps how cornered the president feels himself to be. What measures might we expect under a Trump state of emergency? Probably strong steps against refugees, aliens, and immigrants. Suspending all entry of refugees. Widespread deportations. Expelling many green card holders. Further tightening and even suspending immigration. Mosques might be placed under surveillance, the much-discussed Muslim registry established. More broadly, and again depending on the severity of an attack, bulk collection of metadata might be reinstituted along with other forms of domestic surveillance. Long-standing constraints on the military and the CIA operating domestically might be loosened or eliminated. Black sites would be reestablished and torture reintroduced. The cells at Guantánamo, nearly empty now, would once again begin to fill. The standing post–September 11 Authorization for the Use of Military Force might be expanded or replaced, allowing unlimited military strikes abroad—and, perhaps, at home. The latter might lead, in the case of a particularly severe attack, to the suspension of habeas corpus. Certainly if such an attack were to come during the current Congress there is no reason to expect anything other than majority cooperation and support, not only for Trump’s specific responses to the attack but for the rest of his program. Democrats, whom Trump would denounce as worse than judges in their obstructionism, would be on the defensive. And the courts, whose pushback in any case would take much longer—as it did after September 11—will have been politically hamstrung by a commander in chief who will be in a position to declare, and to repeat, that he had warned the “political judges” not to second-guess him in what was needed to protect the country but that they had not listened. He will not be shy in saying the same about the press, “the most dishonest human beings on earth.” By then his political drama will have been elevated from a battle against elites and the status quo to a heroic struggle for the survival of the nation. As the hero was fond of telling his crowds during the campaign: if he lost, “we won’t even have a country anymore.” There is little reason to suspect they don’t believe it still and no reason to think he does not. “Never let a crisis go to waste,” President Obama’s first chief of staff was fond of saying. It is fair to expect that, in the face of opportunities to increase his power, destroy the opposition, and build his “new political order,” President Trump will once again gaze upon the darkening skies and see only sunshine.

### Yes Diversionary War – Popularity

#### Trump will engage in a diversionary war to rally the base – few checks and many likely scenarios for conflict

Power 4/7. Jonathan, 4-7-2017, a foreign affairs columnist for the International Herald Tribune, writer for the IDN-INPS, "Trump has Cards Up his Sleeves to Avoid Impeachment," Global Geopolitics & Political Economy Net, <http://www.globalgeopolitics.net/2017/06/15/trump-has-cards-up-his-sleeves-to-avoid-impeachment/> //saenl

Some of the “best” are working to bring down President Donald Trump, yet are they ready to cut to the chase? He has cards up his sleeve. He came to power partly because he won the support of working class and lower middle class whites who were prepared to vote against their economic interest for the sake of the nationalism that Trump espoused. Neither Keir Hardie nor Franklin Roosevelt nor Bernie Sanders were their leader. It was Trump. I don’t find it difficult to imagine how Trump could play the nationalist card that would rally his electorate. The “best” would be against this, but how many would be convinced enough to go out on the street, French style, and demand Congress impeach him? I doubt if the Harvard professors would or journalists from the New York Times, business men, school teachers, doctors, civil servants or airline pilots. Of course, as with the civil rights movement and the anti-Vietnam War protests, there would be students in the front row. Then there would be clergy, a few professors from the University of Wisconsin, novelists, Senator Sanders and at most 50 members of Congress. The police would easily face them down and disperse them. “Patriotism is the last refuge of the scoundrel”, said Samuel Johnson. So is extreme confrontation, or even war. What follows is not my scenario. It is that of Philip Gordon, writing in the current issue of the respected “Foreign Affairs”. He was Barack Obama’s Special Assistant for the Middle East, North Africa and the Gulf regions. Those who have dormant passionate intensity in their bones should read it and act now before it is too late. Events can move fast. “A week is a long time in politics”, said the former British prime minister, Harold Wilson. Trump could begin his diversionary tactics with Iran, his arch-enemy during the campaign. Gordon says, let’s suppose that a dozen Americans are killed in an attack in Iraq by an Iranian-supported militia. Two days later, Trump imposes further sanctions on Iran, effectively torpedoing the de-nuclearisation agreement negotiated by Obama. Iran continues to test its missiles. It steps up its support for the Syrian government. Later in the year, the situation having deteriorated further, Iran announces it will resume prohibited nuclear activities, including testing advanced centrifuges and expanding its stockpile of low-enrich uranium. Frustrated by continued Iranian support for the Houthi rebels in Yemen, the Pentagon steps up patrols in the Strait of Hormuz and loosens the rules of engagement for U.S. forces. When an Iranian patrol boat aggressively approaches a U.S. cruiser, the ship fires and kills 25 Iranians. Revenge is swift and 6 more American soldiers in Iraq are killed. In return Trump authorises a cruise missile attack on the Islamic Revolutionary Guard. Nationalist fervour increases in Iran, and also in America. Iran lets its nuclear scientists off the leash. Next, U.S. bombers destroy Iran’s nuclear facilities. A good chunk of the U.S. electorate cheers him on. Anti-Trump congressmen feel that they couldn’t continue with their effort to impeach him while America was in such a serious situation. Experts later called the confrontation with China the most dangerous one since the Cuban Missile Crisis that almost erupted into nuclear war. The president’s advisor, Steve Bannon, said at the beginning of the Administration: “We’re going to war in the South China Sea in five to ten years.” Secretary of State Rex Tillerson, pushed by Trump, warns that China’s access to the islands there “is not going to be allowed”. At the same time North Korea tests another long-range missile capable of reaching the western sea-board of the US. Trump demands that China pressure North Korea to stop the provocation or it would go to war with the North. China is worried about the mass of refugees that would pour into China if the regime collapsed. <<card continues>>

### Yes Diversionary War – Popularity

<<card continues>> Also it doesn’t want U.S.-backed troops to advance to its border with the North. It refuses Trump. Trump then says the days of placating China are over. Sanctions are imposed. President Xi Jinping feels he has to retaliate. He imposes a 45% tariff on imports and sells $100 billion of U.S. Treasury bonds. Next follows an incident in the South China Sea, a clash between American and Chinese naval boats. Each side’s carriers are rushed to the region. There is a military stand-off that looks like stretching into the distant future. U.S.-China relations are in ruins. But Trump is off the hook for the rest of his term. During the next election? Perhaps war with North Korea.

#### Trump cares more about his base than pragmatic policy – his response to a loss of base support will be to wag the dog

Pillar 1/22. Pillar, Paul. Pillar has a PhD and is a nonresident senior fellow in the Center for 21st Century Security and Intelligence in the Foreign Policy program at the Brookings Institution, "Why Donald Trump Might Become an Interventionist," http://nationalinterest.org/print/blog/paul-pillar/why-trump-might-become-interventionist-19149?page=2

Now that Donald Trump has assumed power, we will start to see demonstrations of how futile it was to have tried to project a direction of his policy, including foreign and security policy, on the basis of his tweets, blurts, and campaign speeches. Of course, such projection is what those of us in the commentariat normally do, but this is not a normal president. Anticipation of the direction of policy ordinarily can be discussed in terms of grand strategies and schools of thought, but not so with Trump. With most presidents, attracting crowds and support and votes in a campaign is a gauntlet that must be run to serve the nation in its highest office. With Trump, attracting the crowds and support is what it’s all about. A good take on what makes the new president tick, and what this does or does not mean for protecting the nation’s interests during the next four years, is an [interview](http://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2017/01/trump-biographers-presidency-legitimate-214655) [3] with three Trump biographers (Gwenda Blair, Michael D’Antonio and Tim O’Brien) in Politico. The biographers agreed that there has been no indication Trump can separate the interests of the country from personal pique. As O’Brien put it, “The whole thing has been a vanity show … He’s been unable to find a clean division between his own emotional needs and his own insecurities and simply being a healthy, strategically committed leader who wants to parse through good policy options and a wide series of public statements about the direction in which he’ll take the country.” Whatever will be the Trump foreign policy will not be a function of liberalism, realism, neoconservatism, isolationism, or any of the other isms with which foreign policies customarily are associated. It will be a function of narcissism. Lest there had been any idea that Trump finally would leave the campaign mode once he took office, he dispelled that idea in his first 20 minutes as president with his carnage-filled, it’s-midnight-in-America inaugural address. And if any such idea persisted into his first full day in office, he further dispelled it with an appearance at CIA headquarters, in which he touched only briefly on the mission and contributions of the agency he was visiting and otherwise delivered a typical [Trumpian stream-of-consciousness](https://www.balloon-juice.com/2017/01/21/president-trumps-speech-to-the-cia/) [4] about the size of his support and how great his appointments were. Standing in front of the agency’s memorial wall that honors officers who have died in the line of duty, Trump did not focus on the significance of that place but instead was intent on criticizing the media for allegedly downplaying the size of the crowd at the inauguration event the previous day. It evidently is a matter of special sensitivity for him—and more important to him than recognizing those who have made sacrifices in service to their country—that his crowd was [smaller than for Barack Obama's 2009 inauguration](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2017/01/20/us/politics/trump-inauguration-crowd.html) [5]and also much [smaller than the women's march in Washington](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2017/01/22/us/politics/womens-march-trump-crowd-estimates.html) [6] that was taking place as he was speaking and that itself was only one of [numerous parallel demonstrations](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1xa0iLqYKz8x9Yc_rfhtmSOJQ2EGgeUVjvV4A8LsIaxY/htmlview?sle=true#gid=0) [7] across the country. The grim and gruesome picture that President Trump painted in his inaugural speech is far removed from reality, not only regarding [the economy](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/01/20/us/politics/donald-trump-us-economy.html) [8] but also regarding subjects such as crime, which is less of a problem now than in most previous decades. The economy is, of course, in far better shape than it was when Mr. Obama took office eight years ago. The false darkness of Mr. Trump’s picture of the state of the nation can play either of two different ways for him in the years ahead. One possibility is that even if reality stays more or less the same as it is now, he can contrast future reality with his own negative picture of today and claim credit for improvement regardless of whether any such improvement occurred or not. But the other possibility is that his artificially dark picture of today raises all the more people’s expectations of improvement, and regardless of his claims it may be difficult for him to persuade people that things actually have improved. It is harder for statistics, on matters such as wages, to lie as easily as it is for politicians to do so. And individual Americans can feel directly whether their own lots have improved or not. Such inflated expectations are one ingredient in possible big drops in Trump’s support. Another is the incongruity between his own promises and some of the policies he has suggested, involving such things as how a trade war would affect the cost of living and how upper bracket tax reductions would see the working class fall farther behind. Yet another ingredient is the natural business cycle, bearing in mind that right now the stock market is near record highs and unemployment is as low as it has been in nearly a decade. <<card continues>>

### Yes Diversionary War – Popularity

<<card continues>> There is a long history of political leaders, especially demagogic ones, who face weakening domestic support looking to foreign adventures to divert attention from problems at home, to rally nationalist sentiment, and to reap the benefits of popularity for the leader who is doing the rallying.  One thinks, for example, of Benito Mussolini’s conquest of Ethiopia.  He was seen as making Italy great, and he enjoyed a big boost in popularity within Italy.

### Yes Diversionary War – Popularity

#### Trump lives off of popularity – perceived loss of his base’s forceful acclaim leads to lash out

Fish 1/25. Isaac Stone Fish is a journalist, and a senior fellow at the Asia Society’s Center on US-China Relations. He is on sabbatical from Foreign Policy Magazine. “If the US ever went to war with China, it would be a Trump distraction technique” 25 January 2017 https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2017/jan/25/donald-trump-south-china-sea-distraction-technique

First, the good news. Donald Trump almost certainly does not wish to go to war with China over the disputed islands in the South China Sea. Yes, in his Senate confirmation hearing in mid-January, secretary of state nominee Rex Tillerson provocatively compared Beijing’s moves in the sea to “Russia’s taking of Crimea” and said its “access to these islands also is not going to be allowed”. And on Monday, White House press secretary Sean Spicer pledged to defend “international territories” in the South China Sea. But the simplest – and, frankly, more believable – explanation is that both men misspoke. In the same hearing, Tillerson mistakenly said $5tn in trade passes through the South China Sea daily – it’s yearly. Trump’s team is new, relatively inexperienced in foreign policy and less reliant on expert briefings. As Dennis Wilder, the top White House Asia adviser to George W Bush, put it: “Tillerson and the new press secretary are just not yet steeped in the arcane nature and legal niceties of the South China Sea issue.” Moreover, blockading the islands is not only “literally an act of war”, but “operationally almost impossible” an American South China Sea expert, who asked to remain anonymous because of the sensitivity of the situation, told me. And that, he said, indicates “it is a temper tantrum” – one that Trump may be using with the intention of trying to exert trade concessions from China – and “not a believable threat”. That is the good news. The bad news is that if in the coming months or years Trump faces an ignominious end to his presidency through scandal or mismanagement, a national crisis – involving China, or Isis or another foreign actor – could allow him to cling to power. After national crises involving foreign actors, presidents often enjoy a bump in popularity. John F Kennedy, for example, saw his popularity shoot up after the Cuban missile crisis, while after the 9/11 attacks in 2001, George W Bush’s approval rating jumped from the mid-50s to a record high of 92%. In December 1979, the Republican presidential candidate John Connally reversed his earlier criticism of Jimmy Carter’s handling of the ongoing Iranian hostage crisis. “We have only one president,” Connally said. “Now is the time to rally behind him and show a solid front to Iran and the world.” Political scientists call this the “rally round the flag effect”, and there are two schools of thought for why it happens, according to the scholars Marc J Hetherington and Michael Nelson. There’s the “patriotism” school, where the president embodies the spirit of the nation, earning himself a place above criticism, and the “opinion leadership” school, where “leaders’ unwillingness to criticize leaves journalists with nothing to report – and citizens with nothing to read, see or hear – that is not supportive of the president”. Trump surely understands this, and may be tempted to aggravate a national crisis in order to protect himself. He is a keen student, not of history – he said recently that his two favorite books were ones that he himself wrote – but of human psychology, and especially of mass appeal. If Trump exacerbating a tense situation into a national crisis, or even a war, in order to save his presidency sounds far-fetched, consider his palpable insecurity, and how he obsesses over signs of his popularity. Trump’s White House continues to insist that his inauguration crowd was the largest ever, and that he only lost the popular vote because of massive election fraud – both obvious lies. For Trump, public acclaim seems to justify his existence. Also, Trump enters office beleaguered. His approval rating is the lowest for a new president since Gallup begun surveying the issue in the Dwight D Eisenhower era. And his myriad financial interests, his refusal to release his tax returns, his impulsiveness, his penchant for nepotism, and his willingness to mix business and pleasure greatly increase the chance for an impeachable scandal. Moreover, Trump has shown himself masterful at hijacking the national conversation to redirect attention away from his scandals and incompetence: “the Distractor in Chief”, in the words of the Washington Post’s Paul Farhi. A state of national emergency following an Isis attack, or a war with China to, say, “steal our jobs back” would follow that same pattern – only amplified. We underestimate his desire to maintain that popularity, and the tactics he would employ to do so, at our own peril. Yes, the rally round the flag effect is temporary – lasting only a few weeks to several years, depending on the nature of the crisis. And presidential popularity can suffer when a war imposes financial and societal costs. But its effect is real. If Trump is voted out of office, or impeached and convicted, it does not matter what threat the US is facing. It does not matter if we find ourselves enmeshed in a war with China, or scrambling to respond to an unprecedentedly devastating terrorist attack. He must go. “In times of national crises,” Hetherington and Nelson wrote, “Americans rally to the president as the anthropomorphic symbol of national unity – a kind of living flag.” In some ways, our national nightmare would be a Trump dream: a period where his acclaim is absolute and unimpeachable.

### Yes Diversionary War – Psychology

#### Trump’s psychological traits make him susceptible to diversionary war

Foster 16. 12-19-2016 - professor of international studies and political science at the Virginia Military Institute (Dennis, “Would President Trump go to war to divert attention from problems at home?” *Washington Post*, https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2016/12/19/yes-trump-might-well-go-to-war-to-divert-attention-from-problems-at-home/?utm\_term=.43745ac4c66c

If the U.S. economy tanks, should we expect Donald Trump to engage in a diversionary war? Since the age of Machiavelli, analysts have expected world leaders to launch international conflicts to deflect popular attention away from problems at home. By stirring up feelings of patriotism, leaders might escape the political costs of scandal, unpopularity — or a poorly performing economy. One often-cited example of diversionary war in modern times is Argentina’s 1982 invasion of the Falklands, which several (though not all) political scientists attribute to the junta’s desire to divert the people’s attention from a disastrous economy. In a 2014 article, Jonathan Keller and I argued that whether U.S. presidents engage in diversionary conflicts depends in part on their psychological traits — how they frame the world, process information and develop plans of action. Certain traits predispose leaders to more belligerent behavior. Do words translate into foreign policy action? One way to identify these traits is content analyses of leaders’ rhetoric. The more leaders use certain types of verbal constructs, the more likely they are to possess traits that lead them to use military force. For one, conceptually simplistic leaders view the world in “black and white” terms; they develop unsophisticated solutions to problems and are largely insensitive to risks. Similarly, distrustful leaders tend to exaggerate threats and rely on aggression to deal with threats. Distrustful leaders typically favor military action and are confident in their ability to wield it effectively. Thus, when faced with politically damaging problems that are hard to solve — such as a faltering economy — leaders who are both distrustful and simplistic are less likely to put together complex, direct responses. Instead, they develop simplistic but risky “solutions” that divert popular attention from the problem, utilizing the tools with which they are most comfortable and confident (military force). Based on our analysis of the rhetoric of previous U.S. presidents, we found that presidents whose language appeared more simplistic and distrustful, such as Harry Truman, Dwight Eisenhower and George W. Bush, were more likely to use force abroad in times of rising inflation and unemployment. By contrast, John F. Kennedy and Bill Clinton, whose rhetoric pegged them as more complex and trusting, were less likely to do so. What about Donald Trump? Since Donald Trump’s election, many commentators have expressed concern about how he will react to new challenges and whether he might make quick recourse to military action. For example, the Guardian’s George Monbiot has argued that political realities will stymie Trump’s agenda, especially his promises regarding the economy. Then, rather than risk disappointing his base, Trump might try to rally public opinion to his side via military action. I sampled Trump’s campaign rhetoric, analyzing 71,446 words across 24 events from January 2015 to December 2016. Using a program for measuring leadership traits in rhetoric, I estimated what Trump’s words may tell us about his level of distrust and conceptual complexity. The graph below shows Trump’s level of distrust compared to previous presidents. These results are startling. Nearly 35 percent of Trump’s references to outside groups paint them as harmful to himself, his allies and friends, and causes that are important to him — a percentage almost twice the previous high. The data suggest that Americans have elected a leader who, if his campaign rhetoric is any indication, will be historically unparalleled among modern presidents in his active suspicion of those unlike himself and his inner circle, and those who disagree with his goals. As a candidate, Trump also scored second-lowest among presidents in conceptual complexity. Compared to earlier presidents, he used more words and phrases that indicate less willingness to see multiple dimensions or ambiguities in the decision-making environment. These include words and phrases like “absolutely,” “greatest” and “without a doubt.” A possible implication for military action I took these data on Trump and plugged them into the statistical model that we developed to predict major uses of force by the United States from 1953 to 2000. For a president of average distrust and conceptual complexity, an economic downturn only weakly predicts an increase in the use of force. But the model would predict that a president with Trump’s numbers would respond to even a minor economic downturn with an increase in the use of force. For example, were the misery index (aggregate inflation and unemployment) equal to 12 — about where it stood in October 2011 — the model predicts a president with Trump’s psychological traits would initiate more than one major conflict per quarter.

### Yes Diversionary War – Psychology

#### Diversionary war is uniquely likely for Trump – he sees it as a quick fix for popularity – no checks, media encouragement, and vanity

Healy 4/28. Gene, vice president at the Cato Institute, 4-28-2017, "100 Days in, Trump Has Already Learned the Seductions of Foreign War," Cato Institute, <https://www.cato.org/publications/commentary/100-days-trump-has-already-learned-seductions-foreign-war> //saenl

With his major initiatives stymied by Congress and the courts, President Trump has begun griping about the media holding him to “the ridiculous standard of the first 100 days.” The good news for Trump is he can argue for an extension: according to some of America’s preeminent “thought leaders,” he wasn’t really president until he hit Syria with 59 Tomahawk missiles on April 6.¶ “The Trump administration can truly be said to have started only now,” exulted neoconservative foreign policy guru Elliot Abrams the day after the airstrikes. “Donald Trump became the president of the United States [last night],” echoed CNN’s Fareed Zakaria. It was “a big moment,” “a kind of education of Donald Trump,” Zakaria gushed: Trump “realized [that] presidents don’t need to go to a pesky Congress every time they want military force.”¶ As a practical matter, Zakaria is right: perversely, it’s in the use of military force—the area where presidents are most dangerous—where they now have the freest hand. The president can’t unilaterally pass a tax cut or a new health-care plan, but say the word, and the missiles will fly. When he’s showered in media accolades for doing so, it can make the resort to force particularly seductive.¶ With tensions rising on the Korean Peninsula, the Trump team has signaled it may be ready to unleash another barrage, if it can just get our errant “armada” into position. Asked last Monday whether the president was “prepared to act alone” against North Korea, White House press secretary Sean Spicer replied they’d make sure Congress is “notified,” but “I think he’s going to utilize the powers under Article II of the Constitution.” Now that’s presidential!¶ Our political culture has degraded to the point where it encourages the worst presidential temptations—and we’ve made waging war nearly as easy as firing off a tweet.¶ War Abroad Distracts Americans from Home¶ Our Constitution’s framers had a far narrower view of the president’s powers, and envisioned a broader role for that “pesky Congress” in matters of war and peace. As James Madison put it in 1793, “In no part of the constitution is more wisdom to be found, than in the clause which confides the question of war or peace to the legislature, and not to the executive department”; were it otherwise, “the trust and the temptation would be too great for any one man.”¶ There’s a good deal of political-science evidence suggesting that the “temptation” Madison warned about is real. The “rally effect, “for “rally round the flag,” describes the popularity boost presidents derive from international conflict: “Scholars have repeatedly found short-lived spikes in US presidential approval following US uses of military force.”¶ The “diversionary war” hypothesis—the scholarly moniker for “Wag the Dog”—proposes that beleaguered presidents may seek to distract the public by waging war abroad. Here, the evidence is more mixed. But various studies have found that presidents are more likely to use force during periods of economic stagnation, or high unemployment, and that “presidents resort to the sword more quickly when their approval ratings decline.”¶ Some presidents may be particularly susceptible to temptation: “More conceptually simple leaders—particularly when high in distrust, a trait linked to more hawkish policy inclinations—are significantly more likely to engage in diversion.”¶ The Media Love War. Middle America, Not So Much¶ Whatever motivated Trump’s Syria strike, it seems to have given his dismal approval ratings a nudge. Moreover, judging by the chorus of approval from American “opinion leaders,” the president may have to rethink his view that the press is the “enemy of the American people.” <<card continues>>

### Yes Diversionary War – Psychology

<<card continues>> On Syria, media elites proved themselves far more likely to “rally round the flag” than will guys in trucker hats.¶ The “failing New York Times” greeted the airstrikes with the headline “On Syria Attack, Trump’s Heart Came First.” He “did the right thing” was the common refrain from former critics, like the Times’ Nicholas Kristof, the humanitarian hawk Anne-Marie Slaughter, and neoconservative #NeverTrump-er Bret Stephens.¶ It’s no surprise that, as a senior White House official told the Washington Post’s David Ignatius, “The decision to strike a Syrian air base was a confidence builder for an inexperienced and sometimes fractious White House.” After all, “Trump couldn’t be sure when he launched the attack that a Russian wouldn’t be killed, or that some other freak mishap wouldn’t arise.”¶ We managed to dodge the worst-case scenarios, but new dangers lie ahead. As Madison warned: in war, “laurels are to be gathered, and it is the executive brow they are to encircle. The strongest passions and most dangerous weaknesses of the human breast; ambition, avarice, vanity, the honourable or venial love of fame, are all in conspiracy against the desire and duty of peace.”¶ Two centuries later, our political culture has degraded to the point where it encourages the worst presidential temptations—and we’ve made waging war nearly as easy as firing off a tweet. If, per Fareed Zakaria, we’re witnessing the “education of Donald Trump,” what lessons is he being taught?

### Impact – China War

#### Trump diverts into a US-China war – it’s the obvious choice given his campaign

Reynolds 2/7. Reynolds, Ben. Writer and foreign policy analyst based in New York, “Tillerson, Trump, and U.S.-China Policy,” http://www.chinausfocus.com/foreign-policy/tillerson-trump-and-us-china-policy, 2/7/17

At the same time, Tillerson’s comments during his confirmation hearing suggest an amateurish understanding of the finer points of U.S.-China relations. Tillerson [infamously suggested](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/01/12/world/asia/rex-tillerson-south-china-sea-us.html) the U.S. prevent China from accessing the disputed South China Sea islands, an action that would undoubtedly be seen as an act of war. The White House and State Department quietly walked those comments back, giving the impression that Tillerson’s statements were not a reflection of new U.S. policy, but rather the dangerous ramblings of an inexperienced nominee. Suffice it to say that the combination of high-risk tolerance and an extremely shallow understanding of Asian geopolitics do not bode well for U.S.-China relations. Nevertheless, Tillerson will not be the primary figure responsible for U.S. policy towards China. The general trend in recent years has been the increasing centralization of decision-making in the executive branch. The Obama administration was renowned for allowing most cabinet secretaries little room to operate on their own. The Trump administration may very well continue this trend. Tillerson was reportedly not even informed about the extremely controversial immigration ban, although handling its inevitable fallout certainly fell under the purview of the State Department. It is hard to foresee how the internal dynamics and palace politics of the Trump White House will influence China policy at this stage. It is more important to consider the administration’s interests and general U.S. interests if we want to predict how the U.S. will manage its relationship with China over the next four years. Unfortunately, it seems that the administration will have incentives to provoke a foreign crisis to distract from its domestic failures unless it miraculously improves its approval ratings. (Absent a major terrorist attack, it will not.) China and Iran are the two obvious targets of such a diversionary strategy. This means that, regardless of the U.S.’s long-term strategic interests, domestic politics may cause the administration to behave aggressively towards China. One could argue that there are important ways in which U.S. interests might diverge from the interests of the Trump administration. If one believes that the U.S. is interested in preventing the hindrance of trade and ensuring peace and stability in the Asia-Pacific, then Trump’s incentives to deal belligerently with China would contradict those interests. The administration’s lack of polish and refusal to abide by basic diplomatic protocol will likely undermine U.S. ideological hegemony in the region. These facts are no doubt deeply troubling to liberal foreign policy professionals at the Brookings Institution. That said, the atmosphere in Washington has been gradually tilting in favor of confrontation with China for years now. A declining power like the United States has every incentive to confront its rising challenger sooner rather than later, assuming it is unwilling to allow a transfer of power. China’s military capabilities and international influence grow with each passing year. U.S. military planners understand this fact well, and there are few (if any) members of the U.S. foreign policy elite who are willing to give up U.S. hegemony in Asia without a fight. Trump’s belligerence towards China is not a radical departure from the preceding administration; it is a change in tone, not a change in underlying attitude. The Obama administration did not take such an aggressive position on Taiwan, but it was Obama’s White House that reignited security competition with China after the relatively placid Bush years. We would do well to remember that Trump’s opponent, Hillary Clinton, was one of the preeminent architects of “assertive” U.S. policy in the Asia-Pacific. The ascension of a right-wing buffoon to the presidency did not seem to radically alter the established trend of deteriorating U.S.-China relations. However, two important things have changed. The first of these factors is perceived legitimacy. Donald Trump’s aggressive, toddler-like demeanor has the potential to aggravate and alienate U.S. allies. There are massive material incentives for many allies to continue cooperating with the United States, but the perception of being bullied and humiliated by Trump will generate domestic pressure to push back against certain U.S. interests. Trump’s recent childish behavior on a diplomatic call with Malcolm Turnbull, Australia’s Prime Minister, seems to have ruffled feathers. Outside the region, European Council President Donald Tusk made headlines by [describing](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/press-releases-pdf/2017/1/47244654122_en.pdf) Trump’s America as a threat to Europe. These reflect a potential shift in the diplomatic atmosphere that may make it harder for certain leaders to publicly support U.S. policy. The second factor is the likelihood of a thaw in U.S.-Russian relations. Rex Tillerson, reportedly has a good personal relationship with Vladimir Putin, and he may have an important role in managing U.S.-Russian relations. The U.S. has already eased some sanctions on Russia. Trump has made no secret of his admiration for Putin and willingness to work with Russia in Syria. There will be significant internal pushback on these issues, including from powerful agencies like the CIA. Nevertheless, a U.S.-Russia thaw poses serious risks for China. <<card continues>>

### Impact – China War

<<card continues>> Simultaneous U.S. belligerence toward Russia and China under the Obama administration pushed both countries closer together, but a U.S.-Russian détente could undermine those ties. Tripolarity is notoriously unstable, and there are obvious incentives for two powers to ally themselves against the third. The Trump presidency thus presents both risks and opportunities for China. The risks may be quite severe. Trump’s administration may attempt to provoke a diversionary crisis that could do irreparable harm to both the United States and China. Ten years from now, a military confrontation could end U.S. hegemony in Asia. Now, however, China would be drawn into a draining, protracted conflict with little hope of real victory for either side. On the other hand, there are real opportunities for China as well. The Chinese government has the opportunity to play the “adult in the room,” presenting itself as the only stable guardian of regional security. Trump’s demeanor, domestic instability in the U.S., and unnecessary U.S. escalation will all play into this perception. If China can avoid a direct clash with the United States, it may find that the reassessment of its regional role will come sooner than anyone might have imagined.

### Impact – Iran War

#### Trump will spark a war in Iran to try to appear strong – that draws in ISIS and causes mass death – empirics

Cockburn 2/10/2017 (Patrick Cockburn is an award-winning writer on The Independent who specialises in analysis of Iraq, Syria and wars in the Middle East, “Donald Trump will spark a war with Iran – which is great news for Isis”, The Independent, February 10, 2017, <http://www.independent.co.uk/voices/donald-trump-middle-east-isis-about-to-start-a-war-a7572891.html>, accessed 6/26/2017, \*LD)

Trump is reputed to seldom read books or show much interest in history other than that of his own life and times, but it would be worth his while reflecting on Gallipoli, because Churchill was only the first of six British and American leaders to have suffered political shipwreck in the Middle East over the last century. The prime reason for these successive disasters is that the region has always been more unstable and prone to wars than anywhere else in the world. Mistakes made on its battlefields tend to be calamitous and irretrievable. Avoiding this fate is not easy: the six British and American leaders who came a serious cropper in the Middle East were generally abler, more experienced and better-advised than Trump. It is therefore worthwhile asking, at the beginning of his administration, what are the chances of him becoming the next victim of the permanent state of crisis in the wider Middle East. He campaigned as an isolationist who would avoid being sucked into armed conflicts abroad, but his first weeks in office and his senior appointments suggest that he will try to take a central role in the politics of the region. The new administration projects a macho self-image devoted to “Making America Great Again” and this, combined with the demonising of its enemies, will hinder compromise and tactical retreats. Western intervention in the region has usually come to grief because of arrogant exaggeration of its own strength and an underestimation of the capabilities of their enemies. These failings unite with a crippling ignorance of the part of foreign powers about the complexity and dangers of the political and military terrain in which they are operating. This was true of Churchill, who wrongly assessed likely Turkish military resistance in 1915. Lloyd George, one of the most astute of British prime ministers, made the same mistake in 1922 when his government destroyed itself by threatening to go to war with Turkey. Anthony Eden lost office after the Suez Crisis in 1956 when he failed to overthrow Nasser in Egypt. Tony Blair’s reputation was forever blasted for leading Britain into war in Iraq in 2003. Of the three US presidents badly or terminally damaged by crisis in the Middle East, Jimmy Carter was the most unlucky, as there was nothing much he could do to stop the Iranian Revolution in 1979 or the seizure of diplomats in the US embassy in Tehran as hostages. Ronald Reagan’s presidency saw military intervention in Lebanon where 241 US Marines were blown up in 1983, and the Iran-Contra scandal that permanently weakened the administration. Significant though these disasters and misadventures seemed at the time, none had the impact of George W Bush’s invasion of Iraq in 2003 which led to the regeneration of al-Qaeda and the spread of chaos through the region. In retrospect, these leaders may look foolhardy as they plunged into bottomless quagmires or fought unwinnable wars. Some, like Carter, were victims of circumstances, but entanglements were not inevitable, as was shown by President Obama, who did read books, knew his history and was acutely aware of the pitfalls the US needed to skirt in Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria and beyond. Avoiding disasters which nobody else knew existed will seldom win a politician much credit, but Obama deserves credit for escaping being sucked into the civil war in Syria or into a broader conflict against Iran as the leader of the Shia axis. He justifiably suspected that US allies like Saudi Arabia and the Sunni states of the Gulf were eager to see the US fight their battles for them. <<card continues>>

### Impact – Iran War

<<card continues>> The Trump administration is seen by so many commentators as so uniquely awful in its contempt for the truth, legality and democracy, that they underestimate how much it has in common with that of George W Bush. After 9/11, the Bush administration famously gave the Saudis a free pass despite the many links between the hijackers and Saudi Arabia. Instead the White House channelled the popular anger and desire to hit back provoked by 9/11 into its military campaign to overthrow Saddam Hussein in Iraq. Thirteen years later it is well established through leaked US documents and briefings that Saudi Arabia and the Sunni states of the Gulf played a central role in financing and supplying fundamentalist Islamic groups in Syria after 2011. Trump continually promised during the presidential election that he would focus exclusively in the Middle East on destroying Isis, but one of the first moves of his administration has been to shift the US closer to Saudi Arabia by backing its war in Yemen. In almost his first statement of policy, Secretary of Defence James Mattis said that Iran is "the single biggest state sponsor of terrorism in the world". One of the dangers of Trump’s demagogic rants and open mendacity is that they tend to give the impression that less theatrical members of his team, especially former generals like Mattis or National Security Adviser Michael Flynn, are monuments of good sense and moderation. Yet both men are set on threat inflation when it comes to Iran, though without providing any evidence for its terrorist actions, just as their predecessors inflated the threat supposedly posed by Saddam Hussein’s non-existent WMD and fictional support for al-Qaeda. This is all good news for Isis, though it has so many enemies committed to its defeat that a switch in US policy may be too late to do it a lot of good. But its main enemies on the ground are the Iraqi and Syrian armies, whose governments are backed by Iran, and the Syrian Kurds who fear that the US may soon give them less support in order to appease Turkey. Given the high decibel level of the Trump administrations threats and warnings, it is impossible to distinguish bellicose rhetoric from real operational planning. A confrontation with Iran will probably not come soon; but in a year or two, when previous policies conceived under Obama have run their course, Trump may well feel that he has to show how much tougher and more effective he is than his predecessor, whom he has denounced as weak and incompetent. This administration is so heavily loaded with crackpots, fanatics and amateurs, that it would be optimistic to imagine that they will pass safely through the political swamplands of the Middle East without detonating a crisis with which they cannot cope. The diplomatic agreements that Trump denounces as “terrible deals” for the US represent real balances of power and interests and he is not going to do any better. In four years’ time, the select club of American and British leaders who failed in the Middle East, with disastrous consequences for everybody, may have a voluble seventh member.

### Impact – Iran War

#### Iran war draws in Israel and risks nuclear escalation

Beres 2/10/2017 (Louis Rene Beres is emeritus professor of political science and international law at Purdue University, “The Fast Track to Armageddon”, US News, February 10, 2017, <https://www.usnews.com/opinion/world-report/articles/2017-02-10/donald-trump-iran-and-the-fast-track-to-nuclear-war-in-the-middle-east>, accessed 6/26/2017, \*LD)

When all pertinent factors are taken into account, U.S. President Donald Trump could sometime undertake more-or-less selective military action against Iran. In response, the Islamic Republic – then having absolutely no meaningful option to launching at least certain forms of armed reprisal – would target American military forces in the region and/or carefully chosen Israeli targets. Whatever its precise configuration of selected targets, Tehran's retaliatory blow would be expressly designed so as not to elicit an unacceptably massive (possibly even nuclear) counter-retaliation. With particular regard to Israel, moreover, this sort of retaliation would plausibly include, inter alia, a substantial reliance upon Iran's own surrogate militia forces in Hezbollah. All such bewildering calculations, of course, must assume perfect rationality on all sides. If, for example, the new American president should cast all caution to the winds with his own first strike (a strike that would be defended by Washington, in law, as an allegedly legitimate expression of international law-enforcement, or "anticipatory self-defense"), the Iranian response, whether rational or irrational, could expectedly be "proportionate" – that is, comparably massive. In that prospectively escalatory case, any contemplated introduction of nuclear weapons into the ensuing conflagration might not necessarily be dismissed out of hand. At that point, moreover, any such introduction would have to originate from the American and/or Israeli side. This indisputable inference is "true by definition," "simply" because Iran would not yet have become an operationally nuclear power. In such circumstances, Trump, especially in view of his favored argumentum ad baculum stance in virtually all matters, might decide upon a so-called "mad dog" strategy vis-a-vis Iran. Here, the American president would display a last-resort dependence upon a strategy of pretended irrationality, or what I have called in my own latest books and monographs, the "rationality of pretended irrationality." Significantly, any such residual reliance, while intuitively sensible and apparently compelling, could still backfire, thereby opening up an "Armageddon path" to a now unstoppable escalation. If, on the other hand, Trump's "punishing" or defensive initial strike against Iran were conspicuously less than massive, a fully rational Iranian adversary would likely ensure that its chosen reprisal was correspondingly "limited." But if Trump's consciously rational and calibrated attack upon Iran were wittingly or unwittingly launched against an irrational enemy leadership, the Iranian response could then be "roaring missiles," or an all-out retaliation. This presumably unanticipated response, while non-nuclear, could be directed at some as yet undeterminable combination of U.S. and Israeli targets. Cumulatively, it could still inflict very substantial harms. For the moment, at least, any Iranian missile reprisal against U.S. interests and personnel would have to exclude the American homeland. This same limiting prediction, however, cannot be made in reference to any considered Israeli targets. On the contrary, any reciprocal Iranian attack directed against Israel would plausibly target that country's military assets and could also include a significant number of "soft" civilian populations and corollary infrastructures. Even if it is being played only by rational adversaries, the advancing strategic "game" would demand that each contestant relentlessly strive for "escalation dominance." Ominously, it is in the thoroughly unpracticed internal dynamics of any such rivalry that the serious prospect of a genuinely "Armageddon" scenario could sometime be realized. <<card continues>>

### Impact – Iran War

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#### Iran war triggers economic crisis and nuclear regional war that escalates

Sadjapour 2/9/2017 (Karim Sadjapour is a senior fellow at the Carnegie Endowment and an adjunct professor at Georgetown University, “How America Could Stumble Into War With Iran”, The Atlantic, February 9, 2017, <https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2017/02/iran-trump-nuclear-deal/515979/>, accessed 6/26/2017, \*LD)

Step 6: Conflict A context in which Iran has resumed its nuclear activities and a divided P5+1 fails to meaningfully react creates a dilemma for both the United States and Israel. Israeli Prime Minister Benyamin Netanyahu—who views Iran an “existential threat”—has a lower threshold than the United States for taking military action against Iran. While the Obama administration restrained Netanyahu, Trump has thus far indulged him. Though Netanyahu may not succeed in compelling Washington to strike Iran’s nuclear facilities—his first preference—he may succeed in getting Trump’s greenlight, and the requisite military hardware, for Israel to take military action. What is the likelihood that Trump himself would authorize military action against Iran’s nuclear sites or military assets? One of Trump’s core beliefs, taught to him by his former lawyer Roy Cohn, is “When attacked, hit back harder.” While it remains to be seen how a philosophy born out of New York City real estate quarrels can be applied to complicated geopolitical disputes, throughout his campaign and his first weeks in office Trump’s decision making has been marked by impulsiveness more than restraint. How will he react if Iran continues to defy him despite his repeated taunts and tweets? Trump’s confrontational style is coupled with a core national-security team that is universally cynical about Iran. Flynn, Vice President Mike Pence, CIA Director Mike Pompeo, and Elliott Abrams—whom Trump was reportedly, until recently, considering for deputy secretary of state—were all outspoken opponents of the nuclear deal. Last fall Abrams advocated “sinking an Iranian ship” to show resolve. While Mattis has not recommended scrapping the nuclear deal, he has called Iran “the single most enduring threat to stability and peace in the Middle East.” An unraveling of the nuclear deal could trigger a regional war, or a regional war could trigger an unraveling of the nuclear deal. In addition to concerns that Trump’s social-media outbursts may cause an inadvertent conflict, serious observers also worry that Trump could use either a terrorist attack or an external conflict—preferably with a longstanding Islamist adversary—to expand his power. Trump’s strategic advisor Steve Bannon said in November 2015 that Islam was “the most radical” religion in the world and “we’re clearly going into … a major shooting war in the Middle East again.” To those looking for “shooting wars” in the Middle East, Iran provides an unparalleled opportunity. On numerous occasions over the past two years the U.S. Navy has fired warning shots against Iranian Revolutionary Guard patrol boats in the Persian Gulf and interdicted shipments of weapons bound for Yemen’s Houthis, whose recent attack on a Saudi ship was allegedly intended for the United States. In essence the opportunities for conflict with Iran are numerous and interrelated: An unraveling of the nuclear deal could trigger a regional war, or a regional war could trigger an unraveling of the nuclear deal. Step 7: Repercussions In one of his final interviews before dying at age 101, Kennan reflected that "Anyone who has ever studied the history of American diplomacy, especially military diplomacy, knows that you might start in a war with certain things on your mind as a purpose of what you are doing, but in the end you found yourself fighting for entirely different things that you had never thought of before. War has a momentum of its own, and it carries you away from all thoughtful intentions when you get into it. … War seldom ever leads to good results." <<card continues>>

### Impact – Iran War

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### Impact – North Korea War

#### Trump lashes out against North Korea – it’s the perfect opportunity for diversionary war – that causes hundreds of millions of deaths

Zenko 6/7. Micah, senior fellow with the Center for Preventive Action at the Council on Foreign Relations, 6-7-2017, "Trump’s Russia Scandal Is Already Swallowing His Foreign Policy," Foreign Policy, <http://foreignpolicy.com/2017/06/06/trumps-russia-scandal-is-already-swallowing-his-foreign-policy/> //saenl

While telegraphing its desire to instigate a crisis with North Korea, the Trump administration has publicly articulated no plan or theory of success for how the “denuclearization” of the Korean Peninsula actually happens. And in conversations with White House, Pentagon, and State Department officials and staffers about North Korea, I have heard nothing that indicates such a plan exists. The default course of action — tried unsuccessfully by the last two presidents — is to further lean on Beijing to further lean on Pyongyang. This will not work. Two weeks ago, I was fortunate to attend a workshop in Beijing, where a well-connected Chinese foreign-policy scholar stated bluntly: “You have to understand, China is more afraid of the United States than it is of North Korea.” He further indicated that China’s leaders prefer the status quo of a nuclear-armed North Korea over working with the United States to further destabilize, or even topple, the Kim regime. When China inevitably refuses to coerce North Korea as strongly, or on the timeline, that the Trump administration demands, then what? When China inevitably refuses to coerce North Korea as strongly, or on the timeline, that the Trump administration demands, then what? If the White House believes that North Korea has even a 10 or 20 percent probability of being able to successfully launch an intercontinental ballistic missile mated with a nuclear warhead onto the United States, I believe that Trump would authorize a preemptive attack against the missile-launch site (assuming it is an easily observable, liquid-fueled missile) and perhaps against known nuclear weapons-related facilities. Military officials, including Adm. Harry Harris, commander of the U.S. forces in the Pacific, have acknowledged that Kim would not simply absorb such an attack but would immediately retaliate against South Korea. This would trigger America’s mutual defense treaty commitments to defend South Korea and spark a series of classified, pre-planned U.S.-South Korean military operations. When the Pentagon reviewed some version of this scenario in 1994 (before North Korea had a nuclear arsenal of at least a dozen bombs), it was estimated that such a retaliation could “cause hundreds of thousands, perhaps millions, of casualties.” But a President Trump facing ever-expanding scandals, continually low polling numbers, and even potential impeachment proceedings may decide that a preemptive attack on North Korea is worth the costs and consequences. The academic findings are mixed on whether heads of government facing domestic vulnerability engage in such diversionary wars — uses of force to divert public attention and rally support for their leadership. Some analysts and scholars have examined whether George H.W. Bush’s 1989 invasion of Panama or Bill Clinton’s attacks on al Qaeda targets and Iraq in 1998 were examples of such diversionary tactics. What seems clear, however, is that presidents are more likely to engage in such diversions when they are inherently distrustful and perceive the world in simplistic black-and-white terms — a perfect characterization of Trump. The other potential outcome to consider for the Trump administration’s conduct of foreign policy is for an embattled president to become further and further detached while remaining in office. Toward the end of his presidency, Nixon spent an increasing amount of time in his “Western White House” in San Clemente, California, while Henry Kissinger served as both secretary of state and national security advisor and effectively ran U.S. foreign policy. Before and during the Turkish intervention in Cyprus in July 1974, Kissinger would simply call Nixon to inform him of what Kissinger had decided. <<card continues>>

### Impact – North Korea War

<<card continues>> Since Trump has already bestowed “total authorization” to Secretary of Defense James Mattis, it is not unimaginable that the Pentagon chief could be notifying a president who has retreated to one of his properties of meaningful military decisions already underway. People hoping Trump will go away will be disappointed if comparable investigations of presidents are any criterion. The open-ended Lawrence Walsh independent counsel investigation into Iran-Contra took six years and seven months; the Robert Fiske/Kenneth Starr independent counsel investigation into the Whitewater land deal lasted four years and four months; even the Archibald Cox-Leon Jaworski-Henry Ruth investigation of Watergate lasted two years and two months, wrapping up 14 months after Nixon resigned. Robert Mueller’s team has reportedly gotten a quick start on setting up his office and forming a budget. However, it is improbable that this special counsel will deliver a final report much faster than his predecessors, and certainly not before the Nov. 6, 2018, midterm elections. Further leaks and scandals could increase the political pressure on Trump to such a degree that he resigns. But, while hoping or assuming this happens, it would be a grave mistake to ignore U.S. foreign-policy commitments and activities, and any shifts they might undergo under the influence of scandal.

### A2: Backlash DA’s are Racist

#### Refusing to acknowledge individual backlash confirms the view of administrators as detached technocrats unconcerned with the common people – that magnifies negative reactions

Rossell 77. Christine H., Boston University Prof where she holds the Maxwell Chair in United States Citizenship, a consultant to and/or expert witness in more than 60 educational equity court cases, has helped design and defend 11 magnet-voluntary desegregation plans, writing with Robert L. Crain, “The Mayor's Role in School Desegregation Implementation”, 10/1/77, DOI 10.1177/0042085977123002, Urban Education PB SAGE Publications Inc, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0042085977123002>, accessed 7/1/17 //saenl

Kirby et al. (1973: 129-132) also found other city leaders besides the civic elite to be important in insuring peaceful implementation. Organized white opposition was greatest when the mayor remained aloof from the school desegregation issue or was conservative, when the superintendent was inactive, and where opposition to desegregation came from within the school board itself. However, it can be argued that for this last phase of court-ordered school desegregation in the North, the superintendent is less important than the mayor in insuring peaceful implementation. These last phase cities are characterized by relative educational, economic, and social deprivation for different white ethnic groups and relatively segregated ethnic neighborhoods for virtually every wave of ethnic migration. Working class white residents perceive school desegregation as another example of exploitation of the poor and the powerless by "wealthy liberal suburbanites" and "unfeeling bureaucrats." Professional administrators are simply unequipped to deal adequately with this because they lack the political skills and power to bargain and co-opt, and because they represent an alien tradition which does not have enough legitimacy itself to bestow legitimacy on a controversial social policy. Products of a school administration ideology that emerged in the early twentieth century as the mechanical application of business methods to school systems, they tend to have little concern for the social and political consequences of the educational system (Callahan, 1962; Rogers, 1969; Orfield, 1969). In another sense, they represent the reform ethos—what Hofstadter (1955) calls the indigenous Yankee-Protestant political traditions, founded on middle class life, and the doctrine that political systems ought to be run in accordance with general principles and abstract laws apart from and superior to personal needs; but the citizens and governments of the urban industrial North are part of another tradition—one Rossell / THE MAYOR'S ROLE [251] founded on the European background of the immigrants, and the assumption that the political life of the individual arises out of family needs. Political and civic relations are interpreted chiefly in terms of personal obligations, and strong personal loyalties are placed above allegiance to abstract codes of laws or morals.

### A2: Backlash DA’s are Racist

#### Backlash is a reality and ignoring it doesn’t solve anything – it’s not an excuse to not take action, but an opportunity to find better solutions that avoid it

Lindseth 93. Partner, Sutherland, Asbill & Brennan, Atlanta, Georgia, THE RANDOLPH W. THROWER SYMPOSIUM + DESEGREGATION LAW: THE CHANGING VISION OF EQUALITY IN EDUCATION: RESPONSE: A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE: A SCHOOL BOARD ATTORNEY'S VIEWPOINT, 42 Emory L.J. 879, Lexis //saenl

Plaintiffs in desegregation cases must also stop taking positions which defy not only actual experience, but common sense. A good example is the way in which many plaintiffs' attorneys and expert witnesses approach the phenomenon of "white flight." Oftentimes, they claim that mandatory [\*886] busing plans do not cause white flight or that, even if they do, a court should not consider such evidence. I have had plaintiffs' experts take both positions in cases in which I have been involved, and in most instances the expert's testimony has been disregarded by the court, with good reason. Given the evidence of massive white flight in school district after school district, caused, in large part, by first the threat and then the implementation of mandatory busing plans, experts who testify that busing plans do not cause white flight instantly lose credibility. The alternative position, that white flight should not be considered, is indefensible as a matter of public policy. Courts have recognized that it is not only proper but also necessary to consider white flight in designing an effective desegregation remedy and that doing so is quite different from accepting white flight as an excuse for the failure of desegregation. In the past, when school boards resisted any significant desegregation, the specter of white flight was often used as an excuse not to desegregate. In response, the courts at one time held that evidence of white flight was inadmissible. n27 At the time, the rule against white flight evidence was justified. However, times have changed, and so has the response of the courts. Now courts are entitled to hear evidence of white flight in deciding between viable desegregation plans, with good reason. n28 Even if a plan is accepted, it will be doomed to fail precisely because white flight and its potential effect on the plan have not been considered. It would be a foolish judge or a foolish planner who would simply "stick her head in the sand" and ignore the possible adverse effects of white flight in designing a desegregation plan. Even if the plaintiffs' attorneys succeed, they will not have served their clients well because lasting desegregation is unlikely to result from any plan which does not take into account the very real problem of white flight.

# Affirmative

## A2: Uniqueness

### Non-Unique – No Base Support

#### Trump’s base support is low now

Nichols 8-4-17 (John, The Nation’s national-affairs correspondent. He is the author of Horsemen of the Trumpocalypse: A Field Guide to the Most Dangerous People in America, forthcoming from Nation Books this fall, and co-author, with Robert W. McChesney, of People Get Ready: The Fight Against a Jobless Economy and a Citizenless Democracy."Trump’s Base of Support Is Collapsing" The Nation) <https://www.thenation.com/article/trumps-base-of-support-has-almost-entirely-collapsed/>

Donald Trump did not win the presidency by the standard measures of democracy. Fifty-four percent of the Americans who cast ballots on November 8, 2016 favored someone else, and Hillary Clinton won almost 3 million more votes than Trump. Only an antiquated remnant of an 18th-century instinct toward oligarchy—an Electoral College designed by slaveholders and wealthy merchants to maintain the authority of the elites—allowed an ill-prepared and cruelly intended billionaire to enter the White House. But Trump was a lot more popular in November than he is now. That’s a big deal for the president. And it’s also a big deal for the resistance. After six months, Trump’s approval rating has fallen to 33 percent in a fresh Quinnipiac University Poll that was released on Wednesday. That’s the lowest Quinnipiac result yet, and it’s not an outlier: The new Gallup tracking poll has the president’s approval at a similarly dismal 36 percent, the lowest three-day average in Trump’s tenure. Even Rasmussen, usually the best for Trump, has him at 38 points—the same as the Real Clear Politics average. Gallup, Quinnipiac, and Rasmussen recently scored his disapproval rating at 60, 61, and 62 percent respectively. The math was always against him, but whatever claim on legitimacy Donald Trump might have been able to make after the November 8 election has since evaporated. The numbers are now overwhelming. These numbers tell a story that can’t be neglected amid the day-to-day chaos associated with Trump’s administration: His base of support has fallen dramatically since the election. How dramatically? The 45th president’s approval rating is now comparable to Richard Nixon’s when he was being battered by Watergate revelations in the spring and summer of 1973.

#### Trump’s base support is tanking

Weigant 8-03-17 (Chris, political commentator for Huffington Post, "Trump’s Base Support Begins To Erode" Huffington Post) www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/trumps-base-support-begins-to-erode\_us\_5982b507e4b0396a95c874d2

For the first six months of his presidency, Donald Trump has always been able to count on a “floor” of public support of around 40 percent. Through thick and thin, four-in-ten Americans approved of the job he was doing. That seems to now be changing. For the first time, his own base is starting to become disillusioned with Trump. So far the change is slight, but the trendline doesn’t look good for the near future for the president. Today Trump hit several milestones on the Real Clear Politics poll tracking page. His job approval average is now 38.2 percent, which is the lowest he’s ever seen. His job disapproval rate now stands at 56.9 percent, the highest it’s ever been. That’s a spread of 18.7 points (below water), which is also the largest it has ever been. But when you take a dive into the poll numbers which make up that average, things look even worse for Trump. For the past two and a half months, Trump charted a remarkably consistent line. His job approval hovered close to 40 percent for this entire period, only fluctuating roughly one point on either side. During this time, the outlier polls which lean left showed Trump as low as 35 percent, while the polls which lean right charted numbers up to 45 percent. This evened out in the average, which stayed steadily around 40 percent. For the past two weeks, however, Trump hasn’t charted a single number higher than 39 percent. One poll now has him down to 33 percent job approval. Today’s slide is a reflection of this, but it may go lower still. Real Clear Politics aggregates recent polls, and included in today’s average are five polls that are pretty outdated (taken from 7/12 through 7/18). They’re all buoying Trump’s overall average up, since all five of these polls put his approval between 39 percent and 41 percent. This used to be right in the middle of the spread, but it is now at the extreme high end of the spread. When these polls drop out of the rolling daily average, Trump’s numbers will likely go even lower.

### Non-Unique – No Base Support

#### Trump’s approval among independents and soft Trump voters is crashing

McManus 8-27-17 (Doyle, journalist, "Op-Ed Trump is shedding supporters like no other president in modern history" LA Times) www.latimes.com/opinion/op-ed/la-oe-mcmanus-trump-polls-20170827-story.html

President Trump’s poll numbers are bad and getting worse. He began his presidency on shaky ground; on Inauguration Day, only about 45% of Americans said they approved of the job he was doing. Since then, it’s been a bumpy ride downhill. Last week, the Gallup Poll reported that Trump’s job approval had sagged to a low of 34%. Other surveys’ findings are slightly less dire, but all show the same downward trend. No president has fallen so low in public esteem so early in his tenure in the history of modern polling. Those aren’t the only daunting numbers Trump has had to contemplate. (He claims he ignores the polls, but often betrays his denials with complaints about specific surveys.) The president’s disapproval rating, the share of Americans who think he’s doing a bad job, rose above 50% faster than any of his predecessors’. No president has fallen so low in public esteem so early in his tenure in the history of modern polling. He has created, almost single-handed, an unusually passionate opposition: One poll found that almost twice as many voters “strongly disapproved” of his job performance as said they “strongly approved.” And while Trump claims that his base of support remains impregnable, that’s proven to be a myth. “The Trump base is far bigger & stronger than ever before,” the president claimed on Twitter this month. But his own campaign pollster, Tony Fabrizio, reported numbers last week that show his base eroding. Trump’s support among Republicans and Republican-leaning independents, while still strong at 75%, has declined from earlier highs, Fabrizio said. (Even Trump can’t dismiss that one as a fake poll.) It’s true that most of Trump’s most fervent supporters are still committed to him. But his less fervent supporters — let’s call them “soft Trump voters” — are drifting away. The data site fivethirtyeight.com has been polling thousands of voters who supported Trump on election day, and has classified about 15% of them as “reluctant Trump voters” — people who went for Trump but said they were “not excited” about their vote. These reluctant Trump voters tend to be better-educated than the president’s hard-core supporters. They’re often independents or even Democrats, not committed Republicans. This month, only 63% of them said they approved of the job Trump was doing as president. (Remember, they all voted for him in November.) When asked if they would vote for Trump a second time, only 48% said yes, and only 12% said “definitely yes.” That’s not a reliable prediction of what they’ll do in 2020 if Trump runs for reelection, but it’s a pretty clear sign of buyer’s remorse.

#### Trump’s base support is waning

Milligan 5/17/2017 (Susan Milligan is a political and foreign affairs writer and contributed to a biography of the late Sen. Edward M. Kennedy, “Trump Sees Softening Support Among His Base”, US News, May 17, 2017, <https://www.usnews.com/news/articles/2017-05-17/donald-trump-sees-softening-support-among-his-base>, accessed 6/25/2017, \*LD)

President Donald Trump is starting to lose support among his base, a new Politico/Morning Consult poll shows. The survey found that Trump's approval rating has dropped to 42 percent, down 9 points from where it sat in mid-April. It was taken after Trump fired FBI Director James Comey but before reports that the president divulged classified information to the Russians and urged Comey to back off an investigation of former national security adviser Michael Flynn's connections to Russia. Twice as many voters (38 percent) "strongly disapprove" of the president as those (19 percent) who "strongly approve," the survey found. But more significant among the survey's findings is the "waning enthusiasm for Trump in his base," Morning Consult Chief Research Officer Kyle Dropp said. According to Dropp, when the president took office, 56 percent of his voters strongly approved of his job performance, while that number now stands at 42 percent.

### Non-Unique – No Base Support

#### Trump’s base is shrinking now and his overall disapproval rating is rising – recent polls

Silver 5/24/2017 (Nate Silver is the founder and editor in chief of FiveThirtyEight, “Donald Trump’s Base Is Shrinking”, FiveThirtyEight, May 24, 2017, <https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/donald-trumps-base-is-shrinking/>, accessed 6/26/2017, \*LD)

A widely held tenet of the current conventional wisdom is that while President Trump might not be popular overall, he has a high floor on his support. Trump’s sizable and enthusiastic base — perhaps 35 to 40 percent of the country — won’t abandon him any time soon, the theory goes, and they don’t necessarily care about some of the controversies that the “mainstream media” treats as game-changing developments. It’s an entirely reasonable theory. We live in a highly partisan epoch, and voters are usually loyal to politicians from their party. Trump endured a lot of turbulence in the general election but stuck it out to win the Electoral College. The media doesn’t always guess right about which stories will resonate with voters. But the theory isn’t supported by the evidence. To the contrary, Trump’s base seems to be eroding. There’s been a considerable decline in the number of Americans who strongly approve of Trump, from a peak of around 30 percent in February to just 21 or 22 percent of the electorate now. (The decline in Trump’s strong approval ratings is larger than the overall decline in his approval ratings, in fact.) Far from having unconditional love from his base, Trump has already lost almost a third of his strong support. And voters who strongly disapprove of Trump outnumber those who strongly approve of him by about a 2-to-1 ratio, which could presage an “enthusiasm gap” that works against Trump at the midterms. The data suggests, in particular, that the GOP’s initial attempt (and failure) in March to pass its unpopular health care bill may have cost Trump with his core supporters. These estimates come from the collection of polls we use for FiveThirtyEight’s approval ratings tracker. Many approval-rating polls give respondents four options: strongly approve, somewhat approve, somewhat disapprove and strongly disapprove. Ordinarily, we only estimate Trump’s overall approval and disapproval. But we went back and collected this more detailed data for all polls for which it was available, and then we reran our approval ratings program to output numbers for all four approval categories instead of the usual two.1 Here are Trump’s strongly approve and somewhat approve ratings from shortly after the start of his term2 through this Tuesday: After a slight uptick in the first two to three weeks of his term, Trump’s strong approval ratings have headed downward. But it hasn’t been a steady decline. Instead, they fell considerably from about 29 percent on March 6 — when Republicans introduced their health care bill — to around 24 percent on April 1, shortly after the GOP pulled the bill from the House floor. They then remained stable for much of April, before beginning to fall again this month after the reintroduction (and House passage) of the health care bill and after Trump fired FBI director James Comey on May 9. As of Tuesday, just 21.4 percent of Americans strongly approved of Trump’s performance. By comparison, 45 percent of Americans strongly approved of President Obama’s performance as of April 2009, although Obama’s strong approval numbers would fall considerably over the course of his term — to the mid-to-high 20s by the midterms and to the high teens by 2014. The share of Americans who somewhat approve of Trump’s performance has actually increased slightly, however, from about 16 percent in early February to 17.9 percent as of Tuesday. In part, this probably reflects voters who once strongly approved of Trump and who have now downgraded him to the somewhat approve category. (Trump’s strongly approve and somewhat approve numbers have been inversely correlated so far, meaning that as one has risen, the other has tended to fall.) <<card continues>>

### Non-Unique – No Base Support

<<card continues>> A potential problem for Trump is that in the event of continued White House turmoil, the next step for these somewhat approve voters would be to move toward disapproval of the president. The number of Americans who strongly disapprove of Trump has sharply risen since early in his term, meanwhile, from the mid-30s in early February to 44.1 percent as of Tuesday. In most surveys, Trump’s strongly disapprove rating exceeds his overall approval rating, in fact. The bulk of the increase in Trump’s strong disapproval ratings came early in his term, over the course of late January and early February. It’s possible that this was partly a reaction to Trump’s initial travel ban on immigrants from seven predominantly Muslim countries, which was the biggest news of Trump’s first few weeks in office. But presidential disapproval often rises in the first month or so of a president’s tenure as voters who initially give a new president the benefit of the doubt find things to dislike in his performance.

### Non-Unique – No Base Support

#### Trump’s alienated his most ardent supporters – he failed to deliver on key campaign pledges

Isenstadt and Conway 4/13 (Alex and Madeline, reporters for Politico, "Trump’s base turns on him," POLITICO, http://www.politico.com/story/2017/04/trump-base-supporters-turn-on-him-237200)//dgd

Donald Trump’s true believers are losing the faith. As Trump struggles to keep his campaign promises and flirts with political moderation, his most steadfast supporters — from veteran advisers to anti-immigration activists to the volunteers who dropped their jobs to help elect him — are increasingly dismayed by the direction of his presidency. Their complaints range from Trump’s embrace of an interventionist foreign policy to his less hawkish tone on China to, most recently, his marginalization of his nationalist chief strategist, Steve Bannon. But the crux of their disillusionment, interviews with nearly two dozen Trump loyalists reveal, is a belief that Trump the candidate bears little resemblance to Trump the president. He’s failing, in their view, to deliver on his promise of a transformative “America First” agenda driven by hard-edged populism. "Donald Trump dropped an emotional anchor. He captured how Americans feel," said Tania Vojvodic, a fervent Trump supporter who founded one of his first campaign volunteer networks. "We expect him to keep his word, and right now he's not keeping his word." Earlier this week, Vojvodic launched a Facebook group called, “The concerned support base of President Trump,” which quickly drew several dozen sign-ups. She also changed the banner on her Facebook page to a picture of Bannon accompanied by the declaration: “Mr. President: I stand with Steve Bannon.” "I'm not so infatuated with Trump that I can't see the facts," she said. "People's belief, their trust in him, it’s declining." The swiftness and abruptness of Trump’s shift from bomb-throwing populist outsider to a more mainstream brand of Republican has taken the president’s stalwarts by surprise. “It was like, here’s the chance to do something different. And that’s why people’s hopes are dashed,” said Lee Stranahan, who, as a former writer at Breitbart News, once worked with Bannon. “There was always the question of, ‘Did he really believe this stuff?’ Apparently, the answer is, ‘Not as much as you’d like.’” The White House did not respond to a request for comment. The deflation of Trump’s base threatens to further weaken a president who’s already seen his public support drop to historic lows. Frustration among the president’s allies has intensified in recent days, with many expressing worry that Bannon, the intellectual pillar of the nationalist movement that catapulted Trump to the presidency, is being pushed out. As Bannon’s influence wanes, on the rise is a small group of Wall Street-connected advisers whose politically moderate and globalist views are anathema to the populist cause. The palace intrigue intensified this week after Trump refused to say he still had confidence in Bannon and downplayed the former Breitbart chairman's role in his campaign victory. And it’s feeding suspicions that the president is changing his priorities. Rep. Steve King (R-Iowa), one of the president’s most vocal backers on Capitol Hill, said he’s been disheartened by the chief strategist’s isolation. "A lot of us look at Steve Bannon as the voice of conservatism in the White House," said King, who has known Bannon for years. The displeasure over Bannon’s reduced status has trickled down to Trump’s grass-roots army of volunteers. Among those unsettled is Shane Bouvet, a 24-year-old campaign volunteer and blue-collar single father from Illinois who became something of a hero in the Trump movement. On the eve of the inauguration, Trump, who had read about how Bouvet trekked across the country by car so he could watch the swearing-in, gave him a check for $10,000. Bouvet later said the gift saved the life of his father, who was battling cancer and needed the money to cover medical costs. That day, Bouvet also was introduced to Bannon. The two spoke briefly, and Bouvet came to identify with the adviser who, like him, represented a “forgotten America” that Trump had appealed to with his blue-collar pitch. He said in an interview that he still supports the president, but is troubled by reports that Bannon is on the outs and that senior adviser Jared Kushner, a New York City real estate scion, is accumulating influence. “I see a lot of people upset about his role,” Bouvet said of Bannon. “I love our president,” he added. “I would tell him, follow his heart instead of whispers in his ears.” On his South Florida-based radio show, Trump backer John Cardillo has begun to hear from listeners who are disillusioned with the rising influence of moderate staffers like Kushner and Gary Cohn, the Goldman Sachs executive-turned-Trump economic adviser. For Cardillo, too, it’s been a letdown. During the 2016 Republican primary, he was attracted to Trump because of his insurgent streak. As a former New York City police officer, Cardillo identified with the candidate's blue-collar style. He fell hard and got aboard the Trump train early, backing the insurgent candidate over home-state favorite Marco Rubio. Trump voters “felt like they were voting for an anti-establishment candidate — and they're terrified, they're losing faith," Cardillo said. <<card continues>>

### Non-Unique – No Base Support

<<card continues>> "They're saying, ‘Why does he have these people around him?’" The gripes go beyond Bannon’s apparent downgrade. Many of Trump’s most stalwart supporters, including radio show hosts Michael Savage and Laura Ingraham, called last week’s bombing of Syria a betrayal of Trump’s pledge to be an “America First” commander in chief who would avoid unnecessary conflicts overseas. “People are concerned because it’s such a morass over there,” said Howie Carr, an influential Boston radio show host and vocal Trump backer. “I don’t think any of my listeners have any great stomach for overthrowing Assad, as odious as he is” Concerns about Trump’s foreign policy approach intensified on Wednesday when he backed away from his oft-repeated campaign line that NATO is “obsolete.” Instead, during an appearance with NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg, Trump called the organization a “great alliance.” Howie Carr, an influential Boston radio show host and a vocal Trump backer, said he’s been mostly satisfied with the president’s tenure so far. But he said he and his listeners weren’t on board with the Syria bombing and warned against a U.S.-led push to overthrow Syrian President Bashar Assad. “People are concerned because it’s such a morass over there,” Carr said. “I don’t think any of my listeners have any great stomach for overthrowing Assad, as odious as he is.” Other Trump boosters worry that he’s ditching his economic agenda. They wonder why he backed off his vow to label China a currency manipulator, and are chagrined by his reversal on his position to eliminate the Export-Import Bank. On Thursday, White House press secretary Sean Spicer took issue with the premise that Trump's switch on labeling China a currency manipulator amounted to abandoning a campaign promise. "The president's tough talk ... on a variety of subjects was to get results for the American people. That's what he has pledged to do, to get more jobs here, to grow more manufacturing, to keep our country safe," Spicer told reporters. "At the end of the day, this is always about developing a better situation for the American people, and I think he's done that." Still others are concerned about Trump’s lack of progress on reforming the tax code. Larry Kudlow, a veteran economist who advised Trump’s campaign, expressed dismay that the president hadn’t yet released a tax plan. He said he was beginning to wonder whether the president is about to walk back his pledge to cut taxes. "What is their product?" Kudlow asked. "It doesn't make any sense to me. I'm not giving up hope. But it's looking very shaky to me." Conservative economist Stephen Moore, who also advised the Trump campaign, said he’s reached out to the White House about the lack of a tax package. “They're all over the map," he said. "I don't know if they're listening or not." Then there’s immigration, the issue that catapulted Trump to front-runner status. Activists are increasingly alarmed that the president has yet to follow through on his pledge to rescind protections for undocumented parents and children put in place under former President Barack Obama. Brenda Sparks, an “angel mom” whose son was killed by an illegal immigrant, appeared onstage with Trump at an August campaign event in Phoenix. She said he promised her that he would overturn the program known Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, or DACA, in short order. &quot;I still support Trump but I'm going to hold his feet to the fire,&quot; said Brenda Sparks, an “angel mom” whose son was killed by an illegal immigrant and who appeared onstage with Trump at a campaign event in Phoenix. &quot;He has not lived up to that promise.&quot; "I still support Trump but I'm going to hold his feet to the fire," said Brenda Sparks, an “angel mom” whose son was killed by an illegal immigrant and who appeared onstage with Trump at a campaign event in Phoenix. "He has not lived up to that promise." While Sparks said she didn't think it would be done immediately, "I had expected it before now." "I still support Trump, but I'm going to hold his feet to the fire," she said. "He has not lived up to that promise." Michelle Dallacroce, an anti-immigration activist, is more pointed. Immigration is "why we voted for Donald Trump," she said. "This could be the most elaborate reality show. I'm wondering, was this all an illusion for us, using our movement so he could get in there?" Trump is hardly the first president to get crosswise with his supporters. After running on a promise to infuse Washington with change, Barack Obama faced sharp accusations from backers that he was moving too slowly to change the culture of the capitol. Governing, Obama learned, is a lot different than campaigning. Not all of the president’s backers are disappointed. They point to his successful nomination of Supreme Court Justice Neil Gorsuch and his rollback of environmental regulations as early wins. "There's always going to be things that aren't perfect, but it's exciting," said Ed Martin, a conservative leader in Missouri. But as Trump evolves, some of his loyalists are beginning to compare him to another Republican who lost the support of the party’s base: Arnold Schwarzenegger. After being elected California governor in 2003, the former movie star took on entrenched Democratic interests, lost badly, then tacked sharply to the left. This week, some Trump die-hards passed around a column by conservative commentator Kurt Schlichter headlined: “Trump Can’t Let His Real or His Fake Friends Turn Him into Schwarzenegger Part 2.” Schlichter, in an interview, said conservatives are fundamentally distrustful of Republican politicians who had often misled them. He urged the president to take some immediate actions, however small, to put his supporters at ease. “You’ve got to understand the base. It’s like dating a girl whose father cheated on her mother. She’s always going to be suspicious,” he said. “He’s got to constantly provide wins because he’s got an emotionally damaged base that’s been abused.”

### Non-Unique – Broken Promises Now

#### Breaking a promise with his base is inevitable – they want Obamacare repealed and a good alternative which is impossible

Vyse 6/30. Graham, staff writer for the New Republic, 6-30-2017, "Trump Desperately Wants a “Win.” That’s Why He Should Reject Obamacare Repeal.," New Republic, <https://newrepublic.com/article/143616/trump-desperately-wants-win-thats-reject-obamacare-repeal> //saenl

The president is torn between destroying Obama’s legacy and helping the “forgotten men and women” of America. The smart decision is clear. Like every other Republican running for the White House last year, Donald Trump routinely disparaged President Barack Obama’s signature accomplishment, the Affordable Care Act, which extended health insurance to 20 million Americans. He called it “amazingly destructive” and “a catastrophe,” saying at his final campaign rally before the election, “Real change begins with immediately repealing and replacing the disaster known as Obamacare.” Trump hasn’t let up since becoming president, claiming the program is “broken” and in “a total death spiral.” Yet, as the New Republic’s Alex Shephard noted on Thursday, candidate Trump also broke with GOP orthodoxy on health care, promising not to cut Medicare or Medicaid and making a series of very broad commitments in a September 2015 interview with CBS News. “Everybody’s got to be covered,” he said. “This is an un-Republican thing for me to say.... I am going to take care of everybody. I don’t care if it costs me votes or not. Everybody’s going to be taken care of much better than they’re taken care of now.” Many reporters have noted these and other contradictions in Trump’s health care positions since he launched his campaign in 2015: He’s been for ACA’s individual mandate and against it, complimentary of single-payer systems around the world even as he says he doesn’t want one in America. But now that House Republicans have passed their hastily crafted health care plan and a divided Senate GOP is scrambling to finalize its own version—both of which would uninsure more than 20 million Americans and cut Medicaid by hundreds of billions of dollars—Trump may finally face a difficult choice: Keep his promise to repeal Obamacare, or keep his promise to cover “everybody.” Trump will have to break a promise either way. That’s the consequence of telling people only what they want to hear, rather than having a coherent policy agenda. Rhetorical promiscuity has caused Trump many headaches, but the Republican health care plan is an especially sticky wicket because it would force him to resolve the warring impulses that fueled his campaign: destroy Barack Obama’s legacy, and help the “forgotten men and women” of America.

#### Trump’s already breaking promises and fracturing the base – Immigration reform

Alvarez 6/22. Priscilla, 6-22-2017, "Trump’s Immigration Allies Are Growing Frustrated With Him," Atlantic, <https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2017/06/immigration-hardliners-frustrated-trump-daca/531123/> //saenl

Twenty-one days after Election Day last November, Dan Stein, the president of the Federation for American Immigration Reform, a group that supports reduced immigration, introduced a transition document to provide the newly elected president with guidance on immigration policy.¶ It was their moment. FAIR had condemned the Obama administration’s immigration policy, and pushed for heightened border security and the removal of undocumented immigrants. And Trump, whose campaign had begun with a promise to crack down on illegal immigration, appeared to be the champion they needed.¶ Within the first few weeks of his administration, Trump expanded the number of undocumented immigrants considered a priority for deportation, threatened jurisdictions that limit cooperation with federal immigration agents, and called for more Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents and Customs and Border Protection agents. But he also fell short on other promises—including a central plank of his presidential campaign, a wall along the U.S.-Mexico border. In the interim, the high expectations of immigration restriction groups like FAIR have turned to frustration and disappointment.¶ RELATED STORY¶ ¶ Trump Breaks a Promise to his Voters on Immigration¶ “We can only assume that President Trump has struck a secret deal with Mexico to get them to pay for the border fence he promised, because funding for the project sure isn’t in the budget proposal he sent to Congress,” Stein said in a statement following the release of Trump’s budget proposal in May. The proposal included $2.6 billion for border security, a fraction of which was marked for the construction of a wall. That figure paled in comparison to estimates by the Department of Homeland Security, which found in a report that a wall along the southern border would cost as much as $21.6 billion. <<card continues>

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<<card continues>> It also went back on a campaign pledge that Trump would make Mexico pay for the barrier. But the sarcastic tone of Stein’s statement was notable. ¶ “The key to regaining control of our immigration system is to effectively deter people who are contemplating breaking our laws and effective enforcement against those who do. Unfortunately, President Trump’s budget requests do not demonstrate the resolve that is needed to fulfill the promises that he made to the American people,” Stein added in his statement. ¶ Trump’s victory was seen as an opportunity to pass policies targeting immigration in the United States, which have often faced hurdles in Congress. His team includes many immigration hardliners, like Jeff Sessions, Stephen Miller, and Steve Bannon, which also seemed promising for those seeking stricter policies. Yet immigration restrictionist groups are growing increasingly frustrated with what they see as the glacial pace at which the administration is executing on its immigration pledges, as well as its reversals on key promises.¶ Shortly after Trump took office, immigration hawks urged the president to repeal the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program, the Obama-era program shielding undocumented immigrants who came to the United States as children from deportation and allowing them to legally work in the country.\* Trump had repeatedly said he’d “terminate” the program on the campaign trail, and then began to take a softer approach as president. “To me, it's one of the most difficult subjects I have because you have these incredible kids, in many cases, not in all cases,” Trump said at a White House news conference. Trump left the matter unaddressed in his January executive actions on immigration, prompting complaints from immigration hardliners, who argue the program hurts native-born workers. ¶ In May, the Americans for Legal Immigration PAC dropped its endorsement of Trump for not taking action on DACA. “While we may be one of the first groups representing Trump’s base on immigration issues to leave the fold, we won’t be the last,” William Gheen, the president of the group, wrote in an open letter. “ALIPAC’s announcement about Trump will be considered as a warning sign among many American patriots that we have been lied to, misled, and betrayed, and our warning will have far reaching implications for the Trump administration and his band of pro-Amnesty advisors and cabinet members.” The PAC did not give money to federal candidates during the 2016 election.¶ The Trump administration’s decision on DACA finally came in June, roughly five months into the president’s term. The Department of Homeland Security announced earlier this month that it was rescinding the Deferred Action for Parents of Americans and Lawful Permanent Residents program, which sought to shield the undocumented parents of U.S. citizens and others from deportation. The Obama-era program had never been implemented due to litigation, so the move to revoke it was largely symbolic. DHS also issued guidance noting that DACA would remain in effect for now, days after U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services released figures revealing that the administration was still granting work permits under the DACA program.¶ “I knew he was going to sell us out on some things. I just didn’t think DACA was going to be what he sells us out on.”¶ “I certainly am very happy that Secretary Kelly ended DAPA … that is a good thing and needed to happen—but it does not fulfill Trump’s campaign promise. DACA needs to be ended,” Rosemary Jenks, the director of government relations at NumbersUSA, another group that supports reduced immigration, told The Los Angeles Times. “It is clear the decision on DACA has been made at the White House,” she added. “That is truly on Trump, and he needs to do it.”¶ “I knew he was going to sell us out on some things. I just didn’t think DACA was going to be what he sells us out on,” Mark Krikorian, the executive director of the Center for Immigration Studies, which favors reduced immigration, told me. DACA had been seen as a bargaining chip that could be used to negotiate with Democratic lawmakers on immigration reform, Krikorian said. By failing to repeal it therefore, Trump missed out on an opportunity that may have ramifications down the road.¶ Ann Coulter, a prominent anti-immigrant conservative commentator, railed against the decision on Twitter. “This Daily Trump melodrama is worth it ONLY if he’s really going to build the wall, cut off Muslim refugees and deport illegals,” she said, adding, in a follow-up tweet, that “zero” miles of Trump’s wall had been completed to date.¶ Immigrant advocates, meanwhile, are still anxious about the future of DACA. “I would hesitate to say that we’ve gotten a promise from the administration and I am a firm believer that, due to the unpredictable nature of President Trump, DACA is still very much in danger,” said Jose Magaña-Salgado, the managing policy attorney at the Immigrant Legal Resource Center. The administration’s aggressive approach to deportations has continued to concern immigration advocates, who have thus far found little relief in its decision to keep DACA in place.¶ But the flurry of responses nevertheless highlighted growing frustrations among immigration hardliners, who feel let down by the administration. Trump, after all, took the campaign trail by storm with the phrase “build the wall,” and used forceful rhetoric in speaking about immigration. <<card continues>>

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<<card continues>> His messaging in the White House, however, has been ambiguous. He hasn’t provided a clear plan on what a wall along the southern border will look like, or how he plans to address legal immigration, which hawks want reduced.¶ Factions within the White House may be to blame for the mixed messages on immigration. Earlier this year, The New York Times reported on rifts within the administration over how to address so-called Dreamers. There had also been a draft executive order floating around aimed at ending DACA. While it didn’t come to fruition, it seemed to indicate a fractured White House, Krikorian said. But the administration has also come up short on other promises.¶ “In addition to DACA, he made some strong promises on H1-Bs, which he has yet to [do]. He is talking about them, but he hasn’t taken any concrete action on them,” said Chris Chmielenski, the director of content and activism at NumbersUSA. H1-B visas allow employers to temporarily hire skilled foreign workers to fill specialty occupations. Trump pledged to overhaul the system, but has thus far done little to act on it, according to Chmielenski. Immigration hardliners also understand that they may not get what they want right away. Despite Trump’s forceful rhetoric on immigration on the campaign trail, Chmielenski said, “we didn’t think it was a done deal.” Matt O’Brien, the director of research at FAIR, noted that the president needs congressional authorization to execute on some of his promises, like the border wall. “While it’s difficult to predict, we think—and for a long time have said—it’s an essential measure, so we hope the president will keep his promise. However, I think that’s something that’s not entirely in his hands,” he said. The administration is also still only a few months old, so it’s possible that Trump’s campaign promises will bear out in the future. But that won’t keep hardliners at bay, either.

### Uniqueness Overwhelms Link

#### Trump’s base support is rock solid – empirics prove the plan won’t cost support

Tobin 4/25. Jonathan S., opinion editor of JNS.org and a Contributing Writer for the National Review, 4-25-2017, "Why Trump Can Still Win While Losing," National Review, http://www.nationalreview.com/article/447014/donald-trumps-poll-numbers-supporters-stick-him //saenl

Poll data showing Trump retaining his voters suggest he could hang on despite a mainstream consensus that his presidency is a disaster. Is anyone surprised by a new ABC News/Washington Post poll that shows Donald Trump is the least popular president approaching 100 days in office since they started taking such surveys? Trump won the office while losing the popular vote and was inaugurated as the least popular new president. Since then, Trump has failed to repeal and replace Obamacare and, among other distractions, has been dogged by publicized palace intrigue in the West Wing and an FBI investigation about collusion with the Russians. But the same poll that puts Trump deep under water compared with every president since Truman also should give his critics pause. In a bifurcated nation where Republicans are seemingly unaffected by the cacophony of disdain thrown at Trump, his ability to hang on to his voters may, as it did in 2016, yet prove decisive in determining the future of his presidency. Throughout this difficult period during which he has been almost continually blasted by the mainstream media as unprepared and incompetent, his supporters and apologists have continued to point out that Trump’s base is still with him. That point has left his critics unimpressed. Sure, they concede, Trump’s fans are sticking with him now, just as they did when a tape of his admission of sexual assault surfaced and at every point during the 2016 campaign. But as the new poll shows, with only a 42 percent approval rating, he’s losing independents and Democrats at a rate that theoretically dooms any hope that he will be able to garner majority support for any of his legislative projects. That’s why his opponents are not merely fantasizing about impeachment. They’re also increasingly confident of a midterm comeback for the Democrats in 2018 and treat the very notion of Trump securing re-election in 2020 with contempt. But a deep dive into the ABC/WaPo poll should remind us that the same sort of thinking had most pundits convinced Trump couldn’t win in November. Trump has had no traditional post-election honeymoon. But he has done something remarkable. A stunning 96 percent of those who say they voted for him in 2016 would do so again. This stands in contrast to the buyer’s remorse of Hillary Clinton voters, with 15 percent saying they would not vote for Clinton again if given the chance. Together these numbers explain why the poll shows Trump winning the popular vote in a rematch with the Democratic nominee. How is that possible with such low popularity ratings for Trump? It all comes down to the stark partisan divide in our current political culture. As was plainly illustrated in 2016, right- and left-leaning voters not only disagree; they also don’t listen to/watch/read the same media and thus draw vastly different conclusions from the same events. Why are Republicans so pleased with Trump? Justice Neil Gorsuch and a kept promise about the Supreme Court is a big part of it. So, too, are his moves on regulatory reform and his nominating the most conservative cabinet in recent history. A more sensible foreign policy than was anticipated also helps. But the main thing is that whatever they may think of Trump’s character or shortcomings, almost everyone on the right thinks him superior to any possible Democratic president. This illustrates the Democrats’ dilemma. The Trump “resistance” and its media fellow travelers have largely controlled the narrative about the administration. Each gaffe or blunder has been thoroughly denounced and comprehensively exploited by the Left. That has reinforced the belief of his opponents that Trump is unfit for the presidency. <<card continues>>

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<<card continues>> But neither the administration’s problems nor all of the efforts of its opponents have been able to do a thing to undermine the rock-solid backing he gets from Republican voters. It is true that only guarantees him the support of a minority of Americans. But, in the absence of a viable and/or popular alternative, this may mean that what liberals think is a consensus about Trump’s failure is not enough to ensure Democratic victories in 2018 or 2020. Drilling down further in the poll results reveals that Trump is viewed as out of touch with voters by a 58–38 percent margin. The Republican party is also damned as out of touch by 62–32 percent. But Democrats do even worse at 67–28 percent. Moreover, Trump gets good marks from voters on a number of issues including job creation and even foreign policy in the wake of his attack on Syria. Events that determine the state of the economy or the possibility of foreign crises will have a decisive impact on future elections. But if opinions about Trump are as set in stone as the latest survey indicates, all the abuse hurled at the president by his opponents, mainstream-media talking heads, and television comedians won’t matter as much as the basic calculus that makes him the lesser of two evils for conservatives. That means the same basic formula of decisively winning the white and male vote that delivered the Electoral College to Trump in 2016 could still apply no matter how much his administration is perceived as tottering. Democrats may assert that changing demography will make that a much harder trick to pull off with each passing year. They may also hope that working-class voters will eventually turn on Trump when he is perceived as failing them. But that hasn’t happened yet, and if the gang tackle of Trump in the media during his first 100 days hasn’t done it, the tipping point may never happen. That’s not what Democrats cheering the thought that Trump is the most unpopular president in history want to hear. Nor should Republicans count on this guaranteeing them success if things continue to head south for the administration. But Republicans may well retain enough of a critical mass of their core voters to hold on to contested congressional districts and Senate seats in 2018. And if the dynamic holds, Trump will have more than a fighting chance to replicate his victory in 2020.

### Uniqueness Overwhelms Link

#### Base support is guaranteed – there’s a low bar and they only listen to things that fit the narrative

Michaud 1/31. Benjamin J. Michaud, Portland Press Herald “Maine Voices: Here is why Donald Trump will be a 2-term president”, <http://www.pressherald.com/2017/01/31/maine-voices-here-is-why-donald-trump-will-be-a-two-term-president/>

CUMBERLAND — President Trump is no saint. But what separates Trump from past unsaintly presidents – and there are many – is his style of negotiation: His opening bid is to the extreme, and often hyperbolic. This phenomenon has had a simple yet powerful effect: Supporters take him seriously, not literally, while his opponents take him literally, not seriously. I would humbly suggest that “Never Trump” voters start to take President Trump very seriously, as I believe there is a high probability that he will be a two-term president. Why? Trump’s core base is going nowhere. Trump is a gargantuan economic stimulus package. And moral hysteria by the media purifies the Trump presidency and sets the expectations bar exceedingly low. • As Trump said himself, he could murder someone on Fifth Avenue and his support would not budge (and depending on who he murdered, it may in fact go up). In Maine, we have the “privilege” of living under Gov. LePage. Riding the tea party wave of 2010, LePage was elected as the anti-establishment candidate. And after four years of highly suspect behavior, the only rational conclusion was he had next to zero shot at re-election in 2014. But his support did not budge. Not an inch. Trump is LePage. His core base is going nowhere. • The combination of Trump’s regulatory overhaul, tax reform, infrastructure spending and refusal to touch entitlement programs simultaneously provides relief to the American business community (particularly the small and medium business community) and pumps fresh dollars into the economy. Trump’s election has ushered in a tectonic shift in American business sentiment, as the business community anticipates the above-outlined stimulus package. Since the election, the National Federation of Independent Business’ Small Business Optimism Index has gone vertical, driven in large part by an improved outlook for business conditions and higher sales expectations. If Trump executes his economic policy agenda, a healthy number of independent Hillary Clinton voters who favored policy stability over policy uncertainty and “Never Trump or Hillary” third-party or write-in voters are likely to give Trump the nod in 2020. As James Carville likes to say, “It’s the economy, stupid.” • Since the election, the mainstream media has embarked on a rampant anti-Trump campaign, claiming moral responsibility to hold Trump accountable for each and every seemingly immoral action. Let’s call it “moral hysteria.” This hysteria has two effects. One, it ensures the Trump administration will get away with nothing (which is a good thing!). The spotlight is simply too intense. And two, the expectations bar is set exceedingly low. The second effect is the key. The nature of hysteria is that it is exactly that: hysterical. In its quest to hold Trump morally accountable, the media paints virtually everything he does with a negative brush. So, for example, rather than put the vertical ascent of Small Business Optimism Index on the front page of the morning paper, the media focuses on the risks to the global economic order that Trump’s “aggressive” trade policy rhetoric supposedly represents. If the media adhered to the “seriously, not literally” framework, then it would interpret his trade policy rhetoric as both an opening bid in renegotiating trade relationships and a piece of a larger business-friendly economic agenda. The “negative paintbrush” approach virtually guarantees Trump will exceed voters’ economic policy expectations by 2020. What are the risks to my “two-term Trump” thesis? In ascending order of likelihood: Twitter, China and the business cycle. • Trump’s Twitter account, when utilized appropriately, is an extremely effective mode of unfiltered communication. But it is exactly that – unfiltered. If he spends the next four years attacking the ratings of “The Apprentice,” “Saturday Night Live” and Hollywood actresses, he could fatally “trump” an otherwise robust policy track record. • China’s status as a rapidly growing global superpower makes negotiation around trade policy, North Korea and the South China Sea of paramount importance. Aggression and deftness are required. Trump is aggressive, but appears to lack deftness. Secretary of State-designate Rex Tillerson and Secretary of Defense James Mattis must provide deftness to those negotiations. Given their background, I am confident they will. • The key risk, in my opinion, is economic timing. The United States appears to be in the middle to late innings of its business cycle; if the economy falls into recession in close proximity to the 2020 election, voters’ mood could sour just enough to thwart re-election. But for now, I believe the weight of the evidence firmly suggests “Never Trump” voters should prepare for eight years of President Donald J. Trump.

### Uniqueness Overwhelms Link – Media

#### No Link – Trump completely controls how the plan is spun – supporters don’t watch or trust the media – the narrative he tweets will determine how they perceive the plan

Bernstien 2/14. Leandra, Sinclair Broadcast Group, “Poll: Mainstream media continues to lose the public's trust”

http://valleycentral.com/news/nation-world/main-stream-media-continue-to-lose-the-publics-trust

WASHINGTON (Sinclair Broadcast Group) -- While many mainstream media outlets have cried foul over Donald Trump targeting outlets as "failing" or peddling "fake news," that sentiment is largely shared by a majority of Americans. In its annual confidence poll, Gallup found that Americans' trust in the mass media "to report the news fully, accurately and fairly" reached its lowest level in polling history, with only 32 percent saying they have a great deal or fair amount of trust in the media. Trust in the establishment media did not begin with the contentious 2016 election and Donald Trump taking the stage, but after a steady decline over the past 20 years, it took its deepest dive yet, led by Republicans deep distrust of mass media. On the campaign trail, Trump maintained a combative relationship with the press, but received roaring applause from his supporters when he referred to the "dishonest media," and sniped at the anchors, pundits, reporters and editorial boards who he said were treating him "very unfairly." In order to skirt the criticism and the tough questions, Trump took advantage of Twitter, the most effective tools he has used to circumvent the media and communicate directly with his base. In one of his first stops after taking office, Trump addressed intelligence professionals at CIA headquarters, using the occasion to address his "running war with the media." He received laughter and applause when referring to the press as "among the most dishonest human beings on earth." Only a week earlier, Trump shut out CNN's Jim Acosta to the delight of his supporters, denying a question to the mainstay of cable news during his first press conference after winning the election. Today, after less than a month in the White House, Trump continues to transform the relationship with the mainstream media. Reporters who were traditionally the first to be called on by previous press secretaries have been edged out by Sean Spicer. In place of the Associated Press, CNN, the Washington Post and the New York Times, Spicer has brought in outside voices. In his first briefings, Spicer called on the New York Post, Breitbart, LifeZette, One America News Network, and Newsmax. Rather than staying in the traditional press secretary's comfort zone of the first two rows of the briefing room, Spicer has introduced local news outlets from across the country questioning the White House via Skype. "The point is, there are voices and issues that the mainstream media sometimes doesn't capture, and its important for those issues to get as much prominence as some of the mainstream ones," Spicer told Fox News in January. Bringing in more non-traditional media outlets is by design Spicer explained. "Over and over again we are seeing people gravitate towards sites because they recognize the mainstream media isn't the only game in town," he said. While some larger media outlets have complained that the new White House briefing format is crowding out the more hard-nosed critical reporters with Trump cronies, Spicer has also brought in a handful of local media outlets, who enjoy one advantage over the national establishment media: more trust. According to a 2016 Pew Research study, 22 percent of respondents had "a lot" of trust in local news organizations, compared to 18 percent who trust national outlets. In total, local news coverage enjoyed a six-point advantage over national stations. The shake-up of the national media giants in favor of local stations or new media outlets has raised the ire of those who previously enjoyed having their questions at the front of the queue. During the Monday joint press briefing with Donald Trump and Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, Sinclair Broadcasting Group's reporter, Scott Thuman was called on to ask the first question. Thuman asked the two North American leaders whether either had decided to "alter or amend" their very different approaches to immigration, terrorism, and trade. Trump also took a question from the Daily Caller. CNN reported that other reporters were "outraged" that they weren't called on and that neither Sinclair or Daily Caller asked about the fate of National Security Advisor, Mike Flynn, who announced his resignation from the administration just hours after the press conference. The Washington Post and New York Times both alleged that Trump had intentionally called on "friendly" media outlets to avoid harsh questioning. Fox News and AP directly confronted the two reporters who got their questions answered, alleging their questions had been planted by the White House. Sinclair Broadcast Group's Vice President of News, Scott Livingston defended the reporter for working "to go beyond inside the beltway chatter and get to the heart of the issues that are relevant to all Americans ... The question wasn’t pre-set, screened nor suggested by the White House. We stand by Scott’s judgement and reporting." That wasn't the end of the media infighting on Monday, as the New York Times led a pack of news outlets taking aim at the Wall Street Journal, whose editor-in-chief Gerard Baker insisted on keeping coverage of Trump objective. One individual attending the Monday town-hall style meeting described the Journal's lack of criticism of the president as "neutral to the point of being absurd." Baker defending the publication's stance in a statement after the meeting saying, "If you view a Trump presidency as something that’s potentially dangerous, then your reporting is going to reflect that. You would move closer than you’ve ever been to being oppositional. That’s uncomfortable and uncharted territory for every mainstream, non-opinion journalist I’ve ever known, and by normal standards, untenable." <<card continues>>

### Uniqueness Overwhelms Link – Media

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### Uniqueness Overwhelms Link – Media

#### Echo chambers and media bias makes Trump’s base invincible

Perry 5/24. Luke, Assistant Professor of Political Science at York College of Pennsylvania. 5-24-17, "How Conservative Media Coverage Contributes to Trump’s Solid Base of Support," Utica College Center of Public Affairs and Election Research, https://www.ucpublicaffairs.com/home/2017/5/24/how-conservative-media-coverage-contributes-to-trumps-solid-base-of-support-by-nicolas-anspach //saenl

TRUMP PRESIDENCY Donald Trump’s record-setting low approval ratings have not been a total surprise given the contentious campaign and his loss of the national popular vote. Gallup measured Trump’s approval rating at 45 percent in the days following the inauguration, giving Trump the ignominious honor of being the first president with an initial rating below 50 percent. Since January, the president’s approval rating has steadily declined to its current level of 38 percent. A closer look at Trump’s approval rating; however, shows that Republican voters are still generally pleased with Trump’s performance. In the days following the inauguration, 89 percent of Republicans approved of Trump. Despite a spate of bad press involving Russia and the firing of FBI Directory James Comey in recent weeks, Trump still faces an 84 percent approval rating from voters within his own party. Trump’s approval rating by Democrats and Independents, on the other hand, has plummeted to 7 percent and 31 percent, respectively. What explains Republican voters’ unwavering support of the President when many others in Washington, including members of his own party, are distancing themselves from the near-daily tumult of bad news out of the White House? Political communication and political psychology scholarship may provide some answers. Because the news media provide voters with a window into the political world, what stories news outlets choose to cover have repercussions for what audiences know and consider important. If audiences are selective about their news sources, the partisan biases of those sources can have ramifications for how voters receive and process information. Take, for example, the recent New York Times report that Trump asked former FBI Director Comey to shut down a federal investigation of ousted NSA Director Michael Flynn. While CNN and MSNBC speculated whether Trump’s alleged actions ran afoul of the law, Fox News framed the news differently. Fox News’ audiences instead learned that the New York Times report was the latest in a string of leaks of classified information to the press. According to Fox, the important story wasn’t about possible obstruction of justice, but it was instead about members of the so-called deep state intent on undermining the Trump presidency. This divergence of coverage exists for nearly all of Trump’s recent troubles: alleged leaks of classified information to the Russians, Comey’s firing, the botched rollout of the travel ban, the push for an unpopular replacement to the Affordable Care Act, and the appointment of a special counsel to investigate collusion between Trump’s campaign and Russia are just a few of the bad headlines that Trump has had to weather. Conservative news outlets provide a harbor for the storms engulfing the Oval Office, and voters have high levels of trust in sources sharing their ideology. According to the news reported by conservative outlets, the Trump administration is not floundering, but instead Trump is the victim of forces out to undermine his presidency. In the face of these attacks by the media, the left, and rogue elements within the government, conservative audiences hear that it is more important than ever to support the nation’s commander-in-chief. And yet, it is not just the echo chamber that might reinforce Trump voters’ support of the president. In the off-chance that Republican voters are exposed to countervailing narratives about Trump’s performance, their partisan motivations to protect their preconceived notions about the president may lead them to reject the veracity or reliability of such reports. Indeed, Trump likely knows this. He claims “fake news” whenever the media report a negative story, which fits nicely with the historically-low levels of trust that Republicans have in the mainstream media. Rather than confront the possibility that their opinions of the current political climate are mistaken, motivated reasoners can instead use the excuse of a liberally-biased media to dismiss reports Trump’s missteps. Of course, it is possible that the recent negative news reports regarding Trump will amount to a lot of smoke, but no fire. If so, then Republican voters may be entirely justified in their unwavering support of the president. But if not, what would it take for Trump voters to abandon the president? In January of last year, at a campaign stop in Iowa, presidential candidate Donald J. Trump boasted that he could “stand in the middle of Fifth Avenue and shoot somebody, and not lose any voters.” Let’s hope it doesn’t come to that.

### Uniqueness Overwhelms Link – Media

#### Conservative media echo chamber guarantees Trump controls spin – that maintains base support

Rubin 1/27 Jennifer Rubin writes the Right Turn blog for The Post, offering reported opinion from a conservative perspective. Washington Post, “Trump’s authoritarian tendencies are revealed once again” January 27, 2017

https://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/right-turn/wp/2017/01/27/trumps-authoritarian-tendencies-revealed-once-again/?utm\_term=.361d1e789a1a

What we now see is the product of Trump’s obsession with adulation and his team’s determination to obliterate any bearers of objective truth. Part of the responsibility also rests with so-called respectable conservatives who complained for years, with justification, about liberal bias in the media — and then set out to create something far worse. They have cocooned themselves in a bubble of dishonesty and resentment, a closed media destructive of American democratic norms. In obvious ways (watch “Fox & Friends” peddle Trump’s narrative morning after morning) and less obvious ways (laundering false data from anti-immigrant groups to support immigration exclusionism), the right has become an echo chamber in which blatant untruths are repeated until no one dares question them. It has decided that to be conservative means to be blind to scientific consensus on climate change; hence everyone from Bill O’Reilly to Trump (a “Chinese hoax”) to the Trump Environmental Protection Agency becomes purveyors of misinformation, half-truths and out-and-out lies. To be one of them requires one to believe all sorts of things that aren’t true (e.g. illegal immigration from Mexico is higher than ever, CIA employees gave Trump a standing ovation). As one commentator put it, “One of the defining tactics of his campaign was disinformation, coupled with accusations of the same against the media. That hasn’t changed now that Trump is president. … The president will wage a rhetorical war against the media, with the intent of delegitimizing one of the few institutions that can hold him accountable, and he will wage it with his most effective weapon: Lies, damned lies, and false statistics.”

### Uniqueness Overwhelms Link – Media

#### Trump controls social media spin – that maintains support

Hohmann 6/6/2017 (James Hohmann is a National Political Correspondent for The Washington Post and author of the Daily 202, “The Daily 202: Trump signals to his base that he is a man of action”, The Washington Post, June 6, 2017, https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/powerpost/paloma/daily-202/2017/06/06/daily-202-trump-signals-to-his-base-that-he-is-a-man-of-action/5935fccce9b69b2fb981dc64/?utm\_term=.d8d3d10de6d0, accessed 6/25/2017, \*LD)

If Trump truly cared about the underlying ban and wanted it to be in place for the country’s security, as he claims, he would not be speaking so freely. The billionaire businessman has been mired in litigation off and on for decades and has demonstrated an ability — when his own money was at stake — to be self-disciplined. The only explanation, then, is that he cares less about winning the case than reassuring his base. The number of posts reflects the degree to which Trump thinks the travel ban is a political winner. He is trying to signal for his 24 million Facebook fans and 31.7 million Twitter followers that he’s fighting for them, regardless of what the judges, the media and the Democrats say. As Trump put it this morning: Donald J. Trump ✔ @realDonaldTrump The FAKE MSM is working so hard trying to get me not to use Social Media. They hate that I can get the honest and unfiltered message out. 7:58 AM - 6 Jun 2017 Donald J. Trump ✔ @realDonaldTrump Sorry folks, but if I would have relied on the Fake News of CNN, NBC, ABC, CBS, washpost or nytimes, I would have had ZERO chance winning WH 8:15 AM - 6 Jun 2017 26,230 26,230 Retweets 108,128 108,128 likes -- Bigger picture, the president is trying to maintain his populist street cred and show his true believers that he’s not going wobbly on them after five months in Washington, despite back-tracking on more of his campaign promises than he’s kept. Trump has always been a flashy show horse. Why would anyone think a septuagenarian is suddenly going to buckle down to become a work horse? As a developer, biographers and former associates say, he consistently cared more about the gold-plated façade than the foundation. This is why Trump could obsess about how the lobbies of his properties looked, even as his business ventures careened toward bankruptcy under the weight of bad loans and poor bookkeeping. (Marc Fisher explored this dynamic in February.) -- With his agenda imperiled, Trump increasingly seems determined to create an aura of effectiveness in the hopes that core supporters already inclined to support him won’t be able to tell the difference between optics and substance. Remember, this is the same candidate who once boasted that he could shoot someone on Fifth Avenue and his voters would stick with him.

### Uniqueness Overwhelms Link – Single Issues Not Key

#### The DA is a fallacy – Trump’s base isn’t monolithic – no single issue will not cause his support to drop

Anderson 6/27. Kristen Soltis, political columnist for the Washington Examiner, 6-27-2017, "There's no such thing as 'Trump's base'," Washington Examiner, http://www.washingtonexaminer.com/theres-no-such-thing-as-trumps-base/article/2626598 //saenl

There's no counting the number of times the media have asked: Will this be the thing that drives Donald Trump's supporters away from him? Is this finally the time? During the campaign, it was incessant: the times he'd insult his opponents, the Access Hollywood tapes, the latest foray into "political incorrectness." Once he was elected, the focus shifted to his appointments and proposals: choosing Goldman Sachs executives for his senior team and cabinet, bombing a Syrian airfield, proposing a budget that cuts social program spending. Whether the president's decision is good or bad, the action justifiable or appalling, the question is always, always posed: Won't this drive away his voters? Coming from the polling world, I've long since stopped expecting that any one thing is "the thing" that will dramatically shift Trump's numbers downward. And with exciting new research out on just who comprises Trump's coalition, I believe that part of the resilience of Trump's numbers comes in large part because not all Trump voters are alienated by or attracted to the same things about the president. For all the constant churn of the news cycle and the endless stream of outrage, backlash, and bluster, Trump's job approval numbers have stayed surprisingly stable since his inauguration. From around 44 percent during his "honeymoon" period, Trump's approval numbers are still around 40 percent. For comparison, Barack Obama's approval rating started in the mid-60s, and by late June of his first year, it was approaching the mid-50s. (Still better numbers overall than those enjoyed by President Trump, to be sure.) Part of this is because of the calcification of views of Trump among Democrats: Trump hasn't lost ground with the Left because he never had ground with them to start with. Obama's numbers fell by a slightly larger amount over his first few months because he enjoyed much more support right at the start from Republicans, support that eroded quickly. But I suspect part of this has to do with the ideological diversity and varied interests of Trump's coalition. A new study out from Democracy Fund's Voter Study Group – a research coalition I was honored to advise – covers a great deal of ground explaining and understanding the who, what, why and how of the 2016 election. In the study Cato Institute scholar Emily Ekins lays out typology of the Trump voter, finding five clusters of voters in his coalition. In a sense, most of these clusters are represented by at least a handful of Trump White House senior advisers. The diverging views of these advisers look like a source of conflict, but they also make the Trump administration look like Trump's electorate. "Staunch conservatives" are the largest cluster, making up 31 percent of Trump's voter base. These are traditional Republican types, favoring conservative social and economic policy. Reince Priebus, the career party operative, fits this mold. The second-largest group is the "free marketeers," at 25 percent. These are your Wall Street types, those with fairly moderate social views and who tend to be pro-free trade and pro-immigration, embodied in the White House by either Ivanka Trump or Gary Cohn, the Goldman Sachs alumnus. Behind them come the "American preservationists," who are 20 percent of Trump's coalition. Staunch conservatives and free marketeers are fairly typical Republicans, while the American preservationists are far less reliably a part of a GOP coalition. These folks are in many ways economically progressive, with what Ekins calls "a nativist and ethnocultural conception of American identity." Think of them as the Steve Bannon wing of the coalition. In roughly equal number are simply the "anti-elite," 19 percent of the coalition, holding more moderate immigration and racial views than the American preservationists, but with no less anger at institutions and a sense that Washington isn't working or looking out for people like them. An additional 5 percent, "the disengaged," feel detached generally and do not have many strong preferences. When Trump issued the order to bomb an airfield in Syria that had been the launching point for chemical weapons attacks, some wondered: Would this alienate "the Bannon wing"? <<card continues>>

### Uniqueness Overwhelms Link – Single Issues Not Key

<<card continues>> Trump's decision to pull out of the Paris Accords: Was it a blow to "the Ivanka wing"? And yet after each of these things, Trump's numbers don't move much. Bombing Syria may have gotten Trump backlash from the alt-right, but he continues to fight angrily on Twitter for his travel ban. Pulling out of Paris Accords may have been dismaying to some of the more moderate elements of Trump's coalition, but hey, there's still tax reform to be had. The things that frustrate one piece of Trump's coalition often endear him to or embolden another wing of the coalition. If he hovers around 40 percent over the months, it's not that he's holding his whole base steady — it's because he's losing a few supporters with each move but gaining a few more. There's little he could do to please his whole base but also little he could do to anger his whole base. Of course, he needs to deliver. All the angry tweets in the world won't hold the coalition together if the various factions feel the president hasn't scored any wins for them as time goes on. But for the moment, next time you see the latest outrageous thing the president has tweeted and wonder "Will this be the thing that drives his voters away?" remember that "his voters" are not all the same.

## A2: Link

### States’ Rights Link is Non-Unique

#### Trump’s base already sees him as increasing federal control through DeVos and her stance on the ESSA

Smiley 17 – Teacher Project fellow writing for Slate’s Schooled section. A Columbia Journalism School graduate, he used to cover politics in Australia for the Australian Broadcasting Corporation – (Stephen, “The Conservative Case Against Betsy DeVos,” 2/7/17, http://www.slate.com/articles/news\_and\_politics/schooled/2017/02/why\_some\_conservatives\_oppose\_betsy\_devos.html)//elliot

In their opposition to DeVos, Republican moderates have unlikely company. If the election of Trump as president and the presence of Steve Bannon in Trump’s inner circle has proved anything, it’s that the far-right fringe of the party wields clout. In DeVos, they don’t like what they see. Some members of this constituency—which includes states rights activists, nationalists, and small-government conservatives (not to mention the outright racists and xenophobes)—voted for a Trump administration in the hope it would bring an end to Common Core, their favorite education policy bête noire. But that isn’t on DeVos’ radar. Coupled with DeVos’ pledge to keep implementing the requirements of the Every Student Succeeds Act—the bipartisan successor to the Bush administration’s No Child Left Behind Act that cleared Congress in 2015—conservative activists see the president’s choice as an abject betrayal. “Despite Trump’s lambasting of Jeb Bush’s education policies, the list of staffers looks more like the choices that would have been made under a Jeb Bush administration,” [wrote](https://truthinamericaneducation.com/federalized-education/trumps-questionable-new-education-team/) Erin Tuttle of Hoosiers Against Common Core last month, citing a [Politico story](http://www.politico.com/tipsheets/morning-education/2017/01/new-staffers-arrive-at-education-department-218400) pointing out the number of former Jeb staffers hired by the new administration. On Breitbart, writer Susan Berry has been driving home this argument too. DeVos won’t put “the needs of students and their parents’ decision for their education first,” she’s [declared](http://www.breitbart.com/big-government/2017/02/05/five-reasons-betsy-devos-nomination-education-chief-controversial/).

### Link Turn – Base Loves Spending

#### Trump’s base loves education spending and big government – they’re just social conservatives

Makela 6/20. Senior editor for politics at Vice News, Mark, 6-20-2017, "Turns Out Trump Voters Aren't the Same as 'Conservatives'," Vice, <https://www.vice.com/en_us/article/bj8aqz/turns-out-trump-voters-arent-the-same-as-conservatives> //saenl

Donald Trump is many things to many people, but he is also a lesson. During the GOP primary campaign, Trump wasn't shocking just for the crudeness of his rhetoric but the way he broke from normal Republican discourse. He was far more willing to flirt with outright white nationalism, but he also borrowed talking points from the left when attacking free trade agreements, famously promised "insurance for everybody" when discussing healthcare, swore he'd protect entitlement programs like Social Security, and dangled infrastructure spending. Republicans are supposed to tack rightward in primaries, prostrating themselves before the altar of self-reliance and anti-tax orthodoxy. Trump did the opposite, people loved it, and now he's president. That might be an oversimplification, but a massive new study of 8,000 voters—called the VOTER Survey—sheds some light on the hidden division in the Republican Party that helped lift Trump to the presidency. Participants were asked questions on a variety of topics ranging from how they felt about Muslims and black people to whether they thought Social Security and Medicare were important. The resulting data offers a rare look into how Trump voters differed from backers of Hillary Clinton—and the existential questions facing the Democratic and Republican Parties. One takeaway: There are fewer old-school conservatives than most people think. "A lot of people will say they're conservative, but then you ask, 'Do you want the government to spend more money on education?' 'Well, yeah,'" said political scientist Lee Drutman. "'Do you want the government to spend more money on Social Security and Medicare?' 'Well, yeah'... So it turns out they're not actually conservative, but they'll say they're conservative because it sounds cool." Drutman, who wrote one of the analyses accompanying the survey, used the answers from Clinton and Trump voters to create a pair of rough ideological axes. One measured how right- or left-wing a voter was on social issues; the other measured stances on economic issues. That led to a chart that was predictable in one sense: Clinton supporters had liberal economic and social views. Less obvious is that Trump voters were far more divided: Chart via the VOTER Survey To be sure, plenty of Trump voters are traditional conservatives who lean right on social and economic issues—many of these people also supported George W. Bush, John McCain, and Mitt Romney. But lots of others are socially conservative yet economically liberal, a category Drutman dubbed "populist." Trump supporters are more populist than other Republicans, poorer Republicans are more populist than wealthy ones, and people who cast ballots for Barack Obama and then voted for Trump are extremely likely to be populist. Drutman estimates that almost half of the Republican electorate could fit into this category. As a candidate, Trump appealed to populists by basically promising to protect white people from both job-stealing immigrants and cuts to programs they liked. But as president, Trump has largely embraced a traditional Republican agenda. Though he killed the TransPacific Partnership—which had become a symbol of globalism and free trade and was probably dead anyway—Trump's economic policies have otherwise been mostly geared toward helping rich people. The American Health Care Act would result in many older and poorer people losing insurance and some of them dying as a result; Trump's proposed budget would take away money from programs that benefit depressed areas of the country. As Drutman told me, Trump "filled a niche where there was a void," and spoke to voters who felt ignored. But when he got into office, he was more or less forced to fill his administration with bog-standard conservative politicians. (Whatever his actual beliefs, this was a reality the relatively populist Obama ran into back in 2009, too, when he seemed stuck with Clinton administration veterans.) "There was no set of Washington hands who had policy proposals, and positions worked out along these lines," Drutman said of populism. Plus, Republican donors generally embrace traditionally anti-tax and anti-spending positions, and few politicians want to go against the flow of money. Still, Trump revealed a class of voters who weren't being served by Democrats, normal Republicans, or even Republicans on the libertarian end of the spectrum.<<card continues>>

### Link Turn – Base Loves Spending

<<card continues>> "The question would be, are there politicians who look at this and say, 'Gee, we need to have policies that speak to these voters'?" Drutman told me. Could a more polished politician, a Trump 2.0, run a similar campaign on the right that embraced populism and disdained the donor class—and then actually govern like a populist? Could Democrats find a way to appeal to populists on a purely economic level (in other words, without the whiff of racism) and gut the Republican base—as they have come close to doing at a few moments throughout history? Will Republicans finally realize that no one besides basically the Koch brothers and their friends wants the social safety net to be shredded? Then there's the big one: Is Trump the end of something, or just the beginning?

### Link Turn – CTE

#### Trump’s base is defecting over policy inaction – but a win on vocational education rallies rural areas

Beaumont 6/21. Thomas, AP Reporter, 6-21-2017, "President Trump Returns to Iowa Amid Unhappy Voters," <http://time.com/4826232/donald-trump-iowa-independent-voters/> //saenl

Inaction on health care and any notable decline in the economy will hurt Trump's ability to improve his numbers with independents, with broad implications for the midterm elections next year, Shumaker said. At stake in 2018 will be majority control of the House. A favorable map and more Democrats up for re-election make the GOP more likely to add to its numbers in the Senate. "How the president and members of Congress move forward and address the kitchen-table issues facing the American voters will determine the outcome of the 2018 elections," he said. In Iowa on Wednesday, Trump will be rallying his Republican base in Cedar Rapids. Earlier this month, Vice President Mike Pence attended Republican Sen. Joni Ernst's annual fundraiser, where he talked about job growth and low unemployment since the start of the year, although economists see much of it as a continuation of Obama policies. Trump has only been in office five months. It's a message the Republican establishment is clinging to, especially those looking ahead to 2018. Gov. Kim Reynolds, installed last month to succeed new U.S. Ambassador to China Terry Branstad, said last week of Iowa voters: "I think they are confident that President Trump and this administration are doing the job that they said that they would do, going out there and making America great again." But Trump has to worry about people like Richard Sternberg, a 68-year-old retired high school guidance counselor from Roland, in central Iowa, who voted for Trump. But is Sternberg satisfied? "Not completely." He is bothered by Trump's proposed cut to vocational education, an economic lift for some in rural areas. "We, especially in Iowa, need those two-year technically trained people," Sternberg said. More broadly, Trump needs to act more "presidential," he said." Trump speaks before he thinks," Sternberg said. "He doesn't seem to realize what the president says in the form of direct communication or Twitter carries great weight and can be misconstrued if not carefully crafted."

#### CTE is directed towards Trump’s base

Dougherty 6/9. Shaun M., Department of Education and Public Policy at UConn, 6-9-2017, "Op-ed: 'Trump’s Education Cuts Undermine His Economic Goals'," UConn Today, <http://today.uconn.edu/2017/06/heres-trumps-harsh-education-cuts-undermine-economic-growth-goals-2/> //saenl

The higher education budget faces severe cuts as well. Trump wants to eliminate subsidized student loans as well as a loan forgiveness program, and slash federal work study spending in half. These changes would substantially undermine efforts to help lower-income Americans attain a college degree, which would be a further drag on economic and productivity growth. Of particular concern to me, however, is the $168 million, or 15 percent, reduction in block grants to states, called Perkins funding, that are used to support career and technical education in high schools and community college. Given the administration’s preference for funding programs that promote economic growth, the cut to CTE – which disproportionately benefits Trump’s base of largely white working-class voters – is bewildering. CTE, also known as vocational education, exposes youth to practical, hands-on skills as a complement to academic coursework. Historically, CTE has included programs like auto mechanics and cosmetology, but increasingly also includes high-growth industries such as information technology and health services. By supporting these kinds of career paths, CTE tends to train students for positions that could support small business growth, and that fill demand in the high growth fields of health services, information technology, and advanced manufacturing.

### Link Turn – CTE

#### CTE spending is key to economic growth which checks back against Trump base mutiny

Dougherty 6/4 (Shaun M., Assistant Professor of Education & Public Policy, [University of Connecticut](http://theconversation.com/institutions/university-of-connecticut-1342), "How Trump’s harsh education cuts undermine his economic growth goals," Salon, http://www.salon.com/2017/06/04/how-trumps-harsh-education-cuts-undermine-his-economic-growth-goals\_partner/)//dgd

The Trump administration has some ambitious goals that include [trillions in tax cuts](http://money.cnn.com/2017/04/27/news/economy/trump-tax-plan-debt/), a significant military buildup and a fresh investment in infrastructure. The White House released details of how it plans to pay for it all in its [full budget request for fiscal year 2018](https://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/whitehouse.gov/files/omb/budget/fy2018/budget.pdf): by slashing spending on pretty much everything else, but also by boosting economic growth enough to [generate more than US$2 trillion in new revenue](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/05/22/us/politics/trump-budget-winners-losers.html?mcubz=0) over a decade. What the president’s team is failing to consider is that many of its spending cuts, such as reduced investment in [welfare](http://www.jstor.org/stable/3132242?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents) and education, will actually impede the administration’s ability to [achieve its target growth rate](http://www.npr.org/sections/thetwo-way/2017/05/23/529710769/trump-budget-plan-relies-on-optimistic-growth-assumptions-analysts-say) of 3 percent, up from about 2 percent today. [My own research](http://massbudget.org/report_window.php?loc=Career-and-Technical-Education.html) focuses on how career and technical education (CTE) has implications for growth by promoting educational attainment, training and productivity. Trump’s proposed cuts to CTE offer an illustrative example of the economic consequences of reducing social spending. Taking an ax to education The administration’s [budget](https://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/whitehouse.gov/files/omb/budget/fy2018/edu.pdf) seeks to [slash spending](http://www.npr.org/sections/ed/2017/05/22/529534031/president-trumps-budget-proposal-calls-for-deep-cuts-to-education) on the Education Department by $9.2 billion, or 13.5 percent, which is the [biggest proposed cut](http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/campaign-k-12/2017/05/trump_budget_would_slash_Education_Dept._Spending_Boost_School_Choice.html?cmp=eml-enl-eu-news2) since President Ronald Reagan unsuccessfully [tried to gut the agency](http://www.nytimes.com/1982/11/14/education/reagan-record-in-education-mixed-results.html?pagewanted=all) in the 1980s. In K-12 education, the administration would like to eliminate at least four distinct programs – including Title II grants for teacher and principal training and programs designed to help lower-income students transition to college — and make significant reductions to many others. On the other hand, there’s a big investment in a few programs to support school choice and vouchers, an [articulated priority](https://theconversation.com/trump-budget-would-abandon-public-education-for-private-choice-78071) of Trump and Education Secretary Betsy DeVos. The higher education budget faces severe cuts as well. Trump wants to [eliminate subsidized student loans](https://www.usnews.com/news/politics/articles/2017-05-22/budget-seeks-end-to-subsidized-student-loans-forgiveness) as well as a loan forgiveness program, and slash federal work study spending in half. These changes would [substantially undermine efforts](https://www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2017/05/trumps-education-budget-takes-aim-at-the-working-class/527718/) to help lower-income Americans attain a college degree, which would be a [further drag](https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/education/news/2015/06/26/116019/the-relationship-between-student-debt-and-college-completion/) on economic and productivity growth. Of particular concern to me, however, is the $168 million, or 15 percent, reduction in block grants to states, called Perkins funding, which are used to support career and technical education in high schools and community college. Given the administration’s preference for funding programs that promote economic growth, the cut to CTE — which disproportionately benefits Trump’s base of largely white working-class voters — is bewildering. CTE, also known as vocational education, [exposes youth to practical, hands-on skills](https://www.acteonline.org/cte/#.WSxX2saZOV5) as a complement to academic coursework. Historically, CTE has included programs like auto mechanics and cosmetology but increasingly also includes high-growth industries such as information technology and health services. By supporting these kinds of career paths, CTE tends to train students for positions that could support small business growth, and that fill demand in the high growth fields of health services, information technology and advanced manufacturing. How CTE helps the economy Though CTE is on Trump’s list of cuts, it is the area of education spending that my research suggests has the most potential to boost economic growth. These benefits would be realized through better-paying jobs and fewer dropouts, which also help achieve other positive economic and social outcomes. [Career Academies](http://www.mdrc.org/project/career-academies-exploring-college-and-career-options-ecco#overview), which began about 35 years ago, are one such approach to providing CTE in high school by integrating career pathways into the school curriculum. They boast some of the best evidence on the effectiveness of CTE. A [2008 report on the program](http://www.mdrc.org/publication/career-academies-long-term-impacts-work-education-and-transitions-adulthood) suggests it can help students earn 11 percent more in wages compared with their peers. [My own recent work](https://edexcellence.net/publications/career-and-technical-education-in-high-school-does-it-improve-student-outcomes) using data from Arkansas shows that students who took more CTE courses in high school were more likely to be employed and earn more money — about 3 percent to 5 percent — than their peers who took fewer. Furthermore, I also found these students were more likely to finish high school and go on to college, both of which improve job prospects. [Evidence from Massachusetts shows](http://massbudget.org/report_window.php?loc=Career-and-Technical-Education.html) similar [educational benefits of CTE](http://edex.s3-us-west-2.amazonaws.com/publication/pdfs/%282016.04.07%29%20Career%20and%20Technical%20Education%20in%20High%20School.pdf). <<card continues>>

### Link Turn – CTE

<<card continues>> Specifically, I found that students enrolled in vocational programs were significantly more likely to graduate from high school and attain [industry-recognized certificates](https://learningnetwork.cisco.com/community/certifications) in specialized fields like IT. Increasing high school graduation is critical; there is [ample evidence](https://www.jstor.org/stable/2138804?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents) that higher levels of educational attainment result in higher wages and better long-term employment prospects. [Studies show](http://www.sanjuan.edu/cms/lib8/CA01902727/Centricity/Domain/4026/Drop%20Out%20Articles%20Packet.pdf) that a high school graduate will earn 50 percent to 100 percent more in lifetime earnings than high school dropouts and will be less likely to draw on welfare or get tangled up in the criminal justice system. The graduate’s higher earnings also mean [she’ll pay more in taxes](http://cdrpsb.org/download.php?file=policybrief1.pdf). Beyond improving individual outcomes, investment in education and training [fuels broader economic growth](http://press.uchicago.edu/ucp/books/book/chicago/H/bo3684031.html) by bolstering productivity. The decreased demand for social services and welfare also frees up more state and federal resources to be invested in other areas of the economy. Ideology over sound policy The Trump administration has claimed the high price tag of its tax cuts will pay for themselves through higher economic growth. A budget that aims to gut important social programs — which not only improve individual lives directly but also boost the economy — would make that a lot less achievable. In the end, the Trump budget, it seems, is motivated more by ideology than sound, evidence-based policy. In education, the administration is clearly prioritizing school choice at the expense of bedrock areas like CTE that are known to promote achievement and a variety of economic benefits. he ConversationAs a result, education development will suffer, as will the administration’s rosy economic growth projections.

## A2: Impact

### No Diversionary War

#### Trump won’t start a diversionary war – he knows it won’t boost popularity

Tierney 6/15/17 (Dominic Tierney is a contributing editor at The Atlantic and an associate professor of political science at Swarthmore College, “The Risks of Foreign Policy as Political Distraction”, The Atlantic, June 15, 2017, https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2017/06/trump-diversionary-foreign-policy/530079/, accessed 6/25/2017, \*LD)

But what about military force? To be clear, there is little cause to speculate that Trump plans to launch a full-scale war solely to distract attention. For one thing, as president, the worst possible time to start a major military campaign is when you’re deeply unpopular. And the political upside is shaky at best. Recent big wars in Afghanistan and Iraq were politically damaging to George W. Bush. Even victory doesn’t guarantee a pay-off, as George H. W. Bush discovered when he won the 1991 Gulf War and then lost his bid for reelection in 1992.

### No Diversionary War – Twitter Solves

#### Trump will divert through Twitter, not war

Bershidsky 1-29-2017 – Bloomberg view columnist (Leonid, “Trump a master of diversionary tactics,” *Frederick News Post*, http://www.fredericknewspost.com/opinion/trump-a-master-of-diversionary-tactics/article\_19f13378-2e36-5d9b-bec2-6a15b056ee0c.html)

President Donald Trump’s executive activity has been frantic in the first days of his term. He has moved to keep a number of the scary promises that were easier to dismiss as unfeasible during the campaign than to accept as actual policies in the real world. But the big stories he has generated have had nothing to do with these actions. According to data collected by BuzzSumo.com, the most widely shared CNN news story about Donald Trump since Jan. 21 was one about his press secretary, Sean Spicer, attacking the media for their reporting on inauguration attendance. It was shared 169,700 times on Facebook. A story on Trump’s executive order to start rolling back Obamacare clocked just 71,100 shares. On The New York Times’ website, the most widely shared story debunked Spicer’s “alternative facts.” It showed up on Facebook 170,900 times. The New York Times piece about Trump’s executive order abandoning the Trans-Pacific Partnership got 44,600 shares. This is the result of a manipulation strategy described long ago by Noam Chomsky: “Keep the adult public attention diverted away from the real social issues, and captivated by matters of no real importance.” Leftists such as Chomsky argue that this is what capitalist elites do, but I know it as a common tactic of kleptocratic regimes such as Vladimir Putin’s in Russia. There’s even a term for the tactic: “diversionary conflict.” Faced with economic difficulties or other problems potentially threatening to its survival, the regime starts a war somewhere or sharpens domestic ethnic divisions. Since the oil price plummeted in late 2014, the Putin regime has kept Russians on a steady diet of war news from eastern Ukraine and Syria (Russia and its allies have been winning). With the Syrian operation, Putin sharply raised his international standing, but a big reduction in protests against worsening economic conditions has probably been more important to him. In neighboring Ukraine, every time a government finds itself in trouble and particularly unpopular, the matter of the country’s linguistic division surfaces, with various groups trying to promote or ban the Russian language. Former President Viktor Yanukovych used the language matter as cover for passing other unpopular legislation. Now, with President Petro Poroshenko’s popularity at a nadir, reforms stalled and the cost of living rising sharply, Ukrainians are distracted by the discussion of a new language law that would make Ukrainian obligatory in public life, under threat of fines. Trump doesn’t need to start wars: He and his team know how emotional many Americans are about him. He can choose what he wants to be hated for -- preferably for something silly and unrelated to his actual priorities at the moment. He used this to his advantage during the campaign: His alleged sexual misconduct took up so much media time and public attention than issues like his business history, his tax returns and his proposals. As the inauguration attendance argument played, Trump has been busy. Apart from starting the Obamacare rollback and withdrawing from the TPP, he has frozen a reduction of mortgage insurance premiums, allowed the Keystone Pipeline to go ahead and prepared to sign an executive order to begin construction of a border wall. Well aware that some of these important actions might cause indignation and targeted protest, Trump has tossed out another meaningless football for the media and the public to fixate on. “I will be asking for a major investigation into VOTER FRAUD, including those registered to vote in two states, those who are illegal and even those registered to vote who are dead,” he tweeted. Sure enough, at the time of this writing, the CNN story about this was the most shared in the last 24 hours, with news about the border wall order coming a distant second. Just as it was unimportant how many people attended the inauguration, it doesn’t matter at all at this point whether undocumented immigrants actually voted last November and whether any votes were cast for dead people. No one is challenging the results of the election. The wall and the Keystone Pipeline matter, yet are much smaller stories in terms of readership. Trump and his team are already showing a flair for diversion. Is it enough to discourage the kinds of mass protests that such aggressive moves on lightning-rod issues might spark? We’ll know in the coming days and weeks, though protesters’ energy was certainly sapped by the massive women’s march, which took place before Trump actually did anything damaging to women’s rights. Trump’s and his team’s communications look awkward, inept, gallingly primitive. It’s time to wise up: These people know what they’re doing. They want their political opponents to be confused, to flail at windmills, to expend emotions on meaningless scandals to distract them from any targeted, coordinated action against specific threats. There are going to be many of these: Trump appears intent on keeping his promises. Calm concentration is needed to counteract dangerous policies.

### No Diversionary War – Denial

#### Decreasing polls don’t matter – neither Trump nor his base will respond to negative signs

Stanage 5/20. Niall, Associate Editor of The Hill, 5-20-2017, "The Memo: Trump base shows signs of cracking," TheHill, <http://thehill.com/homenews/administration/334326-the-memo-trump-base-shows-signs-of-cracking> //saenl

A new Reuters/IPSOS tracking poll, released Friday afternoon, showed the president with a job approval rating of 75 percent among Republicans. Political professionals generally view it as worrying for any commander-in-chief if his approval ratings with his own party dip below 85 percent — and downright alarming if they go below 80 percent. “Seventy-five [percent] is certainly a new number and I would want to see something that would either back that up or refute it,” said GOP pollster David Winston, whose resumé includes work for former Speaker Newt Gingrich (R-Ga.). “Certainly, if it were true, that is not where you would want to be.” While the IPSOS result was especially bad for Trump, it was not so far outside of the norm as to be a true outlier. A Monmouth University poll earlier in the week put Trump at 83 percent approval among Republicans, as did an Economist/YouGov poll. All or most of the responses for both surveys were, unlike the Reuters poll, gathered before a special counsel was appointed to look into allegations of collusion between Trump campaign associates and Russia. Low poll ratings are not a new problem for Trump. Nor have they always doomed him. He won the White House despite the worst favorability ratings of any nominee of a major party in history. Head-to-head polls with Democratic nominee Hillary Clinton also suggested he was headed for defeat. Even now, the president relishes reminding audiences of how wrong the pollsters were. Trump has often taken solace from his belief that the people who backed him last November will stand by him, despite what he views as a sustained media campaign against him. On Wednesday, in the eye of the storm over his firing of FBI director James Comey and revelations that he may have revealed classified information in a meeting with Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov and the Kremlin’s ambassador to the U.S. Sergey Kislyak, Trump defended himself in a a speech at the U.S. Coast Guard Academy in New London, Ct. “The people understand what I’m doing, and that’s the most important thing,” he said, “I didn’t get elected to serve the Washington media or special interests. I got elected to serve the forgotten men and women of our country, and that’s what I’m doing.” Some Republican observers beyond the Beltway agree, at least to some degree, that the likely effects of the recent furors on Trump’s base may be exaggerated. “I think there are reasons for Republicans to be concerned, obviously, but I don’t know if we can say definitively at this point what the reaction is going to be,” said Craig Robinson, a former political director of the Republican Party of Iowa. “I would imagine there would have to be some sort of shrinkage in his support but I don’t think it is substantial — I think a lot of those people will give him the benefit of the doubt,” Robinson added. “It’s not as if there is an alternative, some other president they can be invested in.” Trump has also declared that he is the victim of a “witch hunt.” The charge may resonate to some extent with his base, but even broadly sympathetic observers worry that it distracts from the factors that got him elected. “Here’s the problem that the White House and Trump are running into: He was basically elected to deal with the economy and you saw that in the Rust Belt specifically: the economy, jobs and wages,” said Winston. “The challenge is that everything is off on a topic that has nothing to do with that.”

### Impact Non-Unique

#### Trump is is already rallying base with diversionary tactics – the plan doesn’t uniquely trigger calls for nationalism

Ramsey 4/18. Reed, Graduate Assistant at University of the Pacific, 4-18-2017, "Trump Administration Drops MOAB On Afghanistan," <https://www.theodysseyonline.com/trump-drops-moab> //saenl

The Trump administration is at it again. This time it is meddling in another part of the Middle East, Afghanistan. We recently dropped a MOAB (Massive Ordnance Air Blast) bomb in the Northeast, hoping to weed out ISIS tunnel networks. This event occurred just days ago, which comes as no surprise given the recent provocations in the South China sea and Syria. It would seem that this unique instance is a desperate attempt to show the world where our priorities lie.¶ I would say that as of late the Trump administration is trying to divert attention away from his domestic blunders and put more attention on his foreign policy. This phenomenon is characterized as Diversionary War Theory, which is a term in international relations studies suggesting that leaders will engage in warfare when there is domestic turmoil. Another term for this theory is Rally Round the Flag Syndrome, which is similar what happened to the United States following September 11, 2001.¶ In the current state of affairs, Trump has been in the hot seat for some time. Basically, he is on the defensive ever since there were multiple breakthroughs in the Russian investigations, not to mention the collapse of social programs and many other civil protections. The Trump administration is following the lead of Reagan and the Bushes, which is to direct the attention to conflict rather than the failure of massive deregulation. Historically, when times of domestic hardship were tanking presidents’ approval ratings, war always helped to boost their public perceptions. In the 1990s George Bush’s approval rating soared after the US deployed troops to Kuwait for the Gulf War. This is the last thing that the Trump administration can do to try to rally public support and insulate his efforts to do things like dismantle Obamacare.¶ All of this brings us to where we are now. We have struck Syria, and we have moved to the threshold of striking North Korea. Now, we have used the largest explosive ordnance ever used in combat since the nuclear bomb, MOAB. In southern Nangarhar, the local eyewitnesses said they saw “lightning like a thunder storm.” This bomb weighed 21,600 pounds and is speculated to have killed upwards of 30 ISIS combatants. Taken as a bit of a shock, the world is still trying to figure out how to respond to this display of military aggression.¶ I would say that this brings to light a broader picture of what the Trump administration’s efforts against ISIS look like. It seems that they are not limiting themselves to just Iraq and Syria, but are using this excuse to continue war in places like Afghanistan. What I do not understand is how the US gets the ability to just do these things without so much as approval. I assume there is some process that takes place, but the turnaround on these discussions is quite fast. Former president of Afghanistan, Hamid Karzai, said that this was a “brutal act,” and these provocations threaten the sovereignty of Afghanistan. In the end, it seems that Trump will continue to flash the world with the might of the US military in an attempt to regain some sort of legitimacy.

### No China War

#### US-China relations are resilient and war will never happen

Wu, China Foundation for International Studies Center for American Studies executive director, 2013 (Zurong, “China and America’s Innate Goal: Avoiding War Forever”, 7-30, <http://watchingamerica.com/News/217271/china-and-americas-innate-goal-avoiding-war-forever/>)

China and the U.S. are currently constructing a new kind of relationship between major powers, with several aims. One intrinsic aim is especially worthy of attention, namely that China and the U.S. will not go to war today, nor in the future, and will forever maintain a peaceful association. The Chinese and American governments and people are striving toward this goal unceasingly because it is in the best interests of the people of China, America and the whole world. To avoid conflict, to keep from fighting, to be mutually respectful and to embark upon a path of mutual cooperation — acting in these ways would benefit everyone. First of all, the globalization of the economy, information and other essential factors have created a global village, and the U.S. and China live and work together within this community; their interests are intertwined and neither can break the inseparable bond each has with the other. The global financial crisis of 2007 once again made clear the great extent to which the Chinese and American economies are linked and mixed, for when one sinks into a recession or depression, it is almost impossible for the other to recover and flourish alone. When it comes to international security, climate change, energy, counterterrorism, oceans and all sorts of other unprecedented areas, China and the U.S. share more common interests every day, and cooperative negotiations are unceasingly strengthened. Within this sort of atmosphere, discussing whether the U.S. and China want to go to war seems a little bit untimely and excessive. Second, the current period is fundamentally different than the era of the Cold War, for the development of peace is the theme of the present. People from countries around the world are all concentrating their energy on revitalizing the economy and improving quality of life. After the end of the Cold War, America launched several localized wars in smaller countries under the banner of the fight against terrorism, in the process bringing upon itself a heavy financial and economic burden. Perhaps it was upon consideration of the fact that large-scale conflicts could yield a level of suffering and destruction that would be difficult to endure that America has not launched any wars against the great powers that are in possession of nuclear arms. Even in the Cold War, during the Cuban missile crisis of 1962, America and the Soviet Union did not go to war. The experience of history tells us that the inherent goal of this new form of Sino-U.S. relations will have the support of the strength of the entire ranks of the world’s great powers; thus as long as both China and the U.S. have unflagging perseverance, it can be achieved. Third, for over 40 years, China and the U.S. have promoted a strategy of mutual trust, of the expansion of cooperation, of controlling differences of opinion. These lessons from experience are the U.S. and China’s most valuable treasure. Since Nixon visited the Chinese, Sino-American relations have gone through wind and rain but have always developed onward; moreover, the speed, breadth and depth of the development have far exceeded everyone’s expectations. Indeed, Sino-U.S. relations enjoy a great vitality. And since the foundations were laid fairly recently, Sino-U.S. relations continually make significant progress. The highest leaders communicate freely and military leaders exchange visits often. The two militaries are in the process of issuing plans for Chinese troops to participate in the 2014 Pacific Rim joint military exercises. Both sides have decided to actively investigate significant military activities, report mechanisms to each other and continue to research matters of security and issues regarding standards of conduct, which are relevant to the Chinese and American navies and air forces. These collaborations will give rise to a significant and far-reaching influence on world peace and international security and will vigorously promote the actualization of the inherent goal of the new form of Sino-U.S. great power relations.

### No Iran War

#### No US-Iran war – no incentives to escalate and empirics prove rhetoric doesn’t matter

Tabatabai 2/9/2017 (Adnan Tabatabai is co-founder and CEO of the Center for Applied Research in Partnership with the Orient, “Why Iran-US war of words won't turn physical”, Al-Monitor, February 9, 2017, <http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2017/02/iran-us-war-words-trump-escalating-rhetoric.html>, accessed 6/29/2017, \*LD)

As much as the United States' new tone toward Iran is worrisome, and as much as the Islamic Republic's Jan. 29 ballistic missile test is disconcerting, Tehran and Washington are unlikely to collide directly. In both capitals, decision-makers see an urgent need for harsh rhetoric — albeit for different reasons. The Iranians see a need to show resilience vis-a-vis an explicitly hostile US administration. Meanwhile, the latter wants to make clear to both its domestic and international audience that the Obama era is over. This involves signaling that the easing of tensions with Iran has ended. It also involves reassuring regional allies such as Saudi Arabia and Israel that Washington would not engage in a rapprochement with Tehran at their expense. Indeed, it should not come as a surprise that US national security adviser Michael Flynn's warning that Iran "is officially on notice" came shortly after lengthy phone calls between the White House and both Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Saudi Arabia's King Salman bin Abdul-Aziz Al Saud. But escalating rhetoric aside, the reality is that US policy toward Iran has largely remained intact. In the 13 months since the implementation of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), Iran has repeatedly conducted ballistic missile tests. And it is entitled to do so. In UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 2231, which endorses the nuclear deal, Iran is "called upon" not to carry out tests of missiles "designed" to carry nuclear weapons. There is no legally binding prohibition of such launches, unlike in UNSCR 1929 — the last and most harsh UN resolution against Iran over its nuclear program — which is superseded by UNSCR 2231. To be clear, the nuclear deal does not address Iran's missile program. Moreover, the world powers with which Iran negotiated UNSCR 2231 — apart from the United States — did not display any appetite to insert legally binding text on Iran's missile tests. Thus, as provocative as the missile tests may be, it is hard to see them providing a legal basis for the United States to spearhead new multilateral sanctions, leaving Washington with the option of adopting unilateral sanctions, which it did on Feb. 3. While it took the Trump administration less than two weeks to slap sanctions on Iran, the idea that there was a sanctions freeze in Obama's final year in office is inaccurate. In fact, the latest sanctions were prepared by the previous administration. In January 2016, not long after the implementation of the nuclear deal, changes were made to the Visa Waiver Program, which excluded Iranian dual nationals and anyone who had visited Iran in the preceding five years. Moreover, last December, Obama refrained from moving to veto the congressional vote on a 10-year extension of the Iran Sanctions Act. While these sanctions are unrelated to Iran's nuclear program, they undoubtedly undermine the impact of the lifting of nuclear-related sanctions. Iran has reacted to the escalating rhetoric and sanctions by stressing that its missile program is defensive in nature, promising retaliatory sanctions, and by carrying out new military drills. Yet, there is little incentive for Iran to greatly alter the status quo. Iranian leaders see the JCPOA as much more than just about the United States. It is an international arrangement with world powers — including the European Union, which Iran holds in high regard as a multinational institution. They see this arrangement as beneficial to Iran's economic and security calculations. Foreign investment, albeit limited due to remaining US sanctions, is trickling in. The EU oil embargo has been lifted and major contracts in the area of petrochemicals, civic aviation and transport are increasingly sealed. Additionally, the JCPOA provides a sense of security to Iran. It is highly unlikely for any party to the agreement to green-light military action by another party against Iran. <<card continues>>

### No Iran War

<<card continues>> Hence, Iran has little incentive not to abide by the nuclear deal. As such, while the cycle of escalating rhetoric is discomforting at a time of deep uncertainty and conflict in the Middle East, it is important to see that it has its limits. Short of outright regime change, the United States has in fact rather limited options to weaken and contain Iran. Given its experiences in places like Iraq and Afghanistan, it is unlikely that the United States will launch full-scale unilateral military action against Iran. It could move to arm a third country to hit Iranian infrastructure. This was tried with Iraq under Saddam Hussein. Today, Saudi Arabia could be such a third country. But given the lack of appetite in Riyadh for direct confrontation with Tehran, and considering the downward spiral in the Saudi military intervention against Yemen — the poorest country in the region — it is unthinkable that Saudi Arabia would take such a step. Israel has repeatedly threatened to attack Iranian nuclear sites. But considering the low chances of success and the potentially dire consequences, including retaliatory attacks by Lebanon's Hezbollah movement, it can be argued that such threats primarily serve a political purpose. Less costly measures aimed at weakening and containing Iran, such as sanctions, have been tried and tested. The Obama administration managed to put in place an unprecedented multilateral sanctions regime targeting Tehran. Yet, it was under those very sanctions that Iran’s nuclear program evolved into what the international community came to perceive as a major threat to global security. Consequently, the Obama administration tried diplomacy. And it worked. The JCPOA reduced the capacity and increased the transparency of Iran's nuclear program in exchange for the lifting of nuclear-related sanctions. And as the International Atomic Energy Agency has repeatedly certified, the deal is working. Bearing in mind the nuclear deal is fulfilling its objectives, the limited military options to contain Iran, and perhaps most of all the likely US inability to forge an international consensus against Iran in case of its unilateral breach of the accord, the security establishments of both Israel and Saudi Arabia have publicly urged Washington not to dismantle the JCPOA. While reveling in the newfound reassurances from Washington, it can thus be argued that Riyadh and Tel Aviv understand the limits of the cycle of escalation and mostly take solace in Trump's unwillingness to realize their nightmares under Obama. In this vein, the Trump administration can be expected to do whatever it can to minimize the economic benefits Iran will reap under the JCPOA. It will likely seek to discredit Iran's regional policies to prevent the normalization of the Islamic Republic's ties with the world, while also diminishing the political capital the deal affords Iran. But it will do this short of breaching the accord. Thus, while likely to squabble about respective obligations and further drift away from rapprochement, neither Iran nor the United States has the incentive or ability to take the new cycle of tension to a military confrontation.

### No North Korea War

#### Zero risk of Korean conflict

Ashley Rowland, 12/3/2010. Stars and Stripes. “Despite threats, war not likely in Korea, experts say,” http://www.stripes.com/news/despite-threats-war-not-likely-in-korea-experts-say-1.127344?localLinksEnabled=false.

Despite increasingly belligerent threats to respond swiftly and strongly to military attacks, analysts say there is one thing both North Korea and South Korea want to avoid: an escalation into war. The latest promise to retaliate with violence came Friday, when South Korea’s defense minister-to-be said during a confirmation hearing that he supports airstrikes against North Korea in the case of future provocations from the communist country. “In case the enemy attacks our territory and people again, we will thoroughly retaliate to ensure that the enemy cannot provoke again,” Kim Kwan-jin said, according to The Associated Press. The hearing was a formality because South Korea’s National Assembly does not have the power to reject South Korean president Lee Myung-bak’s appointment. Kim’s comments came 10 days after North Korea bombarded South Korea’s Yeonpyeong island near the maritime border, killing two marines and two civilians — the first North Korean attack against civilians since the Korean War. South Korea responded by firing 80 rounds, less than half of the 170 fired by North Korea. It was the second deadly provocation from the North this year. In March, a North Korean torpedo sank the South Korean warship Cheonan, killing 46 sailors, although North Korea has denied involvement in the incident. The South launched a series of military exercises, some with U.S. participation, intended to show its military strength following the attack. John Delury, a professor at Yonsei University in Seoul, said South Korea is using “textbook posturing” to deter another attack by emphasizing that it is tough and firm. But it’s hard to predict how the South would respond to another attack. The country usually errs on the side of restraint, he said. “I think they’re trying to send a very clear signal to North Korea: Don’t push us again,” Delury said. “For all of the criticism of the initial South Korean response that it was too weak, in the end I think people don’t want another hot conflict. I think the strategy is to rattle the sabers a bit to prevent another incident.” Meanwhile, Yonhap News reported Friday that North Korea recently added multiple-launch rockets that are capable of hitting Seoul, located about 31 miles from the border. The report was based on comments from an unnamed South Korean military source who said the North now has 5,200 multiple-launch rockets. A spokesman for South Korea’s Joint Chiefs of Staff would not comment on the accuracy of the report because of the sensitivity of the information. Experts say it is a question of when — not if — North Korea will launch another attack. But those experts doubt the situation will escalate into full-scale war. “I think that it’s certainly possible, but I think that what North Korea wants, as well as South Korea, is to contain this,” said Bruce Bechtol, author of “Defiant Failed State: The North Korean Threat to International Security” and an associate professor of political science at Angelo State University in Texas. He said North Korea typically launches small, surprise attacks that can be contained — not ones that are likely to escalate. Delury said both Koreas want to avoid war, and North Korea’s leaders have a particular interest in avoiding conflict — they know the first people to be hit in a full-scale fight would be the elites.