

Notes

The Base DA — by Dana Randall, Director of Debate at Carrollton Sacred Heart.

General Argument

The Base DA is a “politics disadvantage” — it’s about the political consequences of the plan.

This DA argues that there is a core group of Trump supporters, known as his “base,” who support the president *primarily* because of his stance on immigration. This base consists of people who are worried about economic competition with immigrants (they took our jobs), people who have safety/security concerns about immigration (build the wall), and people who oppose immigration for other reasons like nationalism/xenophobia. The disad argues that while Trump is/has become very unpopular with a lot of people because of other policy actions (tax cuts, Paris withdrawal, environmental deregulation etc) the base is primarily (or exclusively) concerned about immigration policy and thus these other issues have not “thumped” the disad.

The link relies on characterizing the affirmative as “soft” on immigration, which is straightforward but slightly different for each case:

- **Open Borders** — the easiest to argue the link. This aff removes ALL immigration restrictions, so links like “DACA” or “chain migration” obviously apply as does any other link. This case would trigger all of the base anxieties about immigration.
- **High Skilled Immigrants** — while traditional, pro-business segments of the GOP would be in favor of high skilled immigration the base generally views any such policy as job competition. This is why Trump recently made H1-B visa applications far more cumbersome.
- **Refugees** — since Trump recently had sessions change refugee policy, this affirmative can be cast as a “flip flop”, which is when a politician changes their stance on something. Changing your stance generally angers voters/makes you look weak.

The hardest part of this disad is answering “thumpers”- thumpers are link uniqueness arguments that say something in the past/near future should have triggered the disad. On

immigration, the big issues that could thump are the fact that Trump was willing to compromise on DACA, and that he rolled back the family separation policy. If any softening of immigration policy triggers the disad than these actions should have. The neg will have to explain why these were not enough/sufficient to trigger the disad but the affirmative would be- this will obviously be easier vs Open Borders than Refugees as one is a much bigger change in immigration policy than the other.

The impact to the disad is that Trump will “lash out”. What we mean by lash out is Trump will do something aggressive/militaristic in foreign policy to try and distract focus from whatever he did that angered the base- this is often referred to as “wag the dog” or “diversionary conflict”. In the past Trump has been accused of doing this when he launched air strikes on Syria which could be an example either for the neg (see our disad link story is true) or the aff (the impact is exaggerated/overblown).

Affirmative Answers

When answering the disad there are a few key points to push on:

1. **Is it possible for Trump to lose base support?** Given all he has done on non immigration issues, and things he has said about immigration (DACA compromise, ending family separation) and failed to do (not build the wall) it seems that either the base will never abandon Trump or if they were going to they should have already
2. **Is Trump responsible for the plan?** Would the base really blame Trump for a liberal immigration policy? Or would he be able to use twitter/spin to get out of being blamed/put the blame on someone else?
3. **Will Trump really “lash out”?** Would enough of the base abandon him in a public enough fashion that would prompt a strike somewhere?

Negative

1NC Shells

1NC — Base DA

The [first/next] off-case is the Base DA.

First, Trump's base support is solid and growing.

Denning 8-22 — Steve Denning, opinion writer for Forbes Magazine, former Director of Knowledge Management at the World Bank, director of the SD Learning Consortium, a nonprofit organization whose members are organizations committed to discover together the world's most advanced Agile goals, principles and practices and disseminate them globally, 2018 ("Why Cohen's Guilty Plea Won't End Trump's Presidency," Forbes, August 22nd, Available Online at <https://www.forbes.com/sites/stevedenning/2018/08/22/trumps-big-day-is-still-not-pivotal/#68935d7863d2>, Accessed 08-28-2018)

Yesterday was a remarkable day in American politics, with eight convictions of Trump's former campaign manager, Paul **Manafort, and eight guilty pleas by** Trump's former personal lawyer, Michael **Cohen**. The commentariat is noting that it was a historic day in the history of the Trump presidency. The question remains whether these stark developments signify the beginning of the end, as some suggest. **Paradoxically, the setbacks may even strengthen support from Trump's base**. The development most damaging for Trump yesterday was Cohen's extraordinary admission in court that Trump had directed him to arrange payments to two women during the 2016 campaign to keep them from speaking publicly about affairs with Trump. In particular, Cohen stated under oath that the payments were made "in coordination with and at the direction of a candidate [Trump] for federal office," with the intent to affect the outcome of the election, thereby implicating the president as an alleged co-conspirator in a federal crime. When combined with the recording released several weeks ago, in which Trump demonstrated knowledge of the payments and their purpose, the case for Trump's criminal liability appears strong. Yet **Trump's political base, which now constitutes a sizable proportion of the Republican Party, has shown indifference to Trump's deviations from previous conceptions of presidential conduct. They have been willing to overlook more than 4,000 false or misleading statements since taking office, a plethora of racially tinged remarks and actions,** the blatant **collusion** of many in his campaign **with Russia**, guilty pleas by former aides like Michael Flynn, the indictment of many Russians, Trump's public embrace of Vladimir Putin ahead of U.S. intelligence services, an unwillingness to address past **and** current threats of Russian hacking of U.S. elections, **a tax law that massively shifts resources** from his base **to the wealthy**, the systematic demonization and disruption of institutions like the FBI, the NSA and the Justice Department, **among many other deviations from presidential norms.**

Second, Trump's strategy for securing the base is his anti-immigrant stance — it continues to generate overwhelming support.

Malone 6/28 — Jim Malone, served as VOA's National correspondent covering U.S. elections and politics since 1995, former East Africa Correspondent from 1986 to 1990, 2018 ("Trump Pushes Immigration as Midterm Issue Despite Controversy," *VOA News*, June 28th, Available Online At <https://www.voanews.com/a/trump-pushes-immigration-as-midterm-issue-despite-controversy/4457382.html/>, Accessed 8-25-2018)

As he campaigns for fellow Republicans, U.S. President Donald **Trump** has left little doubt that he **intends to make immigration a central issue in this year's congressional midterm elections**. That strategy, however, involves a measure of political risk in the wake of the heavy criticism leveled at the administration over its policy of separating children from parents crossing the border, a policy the president reversed last week. Tough on the border This week, the president appeared to be road-testing some campaign themes for the November midterms. During a rally in South Carolina, Trump fired a warning shot at opposition Democrats over the immigration issue. "The Democrats want open borders and they don't mind crime. We want very tight, very strict borders. And by the way, you saw a 70-year low (in illegal crossings), with all the complaining I'm doing, we've done a very good job," Trump told a rally in West Columbia, South Carolina, for Republican Governor Henry McMaster. The governor prevailed in a Republican primary Tuesday. Just last week, Trump rolled back a policy that separated migrant children from their parents, after a huge outcry that crossed party lines. Administration officials maintained they intend to stay tough on the border. "We are going to continue to prosecute those adults who enter here illegally," said Attorney General Jeff Sessions. "We are going to do everything in our power, however, to avoid separating families." Intense opposition The Trump approach continues to draw protests, including one where demonstrators tried to block a bus full of migrants at a processing center in McAllen, Texas. "People have to stand up. We can no longer accept this racism as if it is OK. This is not something that is OK in America today," said Gabriel Rosales of the League of United Latin American Citizens. He and others briefly prevented the bus from moving. Seventeen states have joined a lawsuit that seeks to force the Trump administration to reunite migrant families. "This is not about Democrats and Republicans. This is not about liberals and conservatives," said Governor Andrew Cuomo of New York, one of the states involved. "This is the basic question about how you treat children. It is a question of humanity. It is a question of values. It is a question of decency." A divided Congress Congress has struggled to address the issue, in part because of a sharp divide between moderates who want to help the so called "dreamers," and conservatives who regard any path to citizenship for illegal entrants as amnesty. It is a balance Republicans will wrestle with all the way to the November midterms, including House Speaker Paul Ryan. "We should not have to be in a situation where we are saying, separate families or secure the border. We should be able to keep families together and secure the border and enforce our laws." Energizing the base Some **analysts see Trump's quick pivot from backing down on family**

separations to focusing once again on border security aimed at firing up his political base for the midterms. “They are really not interested in the views of Democrats or independents or others in the American electorate,” said University of Virginia expert Larry Sabato, via Skype. **“They are only concerned about their base, and the base that they have is strongly anti-immigration.”** Recent polls show **Trump remains overwhelmingly popular among Republican voters**, something that should help Republicans as they fight to keep their congressional majorities in November.

Finally, loss of core supporters causes Trump to lash-out with nuclear weapons.

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 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, **‘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 by Daniel Deudney, who describes nuclear weapons as ‘intrinsicly 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 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 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, 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 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 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 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, '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, 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 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 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 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 for future US governments. According to a 2014 report 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 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, 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 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 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 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 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 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, 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. 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, 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, 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, '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 to pursue Senate ratification of the treaty 'immediately and aggressively'. Once more, there is notably strong public support—82% according 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 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, 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 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 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, 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 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 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 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 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 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 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 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 during the presidential campaign. William Hartung and Todd Harrison have drawn attention 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, 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.**

1NC — North Korea Impact (Optional)

[Alternate 1NC impact.]

Finally, Trump will divert by first-striking North Korea — that triggers global conflict.

Connew 17 — Paul Connew, British former newspaper editor, worked as Director of Communications for the Sparks charity, former Deputy Director at Mirror, 2017 (“Mad Dog and John Kelly: The best hope to stop Trump’s Korea suicide,” *The New European*, August 10th, Available Online At <https://www.theneweuropean.co.uk/top-stories/mad-dog-and-john-kelly-the-best-hope-to-stop-trump-s-korea-suicide-1-5142872>, Accessed 8-26-2018)

Any pre-emptive strike by Trump would also **lead to a wider conflagration**. Despite their support for tougher economic sanctions, neither Russia nor China would remain sanguine about such a move in the near future. Although **the Chinese** see the Kim Yong-un regime as an ill-behaved and troublesome neighbour and ally, they **would be likely to stage their own military response to any unilateral US action**. Little wonder, then, that – despite the welter of sabre-rattling and threats of war – US Secretary of State Rex Tillerson is still publicly offering an olive branch to Kim and strongly arguing the case for a diplomatic solution. “When the conditions are right, then we can sit down and have a dialogue about the future of North Korea, so they can feel secure and prosper economically,” he says. Meanwhile, as Trump sounds off about ‘fiery’ retribution, diplomats and US intelligence officials will be quietly signalling to Moscow and Beijing that America isn’t on the brink of triggering a second Korean war. The White House will also come under pressure not to overreact by its South Korean and Japanese allies who, despite their deep concern at the apparent North Korean nuclear breakthrough, realise the catastrophic consequences of Trump ordering any major US military response. As one senior Pentagon analyst put it to me: “You’ve got to realise that, no matter how worrying this development is, we’re still some way from Kim Yong-un being able to deliver any form of nuclear Armageddon. This is still very much a propaganda power play and the White House would be foolish to rush into taking the military option and abandoning the combined sanctions/diplomatic pressure route. Go down the former road and we’ll lose the unanimous international support achieved at the UN Security Council only last week and head into the biggest international crisis since, say, the Cuban missile showdown or the Vietnam and Korean wars. A war of words sounds terrifying, but it’s manageable. The real thing won’t be. “The reality is that Kim Jong-un is ramping up a propaganda war and provoking Trump as a reaction to the UN sanctions decision rather than seriously about to stage a strike. Yes, Kim is a bloody dictator, but, contrary to popular myth, he’s not actually a suicidal mad man either. If you examine the latest Pyongyang statements carefully, you’ll see the Korean People’s Army version talked about immediate ‘enveloping fire’ engulfing Guam, but the state news agency’s version was more nuanced, talking about a pre-emptive operation if the US ‘shows signs of provocation’.” That said, **these are incalculably high stakes and the huge fear remains that a miscalculation** by either leader – Kim or Trump (both wildly unpredictable, impulsive personalities, they make natural foes) – **could tip the Korean peninsula into a devastating**

conflict. For that reason, Pentagon analysts are pinning considerable hope on China stepping up the diplomatic pressure on Kim Jong-un, or even threatening its own military intervention. How Trump's hectoring of its ally Pyongyang will encourage this is not clear. But there is another underlying fear also panicking many on Capitol Hill, and beyond. That is **Trump, with his appetite for diversionary tactics, could see a pre-emptive strike against North Korea as the ultimate diversion from his domestic problems**, not least the escalating Russian Connection investigations. As a senior Democrat put it to me: "Donald **Trump might not be much of a political historian. But he does know that military conflict can – in the short-term – rally support** around an unpopular president. Take 9/11 and President Bush, for example. **The temptation to strike first and argue he's doing it to save the American mainland** from an exaggerated immediate threat from Kim Jong-un's ICBMs **must be very appealing** for an **impulsive president desperate to try and rally popular support at home ...and risk** an incendiary **international confrontation** to do it."

2NC/1NR — Uniqueness

They Say: “Base Already Angry — Syria”

Delivering on key promises overwhelmed frustration about Syria.

McLaughlin 4/24 — Seth McLaughlin, a reporter on the Politics Desk The Washington Times, April 24, 2018 <https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2018/apr/24/donald-trumps-base-hopes-paul-ryan-exit-will-unite/>

President **Trump’s core supporters are happy** that House Speaker Paul D. **Ryan is retiring** but say they are not ready for a full housecleaning in Congress, holding out hope that the rest of the Republican leadership team will see Mr. Ryan’s departure as a chance to do more to back Mr. Trump. The **supporters**, who **have braved insults from the media and taunts** from friends and neighbors for backing Mr. Trump, say they have either forgiven him or aren’t bothered by his “playboy years.” They **are beginning to sound concerns** **over growing government spending and debt and now are worried that the president’s plans for Syria may stick the U.S. with a much-longer commitment** to a foreign civil war than they expected out of their “America first” leader. **But** Mr. **Trump has delivered overall on the big promises he made to them in smashing the status quo in Washington**, leaving Republican and Democratic operatives squealing, **while pushing for his pro-business and traditional values agenda**. “I must say that given all the constraints and barriers that President Trump is dealing with, I am extremely pleased,” said Bob Harden, who was master of ceremonies at a Trump event in Florida in the final weeks of the presidential campaign. “I don’t know how he has the intestinal fortitude to battle every day. Given the mainstream media, the Democrats, and even given the party elite in the Republican Party, I think he has done a fantastic job.” Eugene Delgaudio, who served as an alternate delegate from Virginia for Mr. Trump at the Republican National Convention, said the president is the “political grenade” for whom grass-roots activists had been longing. “There is one man who has extended the advance of our traditional American moral leadership with strides unseen since I was 14 years old, and that man is Donald Trump,” Mr. Delgaudio said. “My eyesight is failing, but I can tell you I see victory with Donald Trump across the board.” The glowing reviews come from a minority view in the country at large. Mr. **Trump**’s approval rating averages 40.2 percent while his disapproval rating is 54.2 percent, according to FiveThirtyEight.com. He has been underwater since February 2017 and hasn’t even approached positive territory in the months since. But he **remains popular among Republicans**, scoring an 85 percent approval and 10 percent disapproval rating in the April Quinnipiac University Poll. Indeed, **it’s Republican leaders in Congress who seem to take the brunt of Republican voters’ disapproval**. “I really have a problem with the Republicans in Congress,” said Jeff Crouere, a radio host in Louisiana and 2016 Trump delegate. “I think they have really turned their back on the commitment to voters, and I think we are going to have a real problem getting people motivated to vote this fall.” Many Trump backers share that sense of urgency. They worry that the president’s agenda could come to a grinding halt if Democrats win control of the House in the November elections. “It is going to be slaughter for Republicans,” predicted Cody Knotts, a

Trump backer who lives in West Point, New York. The numbers appear to be trending that way. When voters are asked whether they plan to vote for a Republican or a Democrat for their member of Congress this year, Democrats are ahead. Democrats are riding an elections winning streak that has handed them a U.S. Senate and a House seat in deep-red territory. They also have notched major victories in governors and state legislative elections. Some of Mr. **Trump's supporters**, though, **remain optimistic about Republican chances**. They say the Trump-loathing message Democrats are pushing isn't powerful enough. "I truly believe this blue wave isn't coming," Mr. Harden said. Democrats "stand for nothing." Whether optimistic or pessimistic about November, Mr. Trump's backers say Republicans could strengthen their hand if Mr. Ryan and Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell do more to get behind the president's agenda. They also hope that whoever succeeds Mr. Ryan, who is vacating his seat, will be more in tune with Mr. Trump. Matthew Jansen, a Trump backer from Pennsylvania who is running for the state legislature, said Mr. Ryan's exit shows how the party is shifting away from the Wisconsin Republican's "white collar" conservatism and more toward the "blue collar" conservatism popularized by Mr. Trump. "I fully believe that leaning full right and letting the base run the Republican Party is the ticket to success, and that was not the Ryan viewpoint," Mr. Jansen said. Mr. Knotts put it more bluntly: "This man was completely out of touch with the people that voted for Donald Trump." The president's supporters are angry at Mr. Ryan even though the speaker has wrangled votes in the House to repeal Obamacare, pass crackdowns on illegal immigration and sanctuary cities, build the border wall and approve the \$1.5 trillion tax cut package. Of those, only the tax cuts made it through Mr. McConnell's Senate unscathed. Scott Jennings, a Republican Party strategist, said Mr. Ryan also delivered on the military funding boost that Mr. Trump demanded, as well as funding for anti-opioid efforts that Mr. Trump made a hallmark of his 2016 campaign. "I could go on but, but I ask: What's most important? For the speaker to be a clone in attitude or for the speaker to deliver results?" said Mr. Jennings, who worked in the George W. Bush White House. Mr. Jennings also questioned Trump supporters' anger at Attorney General Jeff Sessions, who was one of Mr. Trump's first major backers during the campaign and who pioneered many of the immigration positions that **the** president has adopted. Mr. Trump has been viciously critical of Mr. Sessions, saying he should have squelched the Russia investigation and should be doing more to pursue Trump targets from the 2016 campaign and the Obama administration. Mr. Jennings, though, said Mr. Sessions is "operating within the confines of the law and of what his job requires — period." "He just plows forward implementing the president's agenda day after day, and doing so in a way that is honorable, ethical and between the navigational beacons of the DOJ," he said. That **tax cut** **remains one of Mr. Trump's marquee legislative wins**, **alongside the** Senate **confirmation of** Justice Neil M. **Gorsuch** to the Supreme Court. Enthusiasm for the tax cuts was dulled in March, though, when Mr. Trump signed a \$1.3 trillion deficit-busting spending bill that boosted the Pentagon but also injected a massive amount of money for domestic programs while limiting funds for the border wall. "I wanted to see some real positive movement on the

wall by this point, but the government works the way it works, and you just have to be happy that Hillary Clinton is not our president,” Mr. Jansen said.

They Say: “Base Already Angry — Putin”

Putin doesn't hurt Trump with his base — he walked back his statements and they believe him.

Fox 7/17 — Michelle Fox, A veteran digital and television journalist, Michelle Fox writes articles for CNBC.com and acts as a liaison between the website and CNBC television shows. “Trump’s performance with Putin not a ‘tipping point’ for his base: Former Bush aide” July 17, 2018 <https://www.cnbc.com/2018/07/17/trumps-performance-with-putin-not-a-tipping-point-former-bush-aide.html//dmr>

President Donald **Trump’s performance** at a press conference **with** Russia President Vladimir **Putin wasn’t** **damaging enough to be a “tipping point” for his base** to start to walk away, said Sara Fagen, former senior aide to President George W. Bush. **The president has come under harsh criticism** since Monday’s summit with the Russian leader. In the post-meeting press conference, **Trump appeared to endorse Putin’s denial of Russian election meddling over the conclusions of U.S. intelligence agencies.** On Tuesday, Trump said he misspoke. Fagen told CNBC that **while there has been very strong criticism from Republican senators, it has been from those who have been critical of the president.** “We need to see the full body of the Senate, particularly, and some leaders in the House, they would need to be much more critical, and the language they use would need to be stronger,” she said on “Power Lunch” Tuesday. Plus, **one or two very senior White House officials would need to resign for his base to be swayed**, added Fagen, a CNBC contributor. **In responding to the widespread criticism** on Tuesday, **Trump said, “I accept our intelligence community’s conclusion** that Russia’s meddling in the 2016 election took place.” He then added: “Could be other people also. A lot of people out there. But there was no collusion.” The president said he misspoke in Monday’s press conference. “My people came to me, [Director of National Intelligence] Dan Coates came to me and some others, they said they think it’s Russia. I have President Putin. He just said it’s not Russia,” Trump said Monday. “I will say this: I don’t see any reason why it would be.” However, **Trump said he meant to say he didn’t see “any reason why it wouldn’t be Russia.”** **He also repeatedly praised intelligence agencies** on Tuesday. “I have a faith, full faith, in our intelligence agencies. I have full faith and support for America’s great intelligence agencies, always have,” he said. Fagen said Trump should have said those words while standing next to Putin, but she believes his remarks on Tuesday will soothe the criticism. **“The criticism has been sharp** in a few corners **but not sharp enough to see widespread defections**, to force people to resign, the things that would be required for this to be a tipping point, at least in his foreign policy outlook,” she said.

They Say: “Base Already Angry — Tariffs”

The base likes his hardline talk on China.

Feffer 4/11 — John Feffer is the director of Foreign Policy In Focus and author of the dystopian novel Splinterlands. “Trump’s Trade War Is About Trump, Not China” April 11, 2018.

<http://fpif.org/trumps-trade-war-is-about-trump-not-china/>

Looking to 2020

Trump has generally gotten along with Xi Jinping. He’s repeatedly praised the Chinese leader, continuing to do so even as the trade war heats up. It’s possible that **the two countries will negotiate away their differences behind the scenes**, which they could have done without all the tit-for-tat drama of the recent tariff-slinging. In fact, **China has already shown some flexibility**. But **China represents something else for Trump. It’s the fulcrum of the economic nationalism that** Steve **Bannon brought** to the White House, **a way for Trump to keep enflaming his base of support in pivotal states** in the lead-up to the 2020 election. Trump is following the Bannon playbook — to remake the Republican Party. **The trade issue is the tip of the spear of this strategy.** The Democrats are likely to win back the House in 2018, and they have a shot at getting the Senate as well. That might pose a problem for Trump on a number of fronts, including immigration and the environment. But on economic issues, Trump could very well partner with Democrats and cut out all the Republicans who remain wedded to the “globalist” model. That’s a nightmare scenario for Mitch McConnell, Paul Ryan, and the Koch crowd. But start preparing yourself for the prospect of Donald Trump running again in 2020 on a trans-partisan platform of economic nationalism that touts his “achievements” on trade and infrastructure. **Such a pitch will appeal to precisely the swing states that supported him in 2016.**

Trump’s tariff talk is expanding his base support.

Feffer 4/11 — John Feffer is the director of Foreign Policy In Focus and author of the dystopian novel Splinterlands. “Trump’s Trade War Is About Trump, Not China” April 11, 2018.

<http://fpif.org/trumps-trade-war-is-about-trump-not-china/>

By slapping tariffs on Chinese imports, Donald **Trump has** once **again proven to be the Disrupter-in-Chief**. This week alone, he’s brought John Bolton in as national security advisor over the objections of every sane person in the universe, threatened to go after Bashar al-Assad over the Syrian leader’s alleged use of chemical weapons, and revived disgusting characterizations of Mexicans as rapists. Who can even remember Russiagate or Stormy Daniels with these non-stop disruptions? As Bob Odenkirk jokes in The New Yorker, you’d easily miss the birth of your own grandchild so transfixed are you by the news of the daily car wreck known as the Trump presidency. The tariffs, however, might prove to be the most significant disruption of all. Trump hasn’t just pissed off more than a billion Chinese. He’s enraged

economists, foreign policy professionals, and soybean farmers in this country as well. He sent the stock market into a dive. Indeed, a trade war with China threatens to overturn the entire global economy. At first glance, Trump's move seems to make little political sense. He's going against a good chunk of his own party, which has uncritically embraced free trade for years. The president's moves may complicate Republican chances in the mid-term elections, since Republican candidates must now either run against the president on a pocketbook issue or unconvincingly change their stripes at the last moment. But **Trump's move may preserve (or even expand) his own base of support in key swing states** — and thus his chances for reelection in 2020. Don't underestimate Trump's willingness to destroy his party, his country, and the global economy in his quest to make himself "great" for a second term. On the tariff question, the surprising thing is not **Trump's** decision. After all, he's **been touting tariffs ever since he began talking politics back in the 1980s**. **What's truly bizarre are some of the people who are praising his recklessness and thus reviving his political fortunes.**

Core supporters think it's the art of the deal.

Greene 4/5 — David, NPR Morning Edition staff writer, "Trump Base Supports National Guard Deployments To Border" April 5, 2018 <https://www.npr.org/2018/04/05/599707024/trump-s-base-supports-plan-to-send-national-guard-troops-to-mexican-border>

David Greene talks to Phoenix-based conservative talk show host Chris Buskirk about President Trump signing a proclamation to send National Guard troops to the border with Mexico.

GREENE: **Let me ask you about the tariffs on China. Some political analysts suggest that this could backfire politically on the president.**

There are a lot of rural farm states that might be hurt by this, and that could be a real problem for not just the Republican Party in a midterm election year but for the president and his re-election hopes. Are you worried about that?

BUSKIRK: **Not really.** I think the China - the China so-called trade war or the tariffs, I don't think it actually is a trade war. I think that what **this really is is an extended negotiation.** This is the United States and China trying to readjust the terms on which they're going to trade together. Nobody wants - nobody wants some sort of ongoing one-upmanship with regards to tariffs. And we're trying to get to a fairer trade, and **people in the heartland get that.**

Trump's threats will cease if there are political costs.

Graham 4/6 — Jed, Investors Business Daily staff writer, "Trump Tariffs: Why \$100 Billion China Trade War Threat May Be Good News" April 6, 2018 <https://www.investors.com/news/economy/china-trade-war-trump-100-billion-tariff-threat-good-news/>

President **Trump's latest threat** to double down on his China trade war would be so bad that it may actually be good news in disguise. Yet his proposal **to slap tariffs on another \$100 billion worth of Chinese imports could signify that Trump now recognizes a trade war won't be "fun" or "easy to win."** **The Dow Jones, S&P 500 index and Nasdaq composite all tumbled more than 2% on the stock market** today. The S&P 500 index undercut its 200-day line once again intraday, but closed above that key support. The Dow Jones, with a number of components that could be collateral damage in a trade war with China, led the way lower. Boeing (BA) lost 3.1%, Caterpillar (CAT) 3.5%, Nike (NKE) 2.9%, Cisco Systems (CSCO) 2.6%, Intel (INTC) 3.2% and Apple (AAPL) 2.6%. Apple, Intel, Boeing, Cisco and Nike rank among companies with the highest volume of sales to China. Trump's late Thursday statement decried China's plan to retaliate with tariffs that match U.S. trade restrictions blow for blow. "China has chosen to harm our farmers and manufacturers," Trump's statement read. In other words, China's strategy may be working. China Trade War Hits U.S. Agriculture American farmers, and agricultural equipment makers like Deere & Co. (DE), may be among the biggest losers in a China trade war. Trump said that he's tasked the Department of Agriculture with working on ways "to protect our farmers and agricultural interests." That may be hard to do without an emergency congressional appropriation. **Billions of dollars are at stake for U.S. farmers**, with China imposing 25% tariffs on \$14 billion worth of soybeans alone. Corn, cotton, tobacco and other crops also face tariffs. **GOP lawmakers from farm states** are said to **worry about what Trump's trade war could do to their electoral prospects**. At the least, Trump tariffs threaten to undermine the GOP's message about tax cuts finally unleashing economic growth. So it's not clear that Trump and the GOP are prepared for the fallout from China's retaliatory measures against the first \$50 billion worth of Chinese imports he plans to target. **Trump's 25% tariffs on high-tech imports won't take effect for at least a month. That will give businesses a chance to comment and negotiations to proceed.** But the calm before any storm may last much longer if Trump wants protections in place for U.S. farmers. Hard To Shield American Consumer Further, the likelihood of Trump tariffs on up to another \$100 billion worth of Chinese imports seems low. U.S. trade officials bent over backwards to avoid hitting Chinese imports that would harm American consumers. Nike shoes and Apple iPhones were left unscathed. Doubling down on tariffs without hitting consumers may not be possible. The takeaway for investors is that **Trump's China trade war will likely be mostly talk for months to come.** Further, **Trump is probably discovering he has less leverage than he believed.** **As trade war costs hit home increasingly as Trump escalates, there's a good chance he will make a concerted effort at negotiation.** While he'll hold out the threat of using a hammer, he doesn't have much of a hammer at his disposal.

Trade retaliation is helping Trump win base support — it follows through on protectionist campaign rhetoric.

Eichengreen 7/13 — Barry Eichengreen is professor of economics at the University of California, Berkeley, and a former senior policy adviser at the International Monetary Fund. His

latest book is “The Populist Temptation: Economic Grievance and Political Reaction in the Modern Era.” “Opinion: Surprised by how little Trump’s trade war matters to the economy? Just you wait” July 13, 2018 <https://www.marketwatch.com/story/surprised-by-how-little-trumps-trade-war-matters-to-the-economy-just-you-wait-2018-07-13>

The steel and aluminum tariffs that the **Trump** administration **imposed** at the beginning of June **were important mainly for their symbolic value**, not for their real economic impact. While the tariffs signified that the United States was no longer playing by the rules of the world trading system, they targeted just \$45 billion of imports, less than 0.25% of gross domestic product in a \$20 trillion U.S. economy. **On July 6**, however, **an additional 25% tariff on \$34 billion of Chinese exports went into effect, and China retaliated** against an equivalent volume of U.S. exports. An angry Trump has ordered the U.S. trade representative to draw up a list of additional Chinese goods, worth more than \$400 billion, that could be taxed, and China again vowed to retaliate. Trump has also threatened to impose tariffs on \$350 billion worth of imported motor vehicles and parts. If he does, the European Union and others could retaliate against an equal amount of U.S. exports. We are now talking about real money: nearly \$1 trillion of U.S. imports and an equivalent amount of U.S. export sales and foreign investments. The mystery is why **the economic and financial fallout from this escalation has been so limited. The U.S. economy is humming along**. The purchasing managers’ index was up again in June. Wall Street US:DJIA has wobbled, but there has been nothing resembling its sharp negative reaction to the Smoot-Hawley Tariff of 1930. Emerging markets have suffered capital outflows and currency weakness, but this is more a consequence of Federal Reserve interest-rate hikes than of any announcements emanating from the White House. There are three possible explanations. First, purchasing managers and **stock market investors may be betting that sanity will yet prevail**. They may be hoping that Trump’s threats are just bluster, or **that the objections of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and other business groups will ultimately register**. But this ignores the fact that **Trump’s tariff talk is wildly popular with his base**. One recent poll found that **66% of Republican voters backed Trump’s threatened tariffs against China**. **Trump ran in 2016 on a protectionist vow that he would no longer allow other countries to “take advantage” of the U.S.** **His voters expect him to deliver on that promise, and he knows it**. Second, the markets may be betting that **Trump is right when he says that trade wars are easy to win**. Other **countries that depend on exports to the U.S. may conclude that it is in their interest to back down**. In early July, the European Commission was reportedly contemplating a tariff-cutting deal to address Trump’s complaint that the EU taxes American cars at four times the rate the U.S. taxes European sedans. But China shows no willingness to buckle under U.S. pressure. Canada, that politest of countries, is similarly unwilling to be bullied; it has retaliated with 25% tariffs on \$12 billion of U.S. goods. And the EU would contemplate concessions only if the U.S. offers some in return — such as eliminating its prohibitive tariffs on imported light pickup trucks and vans — and only if other exporters like Japan and South Korea go along. Third, it could be that **the macroeconomic effects of even the**

full panoply of U.S. tariffs, together with foreign retaliation, are relatively small. Leading models of the U.S. economy, in particular, imply that a 10% increase in the cost of imported goods will lead to a one-time increase in inflation of at most 0.7%. This is simply the law of iterated fractions at work. Imports are 15% of U.S. GDP. Multiply 0.15 by 0.10 (the hypothesized tariff rate), and you get 1.5%. Allow for some substitution away from more expensive imported goods, and the number drops below 1%. And if growth slows because of the higher cost of imported intermediate inputs, the Fed can offset this by raising interest rates more slowly. Foreign central banks can do likewise. Still, one worries, because the standard economic models are notoriously bad at capturing the macroeconomic effects of uncertainty, which trade wars create with a vengeance. Investment plans are made in advance, so it may take, say, a year for the impact of that uncertainty to materialize — as was the case in the United Kingdom following the 2016 Brexit referendum. Taxing intermediate inputs will hurt efficiency, while shifting resources away from dynamic high-tech sectors in favor of old-line manufacturing will depress productivity growth, with further negative implications for investment. And these are outcomes that the Fed cannot easily offset. **So,** for those who observe that the economic and financial **fallout from Trump's trade war has been surprisingly small,** the best response is: just wait.

They Say: “Hasn’t Fulfilled Immigration Promises”

Trump is successfully restricting legal immigration — the plan reverses that.

Hauslohner 7/2 — Abigail Hauslohner and Andrew Ba Tran, Washington Post staff writers, “Trump is making inroads in reducing legal immigration” July 2, 2018

<http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/nationworld/ct-legal-migration-steep-decrease-20180702-story.html//dmr>

As the national immigration debate swirls around the effort to discourage illegal immigration by separating families at the border, the **Trump** administration **is making inroads into a** **longtime priority: reducing legal immigration.** **The number of people receiving visas** to move permanently to the United States **is on pace to drop 12 percent** in President Donald Trump's first two years in office, according to a Washington Post analysis of State Department data. Among the most affected are the Muslim-majority countries on the president's travel ban list — Yemen, Syria, Iran, Libya and Somalia — where the number of new arrivals to the United States is heading toward an 81 percent drop by Sept. 30, the end of the second fiscal year under Trump. Last week, the Supreme Court upheld that ban, paving the way for an even more dramatic decline in arrivals from those countries. **Legal immigration from all Muslim-majority countries is on track to fall by nearly one-third.** The Trump administration has argued that its immigration policies are driven by national security concerns and an effort to preserve jobs for Americans. "The history of immigration policy in the United States is one of ebbs and flows," said a White House official. "Yet in recent years, the U.S. has [had] record immigration without any consideration of this influx's impact on American workers or wages." Some public officials and immigration experts have raised concerns that the administration's approach targets certain nationalities, discriminating against those from poorer and nonwhite countries. The Post's analysis also found immigration declines among nationalities not targeted by Trump's travel ban, including nearly all of the countries that typically receive the largest number of immigrant visas from the United States. The number of immigrant visas granted to people from Mexico, the Dominican Republic, the Philippines, China, India, Vietnam, Haiti, Bangladesh, Jamaica, Pakistan and Afghanistan has also declined. Among the 10 countries that send the highest number of immigrants to the United States annually, only El Salvador is projected to receive more visas under Trump: an increase of 17 percent in his first two fiscal years. The number of immigrant visas approved for Africans is on pace to fall 15 percent. Meanwhile, the flow of legal immigrants from Europe has increased slightly, though the total number of visas is still much smaller than that from Africa, Asia and Latin America. It is unclear whether part of the drop in immigrant visas reflects declining interest in immigrating to the United States, because the State Department did not release visa application data, saying it doesn't publish that information. The number of people apprehended trying to cross the border illegally from Mexico declined precipitously during Trump's first fiscal year. While outside experts suspect Trump's anti-Muslim and anti-immigrant rhetoric has deterred some legal immigration, too, they cautioned that visa backlogs and processing times are so extensive that even a significant

drop in applicants is unlikely to put a major dent in the same year's immigrant visa issuances.

The shift in legal immigration is a reversal of the trend under President Barack **Obama**. During Obama's time in office, immigrant visas increased by 33 percent, surging to 617,752 in fiscal 2016, the highest level in decades. That surge occurred almost entirely in the last two years of Obama's presidency. Despite declines since then, the Trump administration still will be providing more immigrant visas than Obama did in earlier years of his presidency. Visa data is recorded by fiscal year, so The Washington Post used October 2008 through September 2016 to approximate Obama-era trends, and October 2016 through May 2018 — the most recent data available — to approximate Trump-era trends and to project through the end of his second fiscal year in September. **During the 2016** presidential **campaign, Trump repeatedly criticized the rate of immigration under Obama as dangerous and unchecked**. He called for "a total and complete shutdown of Muslims entering the United States." **He has vowed to bring about "extreme vetting" and to keep out those who don't share "our values."** **His stance on immigration fueled his rise to the White House; 64 percent of voters who identified immigration as the most important issue facing the country voted for Trump**, according to exit polls. **Trump has said he wants additional limits on immigration in part because he believes new arrivals create undue competition for American workers**.

Base support is strong due to hardline immigration policies.

Mudde 6/29 — Cas Mudde is a Guardian US columnist, an associate professor in the School of Public and International Affairs at the University of Georgia, and a researcher in the Center for Research on Extremism at the University of Oslo. He is the author of *Populism: A Very Short Introduction* and *The Far Right in America*, "Why is Trump still so popular? He gives his base what they want" June 29, 2018
<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2018/jun/29/trump-popular-base-cas-mudde//dmr>

But all of this does not explain why **Trump is actually quite popular – and probably more popular than he was when he got elected**. Today, Trump's approval ratings are at 42%, which is a mere 3% lower than when he started. But more importantly, **he is extremely popular among his core electorate**, ie Republicans. **A recent Gallup poll showed that, at the 500 days mark, Trump was the second most popular US president among his own constituency (87% support)**, only topped by President George W Bush (96% support), who was at that time profiting from the rally around the flag response to the 9/11 terrorist attacks! But **how is this possible**, I hear you think? Has Trump not said that there were "very fine people" among the extreme-right demonstrators at the deadly "Unite the Right" rally in Charlottesville, Virginia? Has he not consistently undermined the independent judiciary and media by attacking "so-called judges" and "the 'Fakers' at CNN, NBC, ABC & CBS"? Has he not systematically dehumanized immigrants and minorities, introduced nativist policies such as a (slightly

watered-down) “Muslim ban”, and made the immigration services into an inhuman authoritarian apparatus that separates crying and screaming children from their parents? Yes, he has. But he has also give a significant tax cut which disproportionately benefits above-average-income Americans, the true core of the Republican, and therefore Trump, electorate. And for many Republicans, if they get a tax break, you can do little to no wrong. Moreover, he is rapidly dismantling the state, by deregulating industries and defunding regulation agencies, which satisfies most of the usual Republican mega-donors – including former anti-Trumpists like the Koch brothers. For the Christian right, he has appointed the staunchly anti-abortion Neil Gorsuch to the supreme court and moved the US embassy in Israel from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. This more than compensates for all his scandals with porn stars and bragging about pussy-grabbing. And given that he will undoubtedly please them with another supreme court judge soon (to replace Anthony Kennedy), and another supreme court position is expected to open up after 2020 (Ruth Bader Ginsburg is 85), the Christian right will come out again en masse in the next presidential elections, to take solidify the conservative hold off the supreme court and ensure the overthrow, or irrelevance, of Roe v Wade. Finally, **the hardcore Trump base, the stereotypical white working-class male nativist, has been more than satisfied**. Expecting little to nothing from politicians, Democratic or Republican, **they see a president who tirelessly tries to ban non-white people** (notably Central Americans and Muslims) **from entering the country**, introduces tariffs to allegedly protect US industries, and “owns the libs” at any occasions with “politically incorrect” and “taboo-breaking” speeches and tweets.

Trump’s base approval is at a record high — hardline immigration stance.

Glasser 6/22 — Susan B. Glasser is a staff writer at The New Yorker, “Trump’s Cynical Immigration Strategy Might Work for Him—Again” June 22, 2018
<https://www.newyorker.com/news/letter-from-trumps-washington/trumps-cynical-immigration-strategy-might-work-for-himagain//dmr>

On Wednesday, I sat down with Merkley in his office on Capitol Hill just a few minutes after President Trump signed an executive order ostensibly rolling back his own Administration’s family-separation policy, the same one Trump’s White House had insisted did not exist. This was the first time in Trump’s Presidency that he had actually been forced to back down from a significant policy by public pressure, as televised images of children in cages and leaked audio of wailing toddlers horrified even staunch immigration opponents in Trump’s own party. Many were calling it the worst blunder of Trump’s Presidency, his Hurricane Katrina—a historic P.R. disaster, a political mistake for the ages. All of which meant that Merkley was now the Man Who Stared Down Donald Trump, arguably the first Democrat to do so effectively. As we talked, Merkley was clearly still outraged. A biting Trump critic previously best known as the only Democratic senator to back Bernie Sanders over Hillary Clinton in the 2016 Democratic primaries, Merkley called Trump’s policy “child abuse,” and seemed angry, in his very low-key

way, about the White House's "massive smear campaign" against him. Tall, soft-spoken, and clad in a slightly too large gray suit, Merkley had previously clashed with Republicans, in 2017, when he seized the Senate floor for a long, losing, sort-of filibuster against Trump's Supreme Court nominee, Neil Gorsuch. But Merkley had never before become a target of the White House attack machine. "They were, like, 'There's no cages, he's lying, he's making this up,'" he pointed out in our interview. Merkley, though, wasn't taking a victory lap. Trump was unrepentant, and his White House had not clarified what, exactly, was in the executive order. Endless rounds of court fights and congressional negotiations seemed imminent. "I'm not sure what's in it," Merkley said, sitting in a leather chair in his office; outside his door, phones were ringing off the hook, with constituents wondering what they could do to stop children from being separated from their parents. Yet Merkley worried that, instead of changing course, Trump would devise another policy that was hardly better for children. "It sounds like the handcuffs-for-all strategy," he told me. "So now we go from one strategy that hurts children to another strategy that hurts children." The politics of it were equally murky. Trump was already busy claiming credit for ending a controversy his own policy had created, and many Democrats were concerned that Trump's executive order was not so much a reversal as a tactical retreat. In fact, it turned out, this was their fear from the beginning. I asked Merkley what his spotlight-loving Democratic colleagues had thought of his viral moment exposing the Trump Administration. The story had exploded, Merkley recalled, but not everyone was happy about it. Some of the other senators were shocked, telling him, "Oh, my God, I can't believe that they're really doing it." But others, Merkley told me, quickly saw political peril. "There were folks saying, 'My goodness, shifting the attention from health care to immigration is a huge political mistake.'" What if they were right? Other than perhaps Trump's hard-line immigration adviser, Stephen Miller, few believe that images of distraught children will actually help Trump politically. The policy was clearly vastly unpopular with the American public, with opinion polls suggesting that two-thirds of the country opposed it. It could prove particularly unpopular in some of the swing suburban districts that could determine whether Republicans keep control of the House of Representatives this fall. There are, nonetheless, some uncomfortable facts that Democrats who see the issue as an unmitigated win need to face. For starters, **hours before he pulled the plug on his Administration's policy, and after weeks of other controversies, Trump hit his highest approval ratings since his Inauguration.** According to Gallup, **forty-five per cent** of Americans approved of the job he was doing, which is still a low figure by historical standards, but is arguably **strikingly high for such a divisive figure.** **The President's endless bashing of undocumented immigrants and his vow to toughen "Boarder security,"** as he spelled it in a recent tweet, **is a key reason.** **Trump's ability to gin up fears about illegal immigration, more than perhaps any other issue, won him the White House.** Headed into a midterm election that will be won by the political party that can better rally its base, Trump has remained determined to talk about immigration, even when others in his party have resisted. Indeed, Republican leaders on Capitol Hill were furious with Trump as the immigration controversy spiralled out of control this week—a time they had planned to spend celebrating

the G.O.P. tax cut, along with the general strength of the economy, which they hope to make the centerpiece of their fall campaign. On Monday, as the political pressure on Trump was escalating, I met with Kristen Soltis Anderson, a Republican pollster who has advised G.O.P. leaders about this fall's elections at a couple of recent retreats. Trump, she told me, had a "freakishly stable" approval rating; in such a polarized moment, people know where they stand on the President. She said that, unlike in previous midterm elections in which the incumbent President's party has done poorly, **voter enthusiasm for Trump has remained strong among Republican voters**, even as a blue wave of Trump-hating Democrats has been building. "The question is," Anderson told me, "if the blue wave is coming, have Republicans built a large enough wall to stop it?" New Pew Research Center data this week underscored her point, finding that voters in both parties are more motivated to vote than they were at any time in the previous twenty years. The Democrats' advantage on enthusiasm, Pew found, is significantly weaker than it was in the previous election cycles when their party scored big. On Wednesday, soon after Trump signed his executive order, I spoke with a veteran Democratic pollster. "I don't want to be quoted saying Democrats have a problem," the pollster said, "but there is a real problem here." The pollster agreed that **it appeared to be a smart move on Trump's part to keep talking about illegal immigration** as much as the economy, even in the midst of the backlash over his tough policies. "On most issues, whether health care or taxes or the general mood, the Republicans are in a bad place," the pollster said. "This is their one wedge issue that actually works for them." Trump certainly seems to think so. At a May 29th campaign event in Nashville for Representative Marsha Blackburn, who is running to succeed the retiring Senator Bob Corker, Trump said of immigration, "The Democrats want to use it as a campaign issue, and I keep saying I hope they do." He added, "That's a good issue for us, not for them." **At a rally this week in Washington, Trump said he had used immigration as an issue to his benefit in the 2016 campaign.** He even made reference to his opening speech of the race, in Trump Tower, when he referred to Mexicans as "rapists" and falsely claimed that hordes were invading America's southern border. The lesson learned by Trump was not that saying shocking, untrue, and arguably racist things about immigrants was politically dangerous but that doing so helped him become President. "Remember I made that speech, and I was badly criticized? 'Oh, it's so terrible, what he said,'" he told the audience. "Turned out I was a hundred per cent right. That's why I got elected."

Extend: “Base Support Now — Campaign Promises”

Base support strong now — Trump fulfills his promises to them.

Bump 6/20 — Phillip, Washington Post staff writer, “Trump’s effort to hold his base close for the midterms seems to be working — so far” June 20, 2018

https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/politics/wp/2018/06/20/trumps-effort-to-hold-his-base-close-for-the-midterms-seems-to-be-working-so-far/?utm_term=.835b5143bd67//dmr

It’s important to remember, in case you’d forgotten, that **just as there is robust disapproval of Trump there is also robust approval from a smaller segment of the population**. We’ve noted before that the combined strong approval and strong disapproval Trump has seen since taking office has been higher than we saw under his two predecessors, with the exception of the bump Bush saw after the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks. **Trump has fostered that, keeping a deliberate focus on his base and ensuring that the promises he made to them are fulfilled.**

Whether his base would have wavered anyway isn’t clear, but they haven’t. And **so now more than half of Republicans specifically plan to vote for Republicans to show their support for him**. Another way of looking at how that’s unusual is to consider the gaps between those saying they want to cast a vote for or against the president and the gaps between the opposition and the president’s party.

Extend: “Base Support Now — Polls”

Trump’s base support is high — 90% approval among Republicans.

Peters 6/23 — Jeremy W. Peters, NYT staff writer, “As Critics Assail Trump, His Supporters Dig In Deeper” June 23, 2018 <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/06/23/us/politics/republican-voters-trump.html//dmr>

LEESBURG, Va. — Gina Anders knows the feeling well by now. President Trump says or does something that triggers a spasm of outrage. She doesn’t necessarily agree with how he handled the situation. She gets why people are upset. But Ms. Anders, 46, a Republican from suburban Loudoun County, Va., with a law degree, a business career, and not a stitch of “Make America Great Again” gear in her wardrobe, is moved to defend him anyway. “All nuance and all complexity — and these are complex issues — are completely lost,” she said, describing “overblown” reactions from the president’s critics, some of whom equated the Trump administration’s policy of separating migrant children and parents to history’s greatest atrocities. “It makes me angry at them, which causes me to want to defend him to them more,” Ms. Anders said. In interviews across the country over the last few days, dozens of Trump voters, as well as pollsters and strategists, described something like a bonding experience with the president that happens each time Republicans have to answer a now-familiar question: “How can you possibly still support this man?” Their resilience suggests a level of unity among Republicans that could help mitigate Mr. Trump’s low overall approval ratings and aid his party’s chances of keeping control of the House of Representatives in November. “He’s not a perfect guy; he does some stupid stuff,” said Tony Schrantz, 50, of Lino Lakes, Minn., the owner of a water systems leak detection business. “But when they’re hounding him all the time it just gets old. Give the guy a little.” **Republican voters repeatedly described an instinctive, protective response to the president, and their support has grown in recent months:** Mr. **Trump’s approval rating among Republicans is now about 90 percent.** And while polling has yet to capture the effect of the last week’s immigration controversy, the only modern Republican president more popular with his party than Mr. Trump at this point in his first term, according to Gallup, was George W. Bush after the country united in the wake of the Sept. 11 attacks. Mr. **Trump has** also **retained support across a range of demographics other than the working-class voters who are most identified with him. This includes portions of the wealthy college-educated people in swing counties,** like Virginia’s Loudoun, in the country’s most politically competitive states. **Many of these voters say their lives and the country are improving under his presidency,** and the endless stream of tough cable news coverage and bad headlines about Mr. Trump only galvanizes them further — even though some displayed discomfort on their faces when asked about the child separation policy, and expressed misgivings about the president’s character.

Trump enjoys dominant approval numbers among Republicans, but it is reversible.

Scherer 4/11 — Michael, Washington Post staff writer, “Analysis: Ryan's GOP swept away by a Trumpian revolution” April 11, 2018

<http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/nationworld/politics/ct-ryan-republicans-trump-20180411-story.html//dmr>

A former vice-presidential nominee, the highest ranking Republican during Trump's rise and once his party's ideological standard-bearer, Ryan has spent the last two years resisting, minimizing and ultimately conceding to a Trumpian revolution he could neither contain nor control. Ryan's brand of politics, an uplifting fiscal conservatism rooted in his admiration of his former boss, Jack Kemp, seemed ascendant as recently as 2012, when Mitt Romney chose to add him to the presidential ticket. Four years later, as Trump was gaining popularity, Ryan warned the country of the divisive tactics the president continues to employ. "Instead of playing to your anxieties, we can appeal to your aspirations. Instead of playing the identity politics of 'our base' and 'their base,' we unite people around ideas and principles," Ryan said in a March 2016 speech on the state of American politics. "We don't resort to scaring you, we dare to inspire you." But Trump still won, not just the nomination but the White House, with a campaign that cast immigrants as inherently devious snakes and encouraged public displays of anger at protesters and the press. Speaker Ryan to retire, leaving big election-year GOP vacuum. The protests Ryan offered rarely had an impact. He denounced Trump's comments about a federal judge as "racist," condemned Trump's approach to trade, defended immigration as "a thing to celebrate," and continued to fight for reductions in entitlement spending long after Trump promised no cuts to Medicare and Social Security. As recently as January, Ryan described Trump's vulgar description of some majority-minority nations as "sh-----" countries as "very unfortunate" and "unhelpful." But throughout it all, Trump's power within the party continued to grow, as Ryan's waned. National polls now show Trump enjoys dominant approval ratings among Republicans, with 86 percent of party voters now supporting the president in the latest Quinnipiac Poll, a dramatic increase from his position before the 2016 elections. "Republicans have united around him and his agenda at least up to this point," said Whit Ayers, a Republican pollster. "If you look at positions that Republicans as a whole have taken in the Trump era, positions they held as recently as two years ago no longer hold the same popularity." Polls have shown increasing Republican support for expanding Social Security, a position closer to Trump than Ryan, as well as declining Republican support for free trade agreements, which were once a cornerstone of conservative economic thinking.

Trump's base support is high – fluctuates between 80-90%. We'll insert this chart into the debate.

Gallup 4/8 Gallup Polling Service, “Presidential Approval Ratings -- Donald Trump”

<http://news.gallup.com/poll/203198/presidential-approval-ratings-donald-trump.aspx>

Donald Trump Job Approval by Party Identification, 2017

Weekly averages from Gallup Daily tracking

	Republicans	Independents	Democrats
	%	%	%
2018			
2018 Apr 2-8	89	35	8
2018 Mar 26-Apr 1	86	33	8
2018 Mar 19-25	85	34	7
2018 Mar 12-18	82	32	7
2018 Mar 5-11	87	34	8
2018 Feb 26-Mar 4	85	34	8
2018 Feb 19-25	85	35	9
2018 Feb 12-18	86	30	6
2018 Feb 5-11	86	36	7
2018 Jan 29-Feb 4	90	33	6
2018 Jan 22-28	87	33	7
2018 Jan 15-21	81	31	6
2018 Jan 8-14	81	35	6
2018 Jan 1-7	87	32	6

Extend: “Base Support Now — SCOTUS”

Trump’s base is fired up — SCOTUS wins and the Travel Ban.

Mills 6/27 — Ryan, USA Today staff writer, “Trump supporters praise Supreme Court travel ban ruling as victory for conservative agenda” June 27, 2018

<https://www.naplesnews.com/story/news/2018/06/26/trump-travel-ban-victory-supreme-court-energizes-supporters/736442002///dmr>

President Donald **Trump’s supporters praised a** U.S. Supreme **Court ruling** Tuesday **upholding the** administration’s **travel ban as a victory for his agenda and a boost in an election year.** Trina Rogers, 30, a homemaker from Merrill, in northern Wisconsin, said she is “totally cool” with the travel ban and “100 percent supportive” of Trump’s actions as president. “You can’t move forward if you don’t have change,” Rogers said. “I support Trump in everything he is doing.” Tuesday’s 5-4 Supreme Court ruling on Trump’s temporary travel ban against predominantly Muslim countries reinforced the president’s authority on national security matters and reversed a series of lower court decisions that had struck down the ban as illegal or unconstitutional. **Tuesday’s victory should help energize those hard-core Trump supporters heading into the 2018 mid-term elections,** some Republican leaders said. But make no mistake, they said, **his base has remained committed to the Trump presidency since his surprise 2016 election.** “We’ve been energized,” said JoAnn DeBartolo, head of the Naples, Florida-based Collier for Trump Club. “It’s not like it went away.” DeBartolo, who led the Trump campaign in Collier County, said about 200 people showed up for the club’s most recent luncheon at a local seafood restaurant in mid-June. Trump continues to receive strong support in pockets of Florida, including the southwest coastal counties where record turnout for him helped him win 61 percent of the vote in Collier and 59 percent in neighboring Lee County. Trump also received high marks Tuesday in Wisconsin, where supporters also gave him the edge in 2016. Supporter Richard Staedt, 80, a retiree from Appleton just southwest of Green Bay, said **Trump’s fight to preserve the travel ban proves the president is keeping his campaign promises.** “I feel just as pleased about him as before,” Staedt said. “He gets an ‘A’ from me.” Trump, who enjoyed a 45-percent approval rating in mid-June that matched a high for his presidency following his meeting with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, should benefit from even more support following Tuesday’s ruling. “More and more people will become Trump supporters,” said Jonathan Martin of Fort Myers, Florida, chair of the Lee County Republican Party. Winston Ohlhausen of Abilene, Texas, chair of the Republican Party in Taylor County where Trump won nearly 73 percent of the votes, said the ruling striking down lower court decisions was “a no-brainer for somebody who believes in the Constitution. “It was such a far-fetched ruling. It was so blatant against what the president had the power and ability in his position to do,” Ohlhausen said. In Florida’s panhandle where Trump received some of his biggest victory margins in the state, Pensacola resident Dan Lindemann disagrees with critics who say the ban amounts to religious discrimination. “To me, it’s purely about national security,” said Lindemann, a former Marine helicopter pilot, small business owner and Trump voter. “When

we're talking about international terrorism and threats from extremists, the majority of the risk comes from Muslim countries. Therefore, the security measures inherently affect Muslim countries. "It's a reasonable defense against groups that have declared jihad against Americans." **The travel ban ruling was the latest in a string of Supreme Court victories that have favored conservative and Republican causes.** In early June, the court absolved a Colorado baker of discrimination for refusing to create a custom wedding cake for a same-sex couple. Also on Tuesday, the court ruled against a California law that required anti-abortion pregnancy centers to inform women about publicly-funded abortion and contraceptive services. Martin said **those issues**, although not directly related to the Trump administration, **show the importance of the president's appointments to the Supreme Court. Trump appointed Justice Neil Gorsuch to the court in his first year.** The court victories and a roaring economy could sway moderates and swing voters, and show them that Trump isn't the "evil dictator" that some media and opponents make him out to be, Martin said. "It's not affecting the Trump supporters," Martin said. "They already know where he's at. Trump supporters aren't racist. They're not bigots the media is making them out to be. "They just want their borders safe, just like every other country in the world."

2NC/1NR — Links

They Say: “Base Support Resilient — Change Minds”

Immigration is the line they won't cross — it threatens their unconditional support.

Healey 17 — Jon Healey, deputy editorial page editor for the LA Times, 2017 (“President Trump finally finds a way to alienate his base, by flirting with Democrats on DACA,” *LA Times*, September 14th, Available Online At <http://www.latimes.com/opinion/opinion-la/la-ol-trump-daca-deal-20170914-story.html#>, Accessed 8-27-2018)

Who knew that deciding the fate of "Dreamers" would be trickier and more explosively controversial for a Republican president than agreeing to raise the debt ceiling? President Trump won plaudits for crossing up GOP leaders to summarily cut a deal with top congressional Democrats on three key fiscal issues: raising the debt ceiling, keeping the government running past Sept. 30 and borrowing a metric megaload of dollars to help out storm victims. **Hey, Trump got something done! He broke through the gridlock! But when he seemed to close in on another bipartisan agreement — this time, to allow a group of immigrants brought into the country as children to stay even though they're here illegally — all hell broke loose, at least among the anti-illegal-immigration zealots who'd been a key part of his base.** Part of **the anger stemmed from reports that Trump wouldn't demand money for his big, beautiful border wall in exchange for protecting Dreamers from deportation.** But another part was simply his willingness to let the Dreamers stay. To pick just one example, check out what Ann Coulter, whose fervent support for Trump now appears to be about as reliable as Trump's support for anyone else, tweeted Thursday: Ann Coulter @AnnCoulter **At this point, who DOESN'T want Trump impeached?** Donald J. Trump @realDonaldTrump ...They have been in our country for many years through no fault of their own - brought in by parents at young age. **Plus BIG border security Trump may still be able to shoot someone while standing in the middle of 5th Avenue without losing a single supporter, but he has found one line his base won't let him cross. Or rather, a loud and possibly large portion of his base won't let him cross it. Another segment, including those who are more conventionally Republican, actually like the idea of cutting Dreamers a break.** After all, America is the only country most of these folks have ever known, and our tax dollars have already been invested in their education and well-being. Should Trump have seen this blowback coming? Maybe – he certainly played up the points during his campaign that President Obama's Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program was reprehensible and that that a new border wall was nonnegotiable. But as both a candidate and as president, Trump has spun like a top on so many issues it's hard to think of one where he's been resolute. And his core supporters haven't flinched. **So why are they flipping out at the newest chapter in the Art of the Deal? Some observers will argue that immigration-related issues lie at the heart of the economic nationalism that defines Trumpism and that carried Trump into the Oval Office.** In that sense, Trump couldn't afford to concede anything on the Dreamers without obtaining something major from Democrats in return – to wit, money for the wall. That's part of it, no doubt. But **another part is the view**

that's spread over the past few decades that compromise itself is a sign of weakness. Trump's deal on the debt ceiling was acceptable to his base because he didn't give up anything meaningful. The debt ceiling increase, the temporary spending bill, the emergency appropriations for storm victims – those were all going to happen anyway. But the outlines of a DACA deal that emerged Wednesday night seemed like a real compromise, one where both sides gave up something to get something. It's worth remembering that Trump took a bit of flak for the debt-ceiling bill from conservatives who thought he caved too quickly to Democrats' demands. **The DACA talks drew a much louder version of that same complaint, this time from Trump's base.** After the debt-ceiling deal, some Trump supporters crowed that the president had finally sprung himself from the chains imposed by the congressional GOP, and particularly the ball-and-chain tandem of House Speaker Paul Ryan (R-Wis.) and Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.). **But Trump's not in a position to triangulate freely, playing congressional Republicans off of congressional Democrats.** Having spent the first months of his tenure playing religiously to his base, alienating much of the rest of the country, **he now finds that the support of his base isn't as unconditional as it seemed. There are lines he can't cross,** and he just tripped over one of them.

Prefer our evidence — it's more recent and accounts for political developments.

Kumar 4/10 — Anita, McClatchy News staff writer, “Trump promised to drain the swamp. His supporters got politics as usual” April 10, 2018 <http://www.mcclatchydc.com/news/politics-government/white-house/article208427804.html>

Frankie Lax, of Jackson, Tenn. said he supported Trump from the day the New Yorker jumped into the race because of his background as a businessman and political outsider. Lax — who says he was known as the “Sean Hannity of west Tennessee” — talked Trump up daily on his top-rated radio show through the primary and general election, distributed thousands of yard signs and donated \$400. He was recently notified that he lost out on a U.S. marshal job to a former state legislator who praised Jeb Bush in what appears to be a now deleted tweet. **“The swamp is not getting drained fast enough,”** Lax said. “I can’t think of one appointment in Tennessee who supported Donald Trump.” **Trump supporters largely don’t blame the president.** Indeed, **his base has remained loyal for 15 months even as he broke campaign promises by failing to repeal the Affordable Care Act and bringing troops home from Afghanistan** and began feuds within his own party. **But now, that base is showing signs of cracking.** His supporters warn that Trump’s 2020 re-election campaign could suffer if he doesn’t pay back activists who turned out in droves to propel the unlikely candidate — a businessman and reality TV star — into the Oval Office.

Pennsylvania proves his base support has limits.

Costa 3/13 — Robert, Washington Post, “Pennsylvania vote shows that Trumpism has its limits — even in Trump country” March 13, 2018

https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/pennsylvania-vote-shows-that-trumpism-has-its-limits--even-in-trump-country/2018/03/13/fd57fb9a-ab8c-4f26-bee7-a01bb4d159b2_story.html?utm_term=.6935829af445

The neck-and-neck result in Tuesday’s special congressional election in a reliably Republican Pennsylvania district revealed that the appetite for President Trump’s style of politics may have its limits in the land of shuttered steel mills and coal mines that has been the core of his support base. The president went all in for Republican candidate Rick Saccone, a seemingly safe bet in a district Trump had carried by 20 percentage points in 2016. Trump visited there twice in recent weeks. He dispatched his eldest son. He sent top White House aides. Yet, with all that political capital on the line, the president watched his favored candidate finish, in effect, in a tie in what should have been an easy win. The razor-thin vote count — three months after Democrats picked up a U.S. Senate seat in deeply conservative Alabama and coming on a whirlwind day when Trump tried to wrangle control of his administration by ousting his secretary of state — left Republicans feeling jittery just months ahead of the midterm elections. And, with Democrat Conor Lamb coming close to a once unthinkable victory, other Democrats running this fall in Trump-friendly districts may find a formula to boost their hopes of retaking the House. “We should be able to elect a box of hammers in this district. If we’re losing here, you can bet there is a Democratic wave coming,” said veteran Republican consultant Mike Murphy, a Trump critic. Uncertainty now pervades the party that Trump leads. Tuesday’s effective tie, coming in the aftermath of Trump’s -aggressive push for steel and aluminum tariffs that were backed by both Pennsylvania candidates, suggests **the power of the president’s hard-line trade stance to rally his voters is no longer a given.**

They Say: “Base Support Resilient — Fake News”

Conservative media will chastise Trump for the plan — DACA negotiations prove.

CBS News 18 — CBS News, 2018 (“Trump's immigration proposal slammed by his base,” no byline, January 26th, Available Online At <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/donald-trump-immigration-proposal-slammed-by-his-base-breitbart-amnesty-don/>, Accessed 8-25-2018)

NEW YORK -- **Fearing betrayal on a signature campaign issue**, President **Trump's loyalists across the country are lashing out against his proposal to create a path to citizenship for** nearly 2 million **"Dreamer" immigrants**. Mr. Trump's proposal includes \$25 billion for border security and significant changes to legal immigration long sought by hard-liners. Several Democrats and immigration activists rejected it outright, accusing the president of holding "Dreamers" hostage to his hard-line immigration agenda. Senior White House officials cast the plan as a centrist compromise that could win support from both parties and enough votes to pass the Senate. But it comes with a long list of concessions that many Democrats, and conservative Republicans, especially in the House, may find impossible to swallow. **His supporters' focus on "amnesty" for Dreamers highlights how dug in the base is and how little room** Mr. **Trump has to maneuver**. Trump-aligned candidates from Nevada and Virginia rejected the notion outright. **The president's most loyal media ally**, the conservative **Breitbart News**, **seen as a barometer for his base**, **attacked him as "Amnesty Don."** And **outside groups who cheered the hard-line rhetoric that dominated Mr. Trump's campaign warned of a fierce backlash against the president's party in November's midterm elections.** "There's a real potential for disaster," said Mark Krikorian, executive director of the far-right Center for Immigration Studies. **"The president hasn't sold out his voters yet. But I think it's important that his supporters are making clear to him that they're keeping an eye on him."** The consequences could be severe for the GOP as it struggles to energize voters heading into the 2018 midterm elections, when Republican majorities in the House and Senate are at stake. Recent Democratic victories in Alabama and Virginia suggest that the GOP has cause for concern - especially as Mr. Trump's approval numbers hover near record lows. **Protections for more immigration** of these young immigrants **could trigger wholesale revolt by** Mr. **Trump's base** in November, said Bob Dane, executive director of the conservative Federation for American Immigration Reform. **"There's widespread fear that if Mr. Trump capitulates to the Democrats and fails to deliver on his campaign promises on immigration**, there's not going to be any more campaign promises for the GOP to make in the future, because **the base will inflict a scorched-earth policy in midterms**," Dane said, noting that his organization has "a longstanding position of opposing amnesty in any form, including the extension of the DACA protections." "DACA itself didn't have a pathway to citizenship," said Sen. Ted Cruz, R-Texas, who battled Mr. Trump in 2016 for the GOP presidential nomination. "So I think it would be a profound mistake and not consistent with the promises we made to the voters to enact a pathway to citizenship to DACA recipients or to others who are here illegally." Rep. Jim Jordan,

R-Ohio, said he supports a more conservative, more sweeping immigration bill proposed by House members, including House Judiciary Committee Chairman Bob Goodlatte, R-Va., which has won strong support from House conservatives. House Speaker Paul Ryan has promised to push for support for that measure. Democrats were also raging. House Democratic leader Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., blasted the plan as "an act of staggering cowardice which attempts to hold the Dreamers hostage to a hateful anti-immigrant scheme." In a statement Thursday night, Pelosi said the framework was "part of the Trump Administration's unmistakable campaign to make America white again." Democratic Whip Dick Durbin, D-Ill., urged Republicans to join together with Democrats to reach a bipartisan alternative. "Dreamers should not be held hostage to President Trump's crusade to tear families apart and waste billions of American tax dollars on an ineffective wall," he said in a statement. Rep. Michelle Lujan Grisham, D-N.M., who chairs the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, said the White House was using DACA recipients "as bargaining chips for sweeping anti-immigrant policies." And Lorella Praeli, with the American Civil Liberties Union, called it "a hateful, xenophobic immigration proposal that would slash legal immigration to levels not seen since the racial quotas of the 1920s, eliminate legal immigration channels for African countries, and spend \$25 billion for a harmful, wasteful border wall and an increase in Border Patrol and ICE agents." **The public scolding from conservatives was aimed at a president who has changed course under pressure before**. Yet Mr. **Trump has faced no greater test on a more significant issue than this one, which dominated his outsider candidacy and inspired a coalition of working-class voters that fueled his unlikely rise**. Now, barely a year into his presidency, Mr. **Trump can bend either to the will of his fiery base or the pressure to compromise**. His leadership may determine the fate of hundreds of thousands of young immigrants and whether his party can improve its standing among a surging group of Hispanic voters. It may also alienate those who love him most. "There's a Trump movement. And It's not necessarily about Donald Trump," said Corey Stewart, a Republican Senate candidate in Virginia and a vocal Trump ally. "It's about the things that Donald Trump campaigned and stood for during his campaign. Ultimately, every elected leader needs to stay true to the message that they ran on. Otherwise, people will leave them." The passionate response underscores the Republican Party's immigration dilemma in the age of Trump. Much of the country, including independents and moderate Republicans, favor protections for thousands of young people brought to the country as children illegally and raised here through no fault of their own. But **a vocal conservative faction emboldened by Mr. Trump's anti-immigrant rhetoric will never accept anything viewed as "amnesty."** And many view legal protection for these young immigrants as just that.

They Say: “Turn — Our Plan Helps the Economy”

Trump’s base misunderstands economics — they only care about nativism.

Delaney 18 — Robert Delaney, US bureau chief South China Morning Post, “Donald Trump’s racist vitriol appeals to his base. Expect more of it” June 25, 2018

<http://www.scmp.com/comment/insight-opinion/united-states/article/2152291/donald-trumps-racist-vitriol-appeals-his-base//dmr>

Standing in front of “angel families”— the PR-engineered moniker given to these unfortunate folks — Trump railed against his critics by highlighting the “death and destruction caused by people that shouldn’t be here”.

It was the most dramatic iteration yet of a familiar production: the framing of illegal immigrants from Latin America as dangerous criminals. It was also, as usual, a performance at odds with all available crime data, and that’s why Trump will only deliver anecdotes instead of numbers in his long-running campaign to portray Latinos as criminals. **Trump’s base can’t get enough of his show. Hearing racist rhetoric from their top leader, thinly veiled and fully blatant, enraptures them. His most ardent supporters have inured themselves to the facts about immigration,** starting with the reality that America was built on the backs of those arriving with nothing but a desire for a better life and a willingness to work for it. This makes immigrants indispensable in a period of economic growth that — partly to Trump’s credit — has brought the US unemployment rate to record lows. A steadily declining birth rate in the US and globally makes immigration reform that much more urgent. While the situations are very different, there’s also an element of racism in the way Trump has used residence restrictions to address perceived threats from China. **Trump intends to limit Chinese graduate students studying certain hi-tech fields to one-year visas,** instead of the usual five, **in response to evidence of intellectual property theft. To address this problem by targeting students based on nationality — instead of finding ways to better protect sensitive intellectual property** sought by actors in any number of countries — **needlessly maligns a particular minority** that has been, throughout US history, unfairly subjected to exclusionary policies. The fact that US arrests and indictments of suspected Russian cyber criminals surged to a record high in 2017 hasn’t moved Trump to propose any official policy targeting Russians in the US. **The economic argument for policies more accommodating to immigrants doesn’t work on Trump’s base,** and he knows this. He also knows that the US business community, which has largely been advocating for clearer pathways to citizenship, won’t have his back if the multiple investigations of Trump, his associates and family turn up illegal activity. **That’s why he doles out the ugliest form of rhetoric: demonising “the other”** to present himself as something of a messiah to all of those who had previously been forced to keep their racist attitudes under wraps. Racism has existed at every level of the US government in various forms throughout the country’s history. But the animus Trump displays towards Latin Americans, Chinese and others living in “shithole countries” is horrifying to see coming from the White House in the 21st century. The only “others” Trump doesn’t

discriminate against are authoritarian leaders, that is, China's President Xi Jinping, North Korean leader Kim Jong-un, and Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman. He shines in the presence of such leaders, who would scoff at the encumbrances **Trump must endure: those pesky investigations, as well as the checks and balances** upon which the system **of US governance** is predicated. Because Trump doesn't control his country the way they control theirs, **he needs to keep throwing** the **red meat** of racism **to his base**. He will continue to trot out anecdotes about crimes committed by Mexicans even if US citizens have caused far more bloodshed. The most horrific killings on US soil in recent years were perpetrated by white, male, native-born Americans.

Policy success is irrelevant — Trump's response to a loss of base support will be to wag the dog.

Pillar 17 — Paul Pillar, Nonresident Senior Fellow at the Center for Security Studies at Georgetown University, Nonresident Senior Fellow in Foreign Policy at the Brookings Institution, 2017 ("Why Donald Trump Might Become an Interventionist," *National Interest*, January 22nd, Available Online At <https://nationalinterest.org/print/blog/paul-pillar/why-trump-might-become-interventionist-19149?page=2>, Accessed 8-26-2018)

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} [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 [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 [5] and also much smaller than the women's march in Washington [6] that was taking place as he was speaking and that itself was only one of numerous parallel demonstrations [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 [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. **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.**

Link — Hardline Immigration Key

Trump's anti-immigration stance is the cornerstone of his base support.

Martin and Haberman 18 — Jonathan Martin, national political correspondent for The New York Times, former senior political writer for Politico, and Maggie Haberman, White House correspondent, won a Pulitzer Prize in 2018 for reporting on Donald Trump's advisers and their connections to Russia, 2018 ("Forget Tax Cuts. Trump Wants to Rally the G.O.P. Base Over Immigration," *The New York Times*, June 18th, Available Online At <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/06/18/us/politics/trump-immigration-midterms.html/>, Accessed 8-23-2018)

WASHINGTON — As Republicans try to keep their midterm election strategy focused on the economy, tax cuts and falling unemployment, President **Trump** sent his clearest signal yet on Monday that he **intends to make divisive, racially charged issues like immigration central** going into the campaign season. Facing bipartisan criticism over his administration's family separation practice on the border, Mr. Trump renewed the sort of bald and demagogic attacks on undocumented immigrants that worked well for him politically in his 2016 presidential campaign. He inveighed against "the death and destruction that's been caused by people coming into this country" and vowed that "the United States will not be a migrant camp and it will not be a refugee holding facility." Republicans typically handle immigration gingerly in an election year, as they try to appeal to Hispanic voters, independents and moderates across divergent districts. But with more Americans still opposing the tax measure than supporting it, Mr. Trump's allies believe that trying to link Democrats to crimes committed by undocumented immigrants and gangs like MS-13 will do more to galvanize Republican voters and get them to the polls in November than emphasizing economic issues. "People don't turn out to say thank you," said Corey Lewandowski, one of the president's top political advisers. "If you want to get people motivated, you've got to give them a reason to vote. Saying 'build the wall and stop illegals from coming in and killing American citizens' gives them an important issue." This fear-oriented approach reflects the degree that Mr. Trump has put his **anti-immigration** imprint on the Republican Party. The same raw **appeals** Mr. Trump made in 2016 about immigrants illegally crossing the border have not abated among most of his Republican supporters. And his supporters say the party has little choice in an election where Democrats **are** eager to register their opposition to a president they despise — and that the only way to succeed in a campaign driven by turning out the party base is to focus on **what grass-roots conservatives care most about**. **"It's an issue folks are emotionally attached to,"** said Andy Surabian, a Republican strategist and former Trump aide. "I know that upsets some people in the donor class, but **it's the reality of where the party is.**" Mr. Trump's anti-immigrant remarks are aimed at the conservative base of the party that elevated his candidacy and is dominant in red states and House districts, especially those with largely white populations. The Republican grass-roots were already hawkish on immigration, while the president's takeover of the party has further

diminished its pragmatist wing. And while hard-line Republicans are a minority of the country's voters, the G.O.P. cannot retain its grip on Congress without this bedrock of its base going to the polls. The president's pugnacity on immigration took flight in 2015 when his vows to build a border wall drew an enthusiastic response at his rallies and soon became his signature proposal. **But stoking fears about "the other" has always been appealing to Mr. Trump**, going back decades to his early days in New York real estate. The issue of Germany and migrants has resonated for Mr. Trump for more than a year, people close to him say. When he thinks of Chancellor Angela Merkel, he is reminded of her difficulties with immigration far more than his clash with her at the G-7 or any bilateral issues. The danger for Republicans is that the political map this year is sharply bifurcated: the most competitive House and Senate contests are taking place in strikingly different parts of the country. Mr. **Trump's broadsides against Hispanic migrants**, like his criticism of black athletes who will not stand for the national anthem, may **resonate in the deeply red states** where the battle for control of the Senate is playing out. But such culture war attacks will likely alienate voters in the affluent, heavily suburban districts Republicans must win to keep control of the House. Further, some in the party believe that by pursuing a hard-line approach to families at the border — a policy that is deeply unpopular among independent voters, according to polls — Mr. Trump is handing Democrats the high ground on immigration instead of making them defend their support for less popular immigrant protections like sanctuary cities. "Somehow I don't think that putting kids in cages is likely to go over very well with suburban moms," said Whit Ayres, a Republican pollster uneasy about running on the culture wars. Mr. Ayres said his party should campaign on "the concrete accomplishments of a Republican-held government." "A fabulously strong economy, a record stock market, ISIS defeated and a world without any major wars that are killing lots of Americans on a weekly basis," he said, laying out the case. Republicans got a lesson last year about the risk of elevating immigration in campaigns where they depend on suburbanites. In the Virginia governor's race, the Republican nominee, Ed Gillespie, thought women in vote-rich Northern Virginia could be won over with a get-tough message on MS-13, the gang with ties to Central America that has gained a foothold in the Washington, D.C., region. But voters in suburban Fairfax and Loudoun counties overwhelmingly rejected these appeals, supporting Gov. Ralph S. Northam with landslide margins in large part to send a message about their disdain for Mr. Trump. The unease with a hard-line approach on immigration is strongest among House Republicans who hail from diverse districts. Many of these lawmakers signed a discharge petition that would have forced a vote offering legal status for Dreamers, children brought to the country by undocumented immigrants. And as Liesl Hickey, a veteran Republican strategist who previously ran the House congressional campaign arm, pointed out, it is Republican lawmakers like Representatives Carlos Curbelo of Florida, Will Hurd of Texas and Steve Knight of California who face some of the most daunting re-election challenges. "I think it's pretty clear that this is not a winning issue in the form that some want to take it," said Ms. Hickey, alluding to the hard-line approach. In a sign of the Republican alarm about the family separations at the border, Representative Steve Stivers of Ohio, the chairman of the National

Republican Congressional Committee, said Monday that he would ask the Trump administration “to stop needlessly separating children from their parents.” Yet some of Mr. Trump’s advisers have told **the president he needs to live up to what he promised voters on immigration**. These aides have told him that what he is doing is similar to what President Obama did, and suggested that the news media is cherry-picking images of children that can be used to portray Mr. Trump’s policy in the harshest of lights. Mr. Trump, absorbing these arguments, has related to allies that he thinks he is being mistreated by the media and sought to shift the conversation to the broader immigration debate. But Democrats believe he is making a costly mistake by taking his rhetoric too far. “He has taken an issue that is a decent wedge in swing places for Republicans and turned it into this preposterous notion that Democrats are responsible for family separation, Democrats are responsible for all immigrant crime, and Democrats are responsible for MS-13,” said Anna Greenberg, a Democratic pollster. “Nobody believes that.”

Anti-immigrant sentiment drives support for Trump — it’s the single most important issue for his base.

Enten and Bacon 17 — Harry Enten, FiveThirtyEight’s senior political writer and analyst, and Perry Bacon, senior writer for FiveThirtyEight, 2017 (“Trump’s Hardline Immigration Stance Got Him To The White House,” *FiveThirtyEight*, September 12th, Available Online At <https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/why-polls-showing-daca-as-popular-even-among-republicans-dont-tell-the-whole-story/>, Accessed 8-25-2018)

President **Trump’s decision to end** the Obama administration’s Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program (better known as **DACA**) **seems like a political loser**. **Polling shows that most Americans support the program**, which protects undocumented immigrants who were brought to the United States as children from deportation, and don’t want participants removed. This includes, in some polls, a plurality of Republicans. That may be why some congressional Republicans have lined up behind a bill that essentially reinstates DACA. A DACA-like bill could be approved by Congress. **But there’s a big force in the way: Anti-immigration sentiment in the Republican Party**. **DACA may be popular, even among some Republicans, but hardline immigration policy has been growing as an animating force in GOP politics for years. It helped put Trump in the White House. So looking only at the polling on DACA can be misleading** if you’re trying to gauge the chances that the Republican-controlled Congress will replace the program. During policy debates, we sometimes become too focused on individual questions instead of looking at the broader public view. On the issue of gun control, for example, Democrats have liked to point out that background checks have near universal support. Yet, Congress has repeatedly failed to pass a background check bill. Part of the reason: Background checks may poll well, but gun control as a general concept is less popular. Similarly, Republicans tend to poll evenly with Democrats on which party “would do a better job of

dealing with” gun policy. In other words, gun policy divides voters along normal partisan lines, making it unlikely that Republicans would be punished for sticking to their position on a specific policy question within that issue. Immigration is similar to guns in that the Democratic position on many specific immigration policy questions is more popular than the Republican position, but Republicans hold their own on immigration more generally. Much of Trump’s immigration agenda doesn’t poll well: For instance, there isn’t broad support for building a border wall with Mexico, limiting legal immigration or ending DACA. However, recent surveys from George Washington University and Morning Consult found that Democrats and Republicans tend to poll evenly when it comes to which party is trusted more to handle immigration. Additionally, **immigration tends to be an issue that is more important to Republicans than Democrats. The 2016 national exit poll found that Trump beat Hillary Clinton by 31 percentage points among voters who said immigration was the most important issue facing the country.** The 2016 Cooperative Congressional Election Study found that **73 percent of Trump voters said immigration was of “very high importance” to them**, compared with 24 percent of Clinton voters. And despite Trump’s rhetoric on immigration and Latinos during the 2016 campaign, he probably did no worse among them than Mitt Romney did in 2012. (And he may have done slightly better.) So even though DACA is popular, Republicans would be unlikely to face a backlash among their voters — even their more centrist ones — should they refuse to pass a replacement. Indeed, **Republican members of Congress could face a backlash if they pass one** — in the form of primary challenges. In recent elections, **a hardline stance on immigration has proved to be a winner in Republican primaries.** **It has been highly correlated with how well GOP senators have done against primary challenges — senators with more hardline positions have done better against primary challengers;** those with more moderate views have done worse. In 2016, moreover, **immigration may have been the issue most responsible for Trump’s winning the Republican nomination.** **In every state with a caucus or primary exit poll, he did best among voters who said immigration was their top issue.**¹ That’s the GOP’s conundrum on immigration and DACA: The politics of “immigration” would suggest that Republicans let DACA lapse, leaving some of the 800,000 recipients subject to deportation; the politics of DACA more narrowly would argue for passing a bill that grants some of its protections. And lawmakers will probably get pressure from both sides. **Vocal conservative activists such as Ann Coulter and the Federation for American Immigration Reform are against any kind of broad protection** from deportation like DACA. **Breitbart**, the website run in part by former Trump chief strategist Steve Bannon, **has been casting any kind of formalization** of DACA policy **as “amnesty,”** a word that conservatives often invoke to drive up opposition to more liberal immigration proposals among party activists. Conservative activists could still declare that a vote for a DACA replacement both rewards illegal behavior and, in effect, gives Obama a policy win. If that kind of argument takes hold among party activists, it will be hard for congressional Republicans to support this legislation.

Immigration is the most important issue for the base.

Collinson 6/19 — Stephen staff writer, CNN, "Why Trump is digging in on separating families at the border" June 19, 2018 <https://www.cnn.com/2018/06/19/politics/donald-trump-immigration-border-separations/index.html//dmr>

(CNN)Logic suggests that the White House, under crushing political pressure, would be forced to back down on its hardline immigration policy amid outrage over searing depictions of kids separated from their parents at the southern border.

But while **the swirling political crisis over the "zero tolerance" approach to undocumented migrants might convince a conventional White House to seek a way out, this administration is so far digging in.** It is sticking to a strategy of falsely blaming Democrats and past

administrations for a practice that it decided to adopt and could change anytime it wanted to.

"The United States will not be a migrant camp and it will not be a refugee holding facility,"

President Donald **Trump** declared on Monday. **A climbdown** on this issue would represent more than a huge embarrassment for the President. It would undermine his political image and philosophy and require him to admit he's wrong and to temper instincts that force him to

counterattack. He **would risk alienating base voters who prize his strongman image on one**

issue above all -- immigration -- and are more inclined to believe that people who cross the

border illegally get what they deserve than to react with compassion to reports by media outlets they disdain. Among those reports Monday came one of the most haunting moments to come thus far in the immigration debate with the release of ProPublica audio recorded last week inside a US Customs and Border Protection detention facility, where children separated from their parents can be heard sobbing. At one point, a traumatized child can be heard calling for "Daddy." Whether that could sway the President must be weighed against the certainty that

a reversal would dilute the Trump mythology that underwrote his rise as a political figure.

Giving in to criticism from all the living first ladies, or the United Nations, or Washington

Republicans like Arizona's Sen. John McCain, **would mean bending to the kind of**

internationalist, traditional establishment forces his entire political project was built to

destroy. Trump goes to Capitol Hill on Tuesday, where his congressional allies spent Monday

trying to find some kind of legislative solution to the border crisis, though many Republicans -- even those who've supported the President in the past -- say Trump can end the family

separation issue with a simple phone call. Loopholes Mercedes Schlapp, the White House director of strategic communications, offered potential White House flexibility Tuesday when she said that Trump was ready to discuss a standalone bill on ending the separations being

authored by Texas Republican Sen. Ted Cruz. "We are looking into the legislative text on the

Cruz bill," she told reporters. Life had been tough for administration officials forced, unlike

Trump, to undergo questioning Monday and make policy arguments that could not match the

emotional storm stirred by the separations. "Separating parents from children is not a policy

that we want to pursue. At the same time, letting children and parents come across the border

... illegally, is not a policy either," Marc Short, Trump's White House director of legislative

affairs, said on CNN's "The Situation Room." White House press secretary Sarah Sanders did nothing to dispel the notion that Trump is using the separations as leverage to force Democrats into caving on his plans to reshape the immigration system when she rejected the idea of standalone legislation on separations. Homeland Security Secretary Kirstjen Nielsen tried and failed to quell the public relations disaster by flying back from New Orleans for the White House press briefing. Nielsen blamed "loopholes" left open by Congress and previous administrations and doubled down on the administration's false contention that it has no option under the law but to funnel people who come across the border illegally into the criminal justice system -- a designation that forces authorities to separate children from their parents while they are in custody. Nielsen's briefing was more tempered than previous administration efforts to explain the situation, but the fact that she, and the President, are trying to blame it on Democrats showed that even they don't want to own the consequences. And at times, Nielsen seemed to lack sensitivity to the anger and empathy that have been triggered over a weekend of heart-rending news coverage and that prompted Colleen Kraft, president of the American Academy of Pediatrics, to describe the separations on CNN as "government-sanctioned child abuse." Nielsen said conditions in facilities where separated children are kept are good, though she ignored the emotional and humanitarian needs of kids cut off from their parents. "We give them meals and we give them education and we give them medical care. There are videos. There are TVs," Nielsen said. 'This has to stop' The administration's defense on Monday failed to keep pace with the accelerating politics of the issue, as even some of its allies eyed a grim midterm election environment or made their own moral calls on the practice of separation. "This has to stop," said Cruz, who is up for re-election in November. "We should keep children with their parents. Kids need their moms. They need their dads," said Cruz, who is introducing a bill that will mandate that families are not separated. Another Republican who often sides with Trump, South Carolina's Sen. Lindsey Graham, said, "Americans are pretty decent folks. They don't like illegal immigration, they want to do it right. But they're moved by the fact that families are being separated and we've got to find a better way." In another sign of the subtle politics of the issue, Democratic Sen. Joe Manchin, who is on a tightrope in a re-election race in West Virginia, where Trump won overwhelmingly in 2016, criticized the President. "That's the most inhumane enforcement I've ever seen in my life," said Manchin. "The American dream and hope of the world, where'd all that go?" Still, Trump may believe he has political grounds to stick to his guns. A new CNN poll Monday showed that while the President had a 59% disapproval rating on immigration, 58% of Republicans favored the new policy toward undocumented immigrant families on the southern border. And 81% of respondents who approve of Trump also give his immigration policy high marks. Given that **this is a presidency almost exclusively rooted in efforts to secure Trump's base**, it might not be surprising if the President looks at such numbers and decides his own political interests -- as distinct from the wider Republican Party's -- augur no course correction.

Trump voters hate the plan — polls.

Constable 16 — Washington Post's bureau chief in Afghanistan and Pakistan. She previously served as a South Asia bureau chief and most recently covered immigration in the Washington area for several years, Pamela, 3-31, **Most U.S. voters view immigrants positively. Most Trump voters don't**, https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/social-issues/most-us-voters-view-immigrants-positively-most-trump-voters-dont/2016/03/31/6f2dec5e-f766-11e5-a3ce-f06b5ba21f33_story.html?utm_term=.945ef998c493

Registered Democrats and Republicans remain sharply divided in their views toward immigrants and Muslims, according to a survey released Thursday by the Pew Research Center, **with much higher percentages of Republican voters supporting a border wall with Mexico** and extra scrutiny on Muslims. Overall, however, a majority of registered voters — and most Democrats — expressed a positive view of immigrants. **Responses among GOP voters varied widely depending on which primary candidate they supported. Those favoring** Republican presidential hopeful Donald **Trump expressed by far the most negative views of immigrants**, and those favoring Democratic candidate Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.) were by far the most positive. Supporters of Sen. Ted Cruz (R-Texas) and Ohio Gov. John Kasich (R) came closest to tracking with voter responses overall. Nationwide, 57 percent of voters said immigrants strengthen the country through work and talent, while **35 percent said immigrants are a burden because they take jobs, housing and health care away from those born in this country**. That ratio was the most positive since Pew started asking the question in 1994. Back then, 31 percent of voters viewed immigrants positively, while 63 percent considered them a burden. Favorable perceptions have climbed steadily since, according to annual Pew polls. **Among voters favoring Trump, 69 percent called immigrants a drain on society**. Supporters of Cruz — himself the son of Cuban immigrants — were more mixed, with 51 percent seeing immigrants as a burden and 36 percent as a boon. Backers of Kasich were far more moderate, with 49 percent seeing immigrants as a benefit and 40 percent as a burden. On the Democratic side, the great majority of responders — 78 percent who back Hillary Clinton and 82 percent who favor Sanders — said immigrants were a positive addition to the United States. **When asked about illegal immigrants, the contrasts between both parties were not quite as sharp — with the exception of Trump supporters**. About three-quarters of all voters said a path should be found for some undocumented immigrants to remain in the United States legally. Clinton and Sanders supporters agreed by 87 and 90 percent, respectively. On the GOP side, 58 percent of Cruz supporters and 75 percent of Kasich backers agreed. But **more than half of Trump supporters — 52 percent — said undocumented immigrants should not be allowed to stay. Forty-two percent of Trump supporters favored a national effort to deport illegal immigrants**, compared with 30 percent who back Cruz, 24 percent who support Kasich, 8 percent who back Clinton and 6 percent who favor Sanders. **Eighty-four percent of Trump backers expressed support for building a wall along the U.S.-Mexico border**, compared with about 67 percent of Republicans overall. Fewer Cruz and Kasich backers said the government

should build a wall, and the great majority of both Clinton and Sanders supporters opposed such a plan. On the separate topic of whether Muslims in the United States should be subjected to greater scrutiny at a time of terrorist attacks and refu-gee surges, 61 percent of all voters said no, as did 79 percent of Democrats. Trump supporters took the opposite view, with 64 percent supporting such scrutiny. Among Cruz and Kasich backers, 53 and 37 percent, respectively, took that position.

Hardline immigration policies have been Trump's strategy for buoying base support.

Shepard 4/11 — Steven, Politico, "Poll: Nearly half support sending troops to border" April 11, 2018 <https://www.politico.com/story/2018/04/11/border-mexico-troops-trump-poll-512778>

Donald Trump's order last week to send National Guard troops to the U.S.-Mexico border is supported by nearly half of voters according to a new POLITICO/Morning Consult poll. A plurality of 48 percent support sending troops to the border — greater than the 42 percent who oppose dispatching the National Guard. Nine percent of voters have no opinion of Trump's order. The order is most popular among voters already inclined to back the president, according to Kyle Dropp, Morning Consult's co-founder and chief research officer. "President **Trump's decision to deploy National Guard troops is a hugely popular move with his base**," said Dropp. "Sixty percent of Trump voters 'strongly' approve of the decision. Among this same group, 49 percent 'strongly' approve of Trump's job performance overall." The partisan split on the issue underscores this divide: Just **22 percent of Democratic voters support sending troops** to the border, **compared to 84 percent of Republicans**. Independents are evenly divided: 44 percent support sending the National Guard to the border, and 44 percent oppose doing so. **Overall, voters lean slightly toward the Republican Party to handle immigration**, the poll shows. Forty-three percent of voters say they trust Republicans in Congress more on the issue, compared to 39 percent who trust congressional Democrats.

Link — Legal Immigration

Curtailing legal immigration is a bedrock principle of the base.

Brownstein 6/26 — Ronald, CNN, "GOP increasingly opposes legal -- not just illegal -- immigration" June 26, 2018 <https://www.cnn.com/2018/06/26/politics/republicans-oppose-legal-illegal-immigration/index.html//dmr>

(CNN)The **firestorm over the separation of children** from their undocumented parents at the border **has almost completely overshadowed** another milestone in **the long-running national immigration debate**: **Opposition to legal**, as well as illegal, **migration is hardening into a bedrock principle of the Republican Party**. With **last week**'s vote in the House of Representatives on hardline immigration legislation from GOP Rep. Bob Goodlatte of Virginia, **about three-fourths of Republicans in both the House and Senate** have **voted** this year **to cut legal immigration by about 40%**. That would represent, by far, the largest reduction in legal immigration since Congress voted in 1924 to virtually shut off immigration for the next four decades. And **while** each of **the bills this year to slash legal immigration ultimately fell short** of passage, **their preponderant support among Republicans marked a telling shift in the GOP's center of gravity**: The last time Congress seriously considered cuts in legal immigration during the 1990s, about three-fourths of Senate Republicans, and about one-third of House Republicans, opposed it. "It tells me that the party is more interested in reducing the number of foreigners in the United States than in reducing illegal immigration," says David Bier, an immigration policy analyst at the libertarian Cato Institute. "One reason to allow people to immigrate legally is to reduce the incentives to come illegally, and so this entire portion of that immigration bill is working at cross-purposes to the goal of securing the border and reducing illegal immigration." New opposition to legal immigration For years, many Republicans have claimed that even as they demanded a crackdown on undocumented, or illegal, immigration, they supported a robust system of legal immigration. Even President Donald Trump nodded to that tradition in a tweet on Sunday when he insisted that illegal immigration "is very unfair to all of those people who have gone through the system legally and are waiting on line for years!" But, in fact, **the vast majority of congressional Republicans this year have now voted for Trump-backed legislation that would** not only crack down on undocumented immigration but also **severely constrict legal entry into the country**, including for millions of those who, as Trump put it, have been "waiting on line for years" to enter legally. "It really looks like the entire debate about illegality is not the main issue anymore **for Republicans** in both chambers of Congress," notes Bier. "**The main goal seems to be to reduce the number of foreigners in the United States to the greatest extent possible.**" The result is that Republicans are now engaged in a two-front war against both legal and undocumented immigration. Trump has clearly signaled he intends to emphasize illegal immigration as a primary wedge issue for the November elections: Even amid the chaos over separations at the border, he's turned to more overtly nativist and racist language, charging that undocumented immigrants "infest" and

"invade" the US and urging an end to due process protections for them. Congressional Republicans, in turn, have backed away from earlier promises to legally protect the so-called "Dreamers," young people brought to the country illegally as children. After Trump rescinded former President Obama's policy sheltering those young people from deportation, House Speaker Paul Ryan, among other leading Republicans, promised Congress would provide a lasting solution. But every Senate proposal to protect them failed, with the vast majority of Republicans voting no. In the House, moderate Republicans backed off their plan to force an up or down vote on protecting the young people through a discharge petition when Ryan promised them he'd craft a comprehensive plan. But amid resistance from conservatives, Ryan's immigration bill is also likely to fail this week -- if it comes to a vote at all after Trump publicly questioned its value. If Ryan's measure fails, as appears virtually certain, it would mark the third time in the past 12 years that House Republicans have refused to legalize any contingent of undocumented immigrants. In 2006 and 2013, the Republican House leadership refused to even schedule a vote after bipartisan Senate majorities passed legislation combining tougher immigration enforcement with a pathway to citizenship for many millions of undocumented immigrants. The Goodlatte bill provides the most revealing gauge of how far the immigration priorities of most House Republicans diverge from those goals. The bill failed in the House last week when 41 Republicans joined 190 Democrats to oppose it. But 193 House Republicans -- just over 82% of those who voted -- backed the legislation. That vote stands as a milestone in hardening GOP attitudes against migration because the Goodlatte bill represented a wish list for the party's most anti-immigration forces. By the calculations of Bier and Stuart Anderson, executive director of the National Foundation for American Policy, a pro-immigration group, it would have reduced legal immigration over the coming decades by fully 40% (far more than the 25%, already a historic decline, that the sponsors claimed.) It would have severely limited the opportunity for migrants to seek political asylum in the US. And despite Trump's gesture toward those "waiting in line," the bill, after a short transition through 2019, would have canceled pending immigration applications from about 3 million married adult children and siblings of US citizens who have waited in line for, in many cases, decades, as Biers and Anderson wrote recently. The strong House Republican vote for the Goodlatte bill came after the GOP caucus voted even more overwhelmingly last year for legislation to punish so-called "sanctuary" cities that fail to fully cooperate with federal immigration law. In that June 2017 vote, House Republicans voted 225-7 to cut off a wide array of federal grants to states or cities that limit immigration cooperation and to allow private citizens to sue such jurisdictions if they claim that they or family members were later harmed by undocumented immigrants released through their policies. (Ryan's immigration bill revives that provision.) Generally, the Senate Republican immigration bills haven't tilted quite as far toward the party's nativist element. But even so, **36 of the 50 voting Republican senators last February voted for Trump-supported legislation** sponsored by Senate Judiciary Chairman Charles Grassley of Iowa **that would have cut legal immigration by about as much as the Goodlatte bill** (though it would not have erased the applications of millions of potential migrants waiting in line). And **all 50 voting Senate Republicans last February backed legislation from GOP Sen. Pat Toomey of Pennsylvania to**

slash federal funding for states and cities that fail to fully cooperate with federal immigration enforcement. The shifting GOP center of power Partly, **the hard Republican turn against** not only undocumented but also **legal immigration can be explained by the party's shifting geographic center.** In the House, the Senate and the Electoral College alike, **Republicans** now **depend predominantly on the parts of America that have been the least touched by the steady growth in the immigrant population** over the past 50 years. In the House, about 85% of Republicans represent districts where the foreign-born share of the population was lower than the national average of 13.5% in 2016. Similarly, 42 of the 51 Republican senators represent the 30 states where immigrants compose the smallest share of the population, mostly in the South, the Midwest and the Mountain West. Republicans hold only nine of the 40 Senate seats in the 20 states where immigrants constitute the largest share of the population, most of them along the coasts. In 2016, Trump's pattern of support followed those tracks too: He won 26 of the 30 states with the smallest share of immigrants, but lost 16 of the 20 with the highest. In both the House and Senate, several Republicans from high-immigration jurisdictions opposed the legislation constricting legal migration. Those opposing the Goodlatte bill last week included Steve Knight, Jeff Denham, David Valadao and Dana Rohrabacher of California, Carlos Curbelo of Florida, Leonard Lance of New Jersey and Barbara Comstock of Virginia. All of them hold swing seats where immigrants make up at least one-fifth of the population. Senate Republican opponents of the Grassley bill included Ted Cruz of Texas and Jeff Flake of Arizona, two high-immigration states. But **a noteworthy number of Republicans from high-immigration jurisdictions in both chambers supported the legislation severely reducing legal immigration.** In the Senate, they included Marco Rubio of Florida, John Cornyn of Texas, Cory Gardner of Colorado and David Perdue and Johnny Isakson of Georgia. Those supporting the cuts in the House included John Culberson and Pete Sessions of Texas, Karen Handel and Rob Woodall of Georgia, Dan Donovan in New York City and Mimi Walters in California. All of those House Republicans represent potentially competitive seats where at least one-fifth of the residents were born abroad. And of course **all Republican senators and virtually all GOP House members**, no matter how large the immigrant presence in their constituencies, **voted to punish "sanctuary" cities.** Those votes are a reminder that in all parts of the country, **the Republican coalition now revolves around the elements of American society most uneasy about immigration** in particular and demographic change in general: **older, blue-collar, evangelical and non-urban whites.** In recent polling by the nonpartisan Pew Research Center, **Republicans living in urban, suburban and rural communities, for instance, were all far less likely than Democrats in the same places to say that immigrants had improved the quality of life in their neighborhoods.** Americans have consistently indicated they want immigration laws upheld and that they oppose policies that connote open borders or appear to tolerate lawbreaking; that can be a risk for Democrats who too sweepingly criticize immigration enforcement. But the public has also shown a durable pragmatic streak that rejects the core ideas conservatives are pushing to dramatically reduce the immigrant presence in American

life. The disapproving majority vs. the engaged minority In its most recent national poll, Quinnipiac University found that among all adults, only about one-sixth wanted to reduce legal immigration, while nearly three-fifths opposed building Trump's wall across the Mexican border, three-fourths supported legal status for all of the undocumented and almost four-fifths backed allowing the "Dreamers" to remain in the US and apply for citizenship. Two-thirds opposed the recently suspended Trump practice of separating undocumented children from their parents at the border. But even as congressional Republicans search for a legislative solution to end family separations, the vast majority of them appear comfortable joining the President in rejecting the lopsided public consensus embodied in those other poll results. That represents one of the party's central gambles in the Trump era: that the minority of Americans deeply uneasy about immigration are more likely to turn out to vote -- and more likely to vote on that issue -- than the majority who support it. That bet may prove a good one in the non-urban House districts and low-immigrant states at the core of the GOP's current congressional majorities. But it could further erode the party's position in more cosmopolitan states and districts with substantial populations of both immigrants and college-educated whites generally welcoming of them. Many of the most vulnerable Republican House members represent white-collar suburban districts with substantial immigrant populations. The two most endangered Republican Senate seats this year -- in Arizona and Nevada -- are among the nine they hold in the 20 most immigrant-intensive states; in 2020, the GOP will likely face tough Senate fights in Colorado and Georgia, two more on that list. Texas may become competitive, if still uphill, for Democrats, too -- perhaps as soon as Cruz's re-election race against Beto O'Rourke this fall. The likely outcome is that **the GOP's geographic center over the next few elections will tilt even more toward the places least affected by immigration. That would further strengthen the party's nativist elements at a time when Trump is already championing them.** And that means, even as America inexorably grows more diverse, the party is likely to hurtle further away from the support for legal immigration championed by Republican presidents from Ronald Reagan through George W. Bush. "I don't see any way to get back to it now that **Republicans know where their base is on their issue,**" says Bier. "I would be surprised if you didn't see a more restrictive legal immigration plank than you already have in the GOP platform in 2020."

Increasing legal immigration betrays his key issue.

Kapur 18 — Sahil Kapur, national political reporter for Bloomberg Politics, 2018 ("Trump's Hard Line on Immigration Traps Republicans in a 2018 Dilemma," *Bloomberg*, June 20th, Available Online At <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2018-06-20/trump-s-hard-line-on-immigration-traps-gop-in-a-2018-dilemma>, Accessed 8-27-2018)

President Donald **Trump's** policy separating families who enter the U.S. illegally has caught 2018 Republican candidates between **an anti-immigration party base** that **favors Trump's hard**

line and the majority of Americans who object to a policy widely criticized as cruel. The “zero tolerance” punishment imposed by the administration has delivered harrowing footage of wailing toddlers to American living rooms less than five months before voters decide which party should control Congress. “A picture is worth a thousand words, and a graphic picture is always potent on this kind of issue. For the Republicans, getting this monkey off their back is critical,” said Tom Davis, a former Republican congressman who chaired the party’s election arm. “Especially for members in swing districts.” Some of those swing districts, in states including New York, New Jersey, Florida and California, will determine whether Democrats take the 23 seats from Republicans that they’d need to gain control of the House. Republicans in those races will have to choose whether to defend or defy Trump on a deeply polarizing issue that could hurt them with constituencies such as suburban women, independent voters and Hispanics. Preferred Message The growing furor also is drowning out the GOP’s preferred campaign message about a booming economy on the week of the six-month anniversary of the Trump tax cuts. It’s not necessarily an easy choice. “For the Republican base, if you resolve this wrongly it’s really going to hurt your turnout,” Davis said. “They’re nervous about people saying ‘you sold out.’” Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell of Kentucky downplayed the prospect of political harm to his party. “It’s not going to tar anybody,” the Kentucky Republican told reporters. “We’re going to fix the problem.” But he noted that any solution has to be bipartisan to pass the Senate and it wasn’t clear Tuesday after a series of meetings whether that could be achieved. Three polls released this week said most Americans oppose the Trump policy, which requires the prosecution of all adults crossing the border outside of an official port of entry and thereby sends children to be housed elsewhere. Approval stood at just 28 percent in a CNN poll, 27 percent in a Quinnipiac poll and 27 percent in an Ipsos poll, all driven by overwhelming opposition from Democrats and independents. Republican Support But Republicans supported the policy — by a margin of 58 percent to 34 percent in the CNN poll, by 55 percent to 35 percent in the Quinnipiac poll, and by 46 percent to 32 percent in the Ipsos poll. **Immigration was a central force in Trump’s rise after he catered to a hunger among core supporters for tough punishments on illegal entry and cuts to legal immigration, including** among **asylum-seekers.** “I run campaigns **all over the country** and **in every poll** we run -- in every district, no matter where it is -- **the No. 1 issue for Republicans is immigration. It’s not even close,**” said Harlan Hill, a Republican consultant and adviser to Trump’s 2020 reelection campaign. “**It’s critical to the president’s identity. He** obviously **ran on this**. He opened up his entire campaign on this issue. **So voters are** quite frankly **holding his feet to the fire.”**

Link — Asylum

Trump ran on limiting asylum — the plan betrays the base.

Kapur 18 — Sahil Kapur, national political reporter for Bloomberg Politics, 2018 (“Trump’s Hard Line on Immigration Traps Republicans in a 2018 Dilemma,” *Bloomberg*, June 20th, Available Online At <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2018-06-20/trump-s-hard-line-on-immigration-traps-gop-in-a-2018-dilemma>, Accessed 8-27-2018)

President Donald **Trump’s** policy separating families who enter the U.S. illegally has caught 2018 Republican candidates between **an anti-immigration party base** that **favors Trump’s hard line** and the majority of Americans who object to a policy widely criticized as cruel. The “zero tolerance” punishment imposed by the administration has delivered harrowing footage of wailing toddlers to American living rooms less than five months before voters decide which party should control Congress. “A picture is worth a thousand words, and a graphic picture is always potent on this kind of issue. For the Republicans, getting this monkey off their back is critical,” said Tom Davis, a former Republican congressman who chaired the party’s election arm. “Especially for members in swing districts.” Some of those swing districts, in states including New York, New Jersey, Florida and California, will determine whether Democrats take the 23 seats from Republicans that they’d need to gain control of the House. Republicans in those races will have to choose whether to defend or defy Trump on a deeply polarizing issue that could hurt them with constituencies such as suburban women, independent voters and Hispanics. Preferred Message The growing furor also is drowning out the GOP’s preferred campaign message about a booming economy on the week of the six-month anniversary of the Trump tax cuts. It’s not necessarily an easy choice. “For the Republican base, if you resolve this wrongly it’s really going to hurt your turnout,” Davis said. “They’re nervous about people saying ‘you sold out.’” Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell of Kentucky downplayed the prospect of political harm to his party. “It’s not going to tar anybody,” the Kentucky Republican told reporters. “We’re going to fix the problem.” But he noted that any solution has to be bipartisan to pass the Senate and it wasn’t clear Tuesday after a series of meetings whether that could be achieved. Three polls released this week said most Americans oppose the Trump policy, which requires the prosecution of all adults crossing the border outside of an official port of entry and thereby sends children to be housed elsewhere. Approval stood at just 28 percent in a CNN poll, 27 percent in a Quinnipiac poll and 27 percent in an Ipsos poll, all driven by overwhelming opposition from Democrats and independents. Republican Support But Republicans supported the policy — by a margin of 58 percent to 34 percent in the CNN poll, by 55 percent to 35 percent in the Quinnipiac poll, and by 46 percent to 32 percent in the Ipsos poll. **Immigration was a central force in Trump’s rise after he catered to a hunger among core supporters for tough punishments on illegal entry and cuts to legal immigration, including among asylum-seekers.** “I run campaigns **all over the country** and **in every poll** we run -- in every district, no matter where it is -- **the No. 1 issue for Republicans is immigration. It’s not even close,**” said Harlan Hill, a Republican consultant and adviser to Trump’s 2020 reelection campaign. “**It’s**

critical to the president's identity. He obviously **ran on this**. He opened up his entire campaign on this issue. **So voters are** quite frankly **holding his feet to the fire."**

Majority of Republicans overwhelmingly oppose increasing asylum claims.

York 6/30 — Byron York is the chief political correspondent for the Washington Examiner, a Fox News contributor and the author of *The Vast Left Wing Conspiracy*. "Donald Trump's mainstream immigration policy" June 30, 2018

<https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/news/donald-trumps-mainstream-immigration-policy//dmr>

Penn also sought opinion **on the complex issue of whether the U.S. offers asylum to too many people**. This was the question: "Many people entering the United States illegally claim asylum and are held here pending a review of their claim for asylum. Should claims of asylum be allowed for people who say that their country generally has high levels of violence, or should asylum be limited to people who can show their government was persecuting them?" Fifty-five percent (**70 percent of Republicans**, 41 percent of Democrats, and 58 percent of independents) **said asylum should be limited to cases of government persecution**, while 45 percent said it should be available to people simply on the basis of violence in their home countries.

Link — DACA

DACA causes wholesale revolt — past negotiations prove even his most ardent supporters would backlash.

CBS News 18 — CBS News, 2018 ("Trump's immigration proposal slammed by his base," no byline, January 26th, Available Online At <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/donald-trump-immigration-proposal-slammed-by-his-base-breitbart-amnesty-don/>, Accessed 8-25-2018)

NEW YORK -- **Fearing betrayal on a signature campaign issue, President Trump's loyalists across the country are lashing out against his proposal to create a path to citizenship for** nearly 2 million "Dreamer" immigrants. Mr. Trump's proposal includes \$25 billion for border security and significant changes to legal immigration long sought by hard-liners. Several Democrats and immigration activists rejected it outright, accusing the president of holding "Dreamers" hostage to his hard-line immigration agenda. Senior White House officials cast the plan as a centrist compromise that could win support from both parties and enough votes to pass the Senate. But it comes with a long list of concessions that many Democrats, and conservative Republicans, especially in the House, may find impossible to swallow. **His supporters' focus on "amnesty" for Dreamers highlights how dug in the base is and how little room** Mr. **Trump has to maneuver.** Trump-aligned candidates from Nevada and Virginia rejected the notion outright. **The president's most loyal media ally, the conservative Breitbart News, seen as a barometer for his base, attacked him as "Amnesty Don."** And **outside groups who cheered the hard-line rhetoric that dominated Mr. Trump's campaign warned of a fierce backlash against the president's party in November's midterm elections.** "There's a real potential for disaster," said Mark Krikorian, executive director of the far-right Center for Immigration Studies. **"The president hasn't sold out his voters yet. But I think it's important that his supporters are making clear to him that they're keeping an eye on him."** The consequences could be severe for the GOP as it struggles to energize voters heading into the 2018 midterm elections, when Republican majorities in the House and Senate are at stake. Recent Democratic victories in Alabama and Virginia suggest that the GOP has cause for concern - especially as Mr. Trump's approval numbers hover near record lows. **Protections for more immigration of these young immigrants could trigger wholesale revolt by Mr. Trump's base** in November, said Bob Dane, executive director of the conservative Federation for American Immigration Reform. **"There's widespread fear that if Mr. Trump capitulates to the Democrats and fails to deliver on his campaign promises on immigration,** there's not going to be any more campaign promises for the GOP to make in the future, because **the base will inflict a scorched-earth policy in midterms,**" Dane said, noting that his organization has "a longstanding position of opposing amnesty in any form, including the extension of the DACA protections." "DACA itself didn't have a pathway to citizenship," said Sen. Ted Cruz, R-Texas, who battled Mr. Trump in 2016 for the GOP presidential nomination. "So I think it would be a profound mistake and not consistent with the promises we made to the voters to enact a

pathway to citizenship to DACA recipients or to others who are here illegally." Rep. Jim Jordan, R-Ohio, said he supports a more conservative, more sweeping immigration bill proposed by House members, including House Judiciary Committee Chairman Bob Goodlatte, R-Va., which has won strong support from House conservatives. House Speaker Paul Ryan has promised to push for support for that measure. Democrats were also raging. House Democratic leader Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., blasted the plan as "an act of staggering cowardice which attempts to hold the Dreamers hostage to a hateful anti-immigrant scheme." In a statement Thursday night, Pelosi said the framework was "part of the Trump Administration's unmistakable campaign to make America white again." Democratic Whip Dick Durbin, D-Ill., urged Republicans to join together with Democrats to reach a bipartisan alternative. "Dreamers should not be held hostage to President Trump's crusade to tear families apart and waste billions of American tax dollars on an ineffective wall," he said in a statement. Rep. Michelle Lujan Grisham, D-N.M., who chairs the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, said the White House was using DACA recipients "as bargaining chips for sweeping anti-immigrant policies." And Lorella Praeli, with the American Civil Liberties Union, called it "a hateful, xenophobic immigration proposal that would slash legal immigration to levels not seen since the racial quotas of the 1920s, eliminate legal immigration channels for African countries, and spend \$25 billion for a harmful, wasteful border wall and an increase in Border Patrol and ICE agents." **The public scolding from conservatives was aimed at a president who has changed course under pressure before.** Yet Mr. **Trump has faced no greater test on a more significant issue than this one, which dominated his outsider candidacy and inspired a coalition of working-class voters that fueled his unlikely rise.** Now, barely a year into his presidency, Mr. **Trump can bend either to the will of his fiery base or the pressure to** govern and **compromise.** His leadership may determine the fate of hundreds of thousands of young immigrants and whether his party can improve its standing among a surging group of Hispanic voters. It may also alienate those who love him most. "There's a Trump movement. And It's not necessarily about Donald Trump," said Corey Stewart, a Republican Senate candidate in Virginia and a vocal Trump ally. "It's about the things that Donald Trump campaigned and stood for during his campaign. Ultimately, every elected leader needs to stay true to the message that they ran on. Otherwise, people will leave them." The passionate response underscores the Republican Party's immigration dilemma in the age of Trump. Much of the country, including independents and moderate Republicans, favor protections for thousands of young people brought to the country as children illegally and raised here through no fault of their own. But **a vocal conservative faction emboldened by Mr. Trump's anti-immigrant rhetoric will never accept anything viewed as "amnesty."** And many view legal protection for these young immigrants as just that.

DACA compromises alienate his base beyond repair.

Healey 17 — Jon Healey, deputy editorial page editor for the LA Times, 2017 ("President Trump finally finds a way to alienate his base, by flirting with Democrats on DACA," *LA Times*,

September 14th, Available Online At <http://www.latimes.com/opinion/opinion-la/la-ol-trump-daca-deal-20170914-story.html#>, Accessed 8-27-2018)

Who knew that deciding the fate of "Dreamers" would be trickier and more explosively controversial for a Republican president than agreeing to raise the debt ceiling? President Trump won plaudits for crossing up GOP leaders to summarily cut a deal with top congressional Democrats on three key fiscal issues: raising the debt ceiling, keeping the government running past Sept. 30 and borrowing a metric megaload of dollars to help out storm victims. **Hey, Trump got something done! He broke through the gridlock! But when he seemed to close in on another bipartisan agreement** — this time, **to allow a group of immigrants brought into the country as children to stay even though they're here illegally — all hell broke loose, at least among the anti-illegal-immigration zealots who'd been a key part of his base.** Part of **the anger stemmed from reports that Trump wouldn't demand money for his big, beautiful border wall in exchange for protecting Dreamers from deportation.** But another part was simply his willingness to let the Dreamers stay. To pick just one example, check out what Ann Coulter, whose fervent support for Trump now appears to be about as reliable as Trump's support for anyone else, tweeted Thursday: Ann Coulter @AnnCoulter **At this point, who DOESN'T want Trump impeached?** Donald J. Trump @realDonaldTrump ...They have been in our country for many years through no fault of their own - brought in by parents at young age. **Plus BIG border security Trump may still be able to shoot someone while standing in the middle of 5th Avenue without losing a single supporter, but he has found one line his base won't let him cross. Or rather, a loud and possibly large portion of his base won't let him cross it. Another segment, including those who are more conventionally Republican, actually like the idea of cutting Dreamers a break.** After all, America is the only country most of these folks have ever known, and our tax dollars have already been invested in their education and well-being. Should Trump have seen this blowback coming? Maybe — he certainly played up the points during his campaign that President Obama's Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program was reprehensible and that a new border wall was nonnegotiable. But as both a candidate and as president, Trump has spun like a top on so many issues it's hard to think of one where he's been resolute. And his core supporters haven't flinched. **So why are they flipping out at the newest chapter in the Art of the Deal? Some observers will argue that immigration-related issues lie at the heart of the economic nationalism that defines Trumpism and that carried Trump into the Oval Office.** In that sense, Trump couldn't afford to concede anything on the Dreamers without obtaining something major from Democrats in return — to wit, money for the wall. That's part of it, no doubt. But **another part is the view that's spread over the past few decades that compromise itself is a sign of weakness.** Trump's deal on the debt ceiling was acceptable to his base because he didn't give up anything meaningful. The debt ceiling increase, the temporary spending bill, the emergency appropriations for storm victims — those were all going to happen anyway. But the outlines of a DACA deal that emerged Wednesday night seemed like a real compromise, one where both

sides gave up something to get something. It's worth remembering that Trump took a bit of flak for the debt-ceiling bill from conservatives who thought he caved too quickly to Democrats' demands. **The DACA talks drew a much louder version of that same complaint, this time from Trump's base**. After the debt-ceiling deal, some Trump supporters crowed that the president had finally sprung himself from the chains imposed by the congressional GOP, and particularly the ball-and-chain tandem of House Speaker Paul Ryan (R-Wis.) and Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.). **But Trump's not in a position to triangulate freely, playing congressional Republicans off of congressional Democrats**. Having spent the first months of his tenure playing religiously to his base, alienating much of the rest of the country, **he now finds that the support of his base isn't as unconditional as it seemed. There are lines he can't cross**, and he just tripped over one of them.

The GOP will only accept tight border security & resents Trump for his concessions on the DACA fix.

Yglesias 18 — Matthew Yglesias co-founded Vox.com with Ezra Klein and Melissa Bell back in the spring of 2014. He's currently a senior correspondent focused on politics and economic policy. "Congress should swap a DACA fix for something Republicans actually care about" Published February 6, 2018. Accessed 6/28/18.

(<https://www.vox.com/2018/2/6/16973962/daca-tax-cuts>; EG)

The legislative processes needed to help young immigrations who came to the United States as children have become increasingly frustrating. And a Monday morning tweet from President Trump offered a reminder of that frustration. **Any deal on DACA that does not include STRONG border security and the desperately needed WALL is a total waste of time.**

March 5th is rapidly approaching and the Dems seem not to care about DACA. Make a deal! **This idea of swapping DACA protections for some kind of border security initiative that Trump could characterize as a "wall" (yes, the wall that Mexico was supposed to pay for) keeps coming up — and the Trump administration itself keeps killing the deal.** It appears that Trump, personally, is sympathetic to this approach. But the people actually running immigration policy in the White House are not, and thus the deadlock continues. The way out of the bind is to recognize that Congress is allowed to make legislative compromises that cut across different issues. A concession to Democrats on immigration policy doesn't need to be offset by concessions to Republicans on immigration policy — it can be offset by concessions on any topic under the sun. And in the case of DACA, a cross-cutting compromise is by far the most promising route to a deal. **Rather than giving the GOP's most extreme immigration hardliners something they want, Democrats would have to give Republicans who don't particularly care about immigration something they do care about — a tax cut, a deregulation, a missile shield, whatever.** The false promise of an immigration deal The wall-for-DACA deal is seductive because it has the formal structure of a good deal. Trump has said, over and over again for a

period of years, that building some kind of wall on the US-Mexico border is extremely important. **And while Democrats think this is stupid and moderately offensive, they don't in a practical sense see the idea of further hardening the border as a huge problem — especially since Trump has already conceded that various features of the landscape (Big Bend National Park, for example) would warrant wall exceptions. The reason this keeps not working, however, is that it's not just Democrats who think the wall is stupid — Republicans also think it's stupid, including Congress's main immigration hardliners and their allies inside the White House.** What they want is real, meaningful concessions on immigration policy aimed at altering the demographic trajectory of the United States. These demands are not particularly popular among congressional Republicans, and deporting DREAMers is unpopular with the public at large. **For GOP immigration doves, the problem at this point is everyone who cares passionately about immigration from a pro-immigrant perspective has sorted into the Democratic Party, and every rank-and-file Republican who cares a lot about immigration is a restrictionist.** Consequently, GOP leaders who themselves don't care very much about immigration — with Speaker Paul Ryan, who's been on just about every conceivable side of the immigration issue over the years, taking the lead — defer to the most extreme restrictionists. And that makes a deal impossible. The key to getting one done would be to strike a deal about something else.

Link — Travel Ban

The Travel Ban is THE campaign promise — SCOTUS decision energized the base and validated Trump's authority.

Mills 6/27 — Ryan, USA Today, "Trump supporters praise Supreme Court travel ban ruling as victory for conservative agenda" June 27, 2018

<https://www.naplesnews.com/story/news/2018/06/26/trump-travel-ban-victory-supreme-court-energizes-supporters/736442002///cmr>

President Donald **Trump's supporters praised a** U.S. Supreme **Court ruling** Tuesday **upholding the** administration's **travel ban as a victory for his agenda and a boost in an election year.** Trina Rogers, 30, a homemaker from Merrill, in northern Wisconsin, said she is "totally cool" with the travel ban and "100 percent supportive" of Trump's actions as president. "You can't move forward if you don't have change," Rogers said. "I support Trump in everything he is doing." Tuesday's 5-4 Supreme Court ruling on Trump's temporary travel ban against predominantly Muslim countries reinforced the president's authority on national security matters and reversed a series of lower court decisions that had struck down the ban as illegal or unconstitutional. **Tuesday's victory should help energize those hard-core Trump supporters heading into the 2018 mid-term elections,** some Republican leaders said. But make no mistake, they said, **his base has remained committed to the Trump presidency since his surprise 2016 election.** "We've been energized," said JoAnn DeBartolo, head of the Naples, Florida-based Collier for Trump Club. "It's not like it went away." DeBartolo, who led the Trump campaign in Collier County, said about 200 people showed up for the club's most recent luncheon at a local seafood restaurant in mid-June. Trump continues to receive strong support in pockets of Florida, including the southwest coastal counties where record turnout for him helped him win 61 percent of the vote in Collier and 59 percent in neighboring Lee County. Trump also received high marks Tuesday in Wisconsin, where supporters also gave him the edge in 2016. Supporter Richard Staedt, 80, a retiree from Appleton just southwest of Green Bay, said **Trump's fight to preserve the travel ban proves the president is keeping his campaign promises.** "I feel just as pleased about him as before," Staedt said. "He gets an 'A' from me." Trump, who enjoyed a 45-percent approval rating in mid-June that matched a high for his presidency following his meeting with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, should benefit from even more support following Tuesday's ruling. "More and more people will become Trump supporters," said Jonathan Martin of Fort Myers, Florida, chair of the Lee County Republican Party. Winston Ohlhausen of Abilene, Texas, chair of the Republican Party in Taylor County where Trump won nearly 73 percent of the votes, said the ruling striking down lower court decisions was "a no-brainer for somebody who believes in the Constitution. "It was such a far-fetched ruling. It was so blatant against what the president had the power and ability in his position to do," Ohlhausen said. In Florida's panhandle where Trump received some of his biggest victory margins in the state, Pensacola resident Dan Lindemann disagrees with critics who say the ban amounts to religious discrimination. "To me, it's purely about national security," said

Lindemann, a former Marine helicopter pilot, small business owner and Trump voter. “When we’re talking about international terrorism and threats from extremists, the majority of the risk comes from Muslim countries. Therefore, the security measures inherently affect Muslim countries. “It’s a reasonable defense against groups that have declared jihad against Americans.” **The travel ban ruling was the latest in a string of Supreme Court victories that have favored conservative and Republican causes.** In early June, the court absolved a Colorado baker of discrimination for refusing to create a custom wedding cake for a same-sex couple. Also on Tuesday, the court ruled against a California law that required anti-abortion pregnancy centers to inform women about publicly-funded abortion and contraceptive services. Martin said **those issues**, although not directly related to the Trump administration, **show the importance of the president's appointments to the Supreme Court.** **Trump appointed Justice Neil Gorsuch to the court in his first year.** The court victories and a roaring economy could sway moderates and swing voters, and show them that Trump isn’t the “evil dictator” that some media and opponents make him out to be, Martin said. “It’s not affecting the Trump supporters,” Martin said. “They already know where he’s at. Trump supporters aren’t racist. They’re not bigots the media is making them out to be. “They just want their borders safe, just like every other country in the world.”

2NC/1NR — Impacts

They Say: “No Diversionary War”

Decline in base support causes Trump lashout — global conflict results.

Danner 17 — Mark Danner, Chancellor’s Professor of English and Journalism at the University of California at Berkeley, James Clarke Chace Professor of Foreign Affairs and the Humanities at Bard, 2017 (“What He Could Do,” *The New York Review of Books*, March 23rd, Available Online At <https://www.nybooks.com/articles/2017/03/23/what-trump-could-do/>, Accessed 8-26-2018)

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 resentment, 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. 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. 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 reinstated 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.

Perceived loss of popularity leads to Trump lash out — it’s his psychology.

Fish 17 — 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//dmr>

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.**

They Say: “Advisors Check”

No checks — Trump has removed anyone willing to say “no.”

Allen 18 — Mike, Co-founder of Axios, the next great media company; co-founder of Politico, “The case for extreme worry” April 5, 2018 <https://www.axios.com/donald-trump-foreign-policy-polarization-success-325dfeaa-115a-433d-a975-afabbf77e6fe.html//dmr>

To White House insiders, **this is the most dangerous phase of Donald Trump's presidency so far, from the brewing trade war with China** that he denies is a trade war, **to the perilously spontaneous summit with North Korea**. The big picture: **Checks are being ignored or have been eliminated, and critics purged** as **the president is filling time** by watching Fox, and by **eating dinner with people who** feed his ego and conspiracy theories, and who **drink in his rants**. Both sides are getting more polarized and dug in — making the daily reality more absurd, and the potential consequences less urgent and able to grab people’s serious attention.

Trump is a free agent and will strike — even insiders concede they can’t stop him.

Miller 17 — Vice president for new initiatives at foreign policy and a distinguished scholar at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars. With Richard Sokolsky, a nonresident senior fellow in Carnegie’s Russia and Eurasia Program. 6/20/17, “Why Trump’s Foreign Policy Can’t Be Stopped” June 20, 2017 <http://carnegieendowment.org/2017/06/20/why-trump-s-foreign-policy-can-t-be-stopped-pub-71330>

Still, for the most part, President **Trump is a relatively free agent to shape the optics and substance of his administration’s foreign policy, for good or ill. Take his most recent trip abroad. In a scant nine days, the president invested Saudi Arabia as the focal point of his Middle East strategy and re-energized the U.S.-Saudi relationship through hundreds of billions of dollars’ worth of intended arms sales and investment ventures. And that was just for starters. Trump went on to deliver an anti-Iranian message that exacerbated tensions within the Gulf Cooperation Council and made more difficult the task of putting his anti-Islamic State coalition together;** tweeted his preference for taking Saudi Arabia’s side in its conflict with Qatar, further inflaming the crisis; made clear that human rights have no serious place in his Middle East agenda; became the first sitting U.S. president to visit the Western Wall in Jerusalem; offended and **insulted European allies on issues including climate change, trade, and defense spending; and blindsided his advisors when he failed to explicitly reaffirm America’s commitment to NATO’s mutual defense guarantee. And all this in a mere nine days.** Whether any of this reflects a coherent strategy isn’t really the point. **The larger takeaway is that the president can act unilaterally** — as his withdrawal from the Paris climate change accord reveals — **with devastating strategic consequences.** There are issues, specifically dealing with Russia, where the current domestic controversy will certainly constrain Trump. Indeed, it’s hard to imagine in these circumstances lifting sanctions on Vladimir Putin or

playing footsy with him on any significant or sensitive issue. But on most political issues, and perhaps also **when it comes to projecting American military power abroad, there are few if any constraints to stop him.** HIS ADVISORS GIVE HIM COVER AND LEGITIMACY **The appointment of** several experienced hands in the ways of government and the world — Secretary of Defense James **Mattis**, National Security Advisor H.R. **McMaster**, Secretary of State Rex Tillerson, **and** Homeland Security Secretary John **Kelly** — **might have a leavening effect** on a volatile and inexperienced president. And although we don't know what Trump's foreign policy would look like if these experienced operators were not around, **it's clear that** on issues that are important to the president — for example, climate change and turning NATO's Article 5 into a bargaining chip rather than a commitment — **they have not been able to restrain him.** Indeed, on far too many issues these **advisors seem willing to play along with if not endorse Trump's self-consciously self-centered nationalism.** This White House operates on the premise that nations do not have a stake in cooperating to solve problems they cannot solve by themselves or in one another's success; instead, **Trump lives in a Darwinian dog-eat-dog world** where America needs to look to its own interests and cut the best deals it can — **allies and adversaries be damned** (perhaps minus Putin). **When two presumed moderates in the administration — chief economic advisor Gary Cohn and McMaster — basically said as much** in a recent Wall Street Journal op-ed, **they gave legitimacy to this deeply flawed view.**

They Say: "DA is Racist"

It's politically irresponsible to ignore potential ramification of racist actors.

Gray 18 — (Briahna Joy, JD from Harvard, Senior Politics Editor at The Intercept, Viewable/listenable at 1:31:06 here (link should go directly to time code):https://youtu.be/_SD8vxsogVM?t=5466)

"**That's literally your job. If you don't want to talk to racists**, if you don't want to solicit the votes of racists, **you** probably **shouldn't be a politician, because there's a heck of a lot of them in every party in this country**, in every neighborhood in this country, and every ethnic group in this country. It's just the way that it is. **If you want to be the leader of the free world, you can't sit around and say 'it's not my job to care about the fate of this cohort of my constituency.'** If that's how you feel about things, go be the mayor of a small town where you go ahead and duck-duck-goose everybody and vet whether or not they actually are meritorious of living in your jurisdiction. But the president of the country can't do that. **You have to have a more humanistic orientation where you actually deign to care about the people who you have control over their lives.** And Ocasio-Cortez spoke repeatedly and passionately about human dignity. She uses that word with purpose. And that I think is part of why her message was so unimpeachable. You can't do anything when someone looks you in your eye and makes a basic call for dignity. That's the lesson the Democrats should be taking away from this. They probably won't."

DA Turns the Case

The DA turns the case — decrease in base support also increases xenophobia.

Parmar 18 — Inderjeet Parmar is professor of international politics at City, University of London, and a columnist for The Wire. “Trump’s Game of Musical Chairs Is Taking a Risky Turn” March 31, 2018 <https://thewire.in/world/trump-game-musical-chairs>

Unsurprisingly, this worries the US foreign policy establishment which, since Pearl Harbor, has worked tirelessly to build the international architecture of US-led order – the United Nations system, US-European and US-East Asian security systems, as well as a string of alliances in the western hemisphere and the Middle East. Establishmentarians worry how far President Trump may go; he’s not ‘one of us’. But the **Trump strategy is politically-convenient, distracting attention from basic domestic sources** of the political legitimacy crisis laid bare in the historic election campaigns of 2016. **By blaming the foreigner**, the outsider, the immigrant, **Trump sends a loud and clear message to his political base – ‘America First’** and ‘Make America Great Again’! Thus far, **his core support remains solid – at around 80% favourability** among his **GOP 2016 voters – but as this base erodes, however slowly, we should expect more xenophobic rhetoric and policies** as we approach November 2018.

Extend: “North Korea Lashout”

Trump thinks North Korea is an easy victory — he’ll strike to wag the dog.

Torpey 17 — John, Presidential Professor of Sociology and History and Director of the Ralph Bunche Institute for International Studies at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York, “Defining Trumpism: Making sense of the first 100 days”, April 26, 2017

<http://thehill.com/blogs/pundits-blog/the-administration/330686-defining-trumpism-making-sense-of-the-trumps-first-100>

Given all the **obstacles** to achievement **on the domestic front and the need for charismatic leaders to “win” big and visibly**, President **Trump may look to score what he thinks are easy victories on the international scene**. We now know that Xi Jinping seems to have persuaded him in Florida that things with North Korea are more complicated than he had thought. Yet the man’s ignorance is frightening, and we know that he has a tendency to listen to the last person who advised him. If he talks to the wrong person, therefore, he may go looking for trouble that is bad for us and for the world. **We must** therefore **worry that the president will go off in search of dragons to slay simply in order to maintain his heroic stature** among his base. **This may all go in a very bad direction**; behind the attacks on Syria may lurk a larger objective, namely Iran. Notwithstanding Xi’s counsel, **putting the North Korean threat to rest may look to Trump like an appealing prize.**

They Say: “Checks on North Korea Lashout”

No checks on a North Korean strike.

Rachman 17 — Gideon Rachman, chief foreign affairs commentator of the Financial Times, won the Orwell prize for political journalism, named as commentator of the year at the European Press Prize awards, 2017 (“America is now a dangerous nation,” *CNBC*, August 14th, Available Online At <https://www.cnbc.com/2017/08/14/danger-that-trump-could-exploit-north-korea-as-a-distraction-commentary.html>, Accessed 8-26-2018)

Mr Trump's swiftly notorious threats that North Korea risks "fire and fury" from a "locked and loaded" America were particularly irresponsible. Even if the threat is a bluff, it puts American credibility on the line and risks triggering escalation from the Kim Jong Un regime, which is threatening to fire missiles near the US territory of Guam. Even more alarming, the **Trump administration is openly flirting with the idea of a pre-emptive strike on North Korea** — arguing that a nuclear-armed Mr Kim cannot be deterred. But if America could rely on deterrence to contain the nuclear threat from Stalin's Russia and Mao's China — it can certainly do the same with Mr Kim's North Korea. All previous presidents have rejected the idea of pre-emptive attacks on nuclear-armed states — for obvious reasons. **The international crisis that Mr Trump is stoking is increasingly inseparable from the domestic problems besieging his administration.** The investigation by former Federal Bureau of Investigation director Robert Mueller into Russian intervention in the US election is getting ever closer to the president's inner circle. Congress is deadlocked and the White House is a merry-go-round of sackings and scheming. And now there is political violence on the streets, as white supremacists and neo-Nazis attack, and even kill, protesters in Charlottesville — while the president issues evasive and equivocal statements from a golf course. **The danger is that these multiple crises will merge, tempting an embattled president to try to exploit an international conflict to break out of his domestic difficulties.** Just this week, Sebastian Gorka, a controversial White House aide, used the North Korean crisis to pressure Mr Trump's domestic critics to back down, telling Fox News: "During the Cuba missile crisis we stood behind JFK. This is analogous to the Cuba missile crisis. We need to come together." Mr Gorka's flirtation with the idea that the threat of war could lead Americans to rally around the president should sound alarm bells for anyone with a sense of history. **Governments facing a domestic crisis are often more inclined to adventurism abroad.** For example, the German government that led Europe into the first world war felt under acute threat from domestic political enemies. But on the day war broke out, an exultant Kaiser told a crowd: "I no longer recognise any parties or affiliations; today we are all German brothers." Or as Mr Gorka put it last week: "These are the moments when we have to come together as a nation." Leaders under severe domestic political pressure are also more likely to behave irrationally. During the Watergate crisis, members of Richard Nixon's cabinet told the military to double check with them before obeying a presidential order to stage a nuclear strike. Unfortunately, it is not clear that any US official — now or then — has the right to countermand the president if he decides to go nuclear. "The danger is that these multiple

crises will merge, tempting an embattled president to try to exploit an international conflict to break out of his domestic difficulties." Outside observers are left hoping that the "adults" in the Trump administration will somehow manage the president. But, at least in public, **the pushback against Mr Trump's threats of war has been remarkably weak**, both in Congress and within the administration. HR McMaster, the president's national security adviser, has defended Mr Trump's warmongering on national television. Meanwhile, General McMaster himself is under attack from the white nationalist wing of the president's supporters, who blame him for sacking some of their allies on the National Security Council. Last week, as the North Korean crisis built, the hashtag "Sack McMaster" was trending on Twitter, as the nationalists sought to purge their newfound enemy from the White House. This is the very opposite of the atmosphere that should prevail in the White House as a potential nuclear confrontation looms in the Pacific. **Those who are hoping that America's "Deep State" will contain Mr Trump** — or even force his resignation — **are probably guilty of wishful thinking**. Forcing him from office remains a massively difficult task and risks provoking a further radicalisation both in domestic politics and the conduct of US foreign policy.

There's no legal check on war with North Korea.

Goldsmith 17 — Jack Goldsmith, Henry L. Shattuck Professor at Harvard Law School, co-founder of Lawfare, Senior Fellow at the Hoover Institution, former Assistant Attorney General, former Special Counsel to the Department of Defense, 2017 ("The Ease of Writing an OLC Opinion in Support of Military Action Against North Korea," *Lawfare*, September 14th, Available Online At <https://www.lawfareblog.com/ease-writing-olc-opinion-support-military-action-against-north-korea>, Accessed 8-26-2018)

I've been asked a lot recently about the President's power under Article II to order a military strike on North Korea in the absence of congressional authorization. The proper meaning of Article II on this question is contested and I won't offer my views on that here. But **the only opinion about Article II that effectively matters on this question is the Executive branch's.** **The Executive branch will decide for itself whether to act unilaterally and neither the People nor the other two branches can do much in advance,** at least as a legal matter, **to stop it.** So what is the Executive branch view of a strike on North Korea? Some might think that the place to look for guidance is OLC's latest word on war powers, a 2011 OLC opinion on the unilateral use of force in Libya. But that opinion is not the most relevant or necessarily even controlling, since it did not address a situation involving self-defense. The Libya operation was primarily justified on the grounds of preserving regional stability and upholding a U.N. Security Council Resolution. Self-defense is more at the core of presidential power, and easier to justify under Article II. To be sure, the 2011 opinion suggested that a president might not be able to use force unilaterally if the force involved a "prolonged and substantial military engagements, typically involving exposure of U.S. military personnel to significant risk over a substantial period." In that situation, OLC reasoned, the president might be starting a "war" that (according

to OLC) Congress might have to approve under Article I of the Constitution. But that standard can be skirted in the Korea situation. We know from the experience in Libya itself that hundreds of bombing sorties over many months resulting in the removal of power of a foreign leader (Muammar Qaddafi) does not require congressional approval. (I assume here that the Obama administration believed the Libya operation was lawful to the end.) That gives the president leeway in Korea even under the 2011 opinion, although the likelihood of escalation is relevant under the 2011 opinion and surely operates differently in Korea. Much more importantly, the Article I limitation announced in the 2011 opinion was very tentative: OLC said only that Article I was a “possible” constitutional limitation, and that a substantial military engagement “may” require congressional authorization. OLC did not rule or hold that Article I applies in this context. Another reason the 2011 opinion is not terribly relevant when it comes to the Korea situation is that there are extant OLC opinions that are much more on point. Early in the George W. Bush administration, OLC wrote two legal opinions that collected and extended a lot of Executive branch precedents and thinking on the president’s power to use force in the national interest, including self-defense and anticipatory self-defense. The first is a September 25, 2001 opinion on using force against terrorists and nations that support them, and the second is an October 23, 2002 opinion to use force against Iraq. The Obama administration’s OLC rescinded many Bush-era OLC opinions. It did not rescind these two. Both remain on the books and are valid OLC sources of authority I won’t summarize these opinions in detail; I urge readers to look at them in their entirety. Suffice it to say that the opinions are more on point than the 2011 opinion, and that OLC takes a very different approach to Article I limits (they reject any such limits, even “possible” ones). And—citing historical practice and precedent—these two opinions reach very broad conclusions about presidential power under Article II to use force to protect national interests, especially the defense of the nation. The 2001 opinion is focused on meeting terrorist threats, but it collects and reads charitably all significant precedents on unilateral uses of force, and concludes (with my emphasis added): In light of the text, plan, and history of the Constitution, its interpretation by both past Administrations and the courts, the longstanding practice of the executive branch, and the express affirmation of the President's constitutional authorities by Congress, we think it beyond question that the President has the plenary constitutional power to take such military actions as he deems necessary and appropriate to respond to the terrorist attacks upon the United States on September 11, 2001. Force can be used both to retaliate for those attacks, and to prevent and deter future assaults on the Nation. Military actions need not be limited to those individuals, groups, or states that participated in the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon: the Constitution vests the President with the power to strike terrorist groups or organizations that cannot be demonstrably linked to the September 11 incidents, but that, nonetheless, pose a similar threat to the security of the United States and the lives of its people, whether at home or overseas. In both the War Powers Resolution and the Joint Resolution, Congress has recognized the President's authority to use force in circumstances such as those created by the September 11 incidents. Neither statute, however, can place any limits on the President's determinations as to any terrorist threat, the amount of military force to be used in response, or the method, timing, and nature

of the response. These decisions, under our Constitution, are for the President alone to make. The 2002 opinion is briefer on the issue of unilateral use of force against Iraq under Article II. It concludes (again, with my emphasis): Accordingly, we believe that the President's constitutional authority to undertake military action to protect the national security interests of the United States is firmly established in the text and structure of the Constitution and in executive branch practice. Thus, to the extent that the President were to determine that military action against Iraq would protect our national interests, he could take such action based on his independent constitutional authority; no action by Congress would be necessary. For example, were the President to conclude that Iraq's development of WMD might endanger our national security because of the risk that such weapons either would be targeted against the United States, or would be used to destabilize the region, he could direct the use of military force against Iraq to destroy its WMD capability. Or, were it the President's judgment that a change of regime in Iraq would remove a threat to our national interests, he could direct the use of force to achieve that goal. Were the President to take such action, he would be acting consistent with the historical practice of the executive branch. OLC added, in a footnote to this paragraph's penultimate sentence: "These examples are intended to be illustrative and non-exclusive." There is a lot to quibble with in these opinions, and these conclusions are indeed very broad. But reading the opinions will make plain that the Executive has been asserting more and more authority to use force unilaterally, including in self-defense, for many decades. They also make plain that the President's unilateral military powers are at their apex when defense of the nation is at stake. North Korea has already taken many more threatening actions against the United States, and uttered many more threatening words, than did Iraq. Both the 2001 and 2002 opinions, and some of the precedents they cite, could easily be invoked in support of a self-defensive strike on North Korea. We on the outside can question the validity of these opinions. And one can urge OLC not to consider them. But an Executive branch lawyer cannot simply discard prior legal opinions willy-nilly. An OLC lawyer asked about the president's authorities to strike North Korea would have to take these opinions (and the precedents and opinions they cite) into account unless the office was prepared to overrule them, which is a very high bar. If the President and his military advisors decide that a military action against North Korea is the best course of action to protect the nation, it is unrealistic in the extreme to expect OLC to discard these opinions (and the underlying precedents) and say "no." The much more likely scenario is that OLC will write the opinion without much trouble. That is the reality of executive branch lawyering in the war powers context, especially when the stakes are so high and the legal opinions (including ones beyond the 2001 and 2002 opinions) so promiscuously broad. It is a reality that did not begin with the Trump administration. In short, as I argued recently in a different context, **don't expect the law or lawyers to provide avenues to constrain the President from using force in North Korea if the President deems it the appropriate course.**

Affirmative

2AC

2AC — Base DA Answers

Trump's base is already angry — Syrian strikes prove.

Mills 18 — Curt Mills is foreign-affairs reporter at the National Interest. “Trump Strikes Syria, Risking Core Supporters,” The National Interest, April 14th, <http://nationalinterest.org/feature/trump-strikes-syria-risking-core-supporters-25393//dmr>

President **Trump** informed the nation Friday night that, after a week's worth of consideration and speculation, he had **instructed** the U.S. military to carry out **strikes against** regime targets in **Syria** -- in tandem with the United Kingdom and France. It was a week in **which** the president pardoned the prominent neocon and former Dick Cheney adviser I. Lewis “Scooter” Libby, feuded with former FBI Director James Comey, welcomed John Bolton, bombed a Middle Eastern country and declared “mission accomplished.” As I've previously reported, the president in taking military action **risks portions of his populist, nationalist base**. That hasn't changed. Quite the contrary. **“Syria strike big loss for Trump's America First national security strategy--humanitarian interventionism not what his base voted for,”** a former senior White House official told me Saturday morning. A source close to populist movements in Europe says that he expects Hungarian President Viktor Orban, Front Nationale politician Marine Le Pen and White House ally Nigel Farage to condemn the strike imminently. **A cadre of right-wing media personalities oppose even limited action against Syrian** President Bashar al-Assad, including: Tucker Carlson, Laura Ingraham, Tomi Lahren, Ann Coulter and Farage. A source close to Steve Bannon says he, too, opposes the strikes. More fringe personalities, such as Alex Jones and Stefan Molyneux, have denounced the strike in vociferous terms. Jones, the founder of Infowars and a conspiracy theorist, publicly wept over Trump's action and lamented, “He's crapping all over us it makes me sick.” **The disappointment was compounded by the fact that** as late as Friday afternoon, **many in this contingent inferred** that **plans** to strike Syria **imminently had been scuttled**--in part **because of a pressure campaign, from the president's core supporters**.

Trump already failed to fulfill his immigration promises — there's no wall and he backed down on family separations.

No Link — Base Support is Resilient —

(a) Republicans will change their minds to love the plan and Trump.

Barber 17 — Assistant Professor of Political Science at BYU; and Jeremy C. Pope, Associate Professor of Political Science at BYU (Michael, “Does Party Trump Ideology? Disentangling Party and Ideology in America,”

https://www.dropbox.com/s/ofh5bzwn4ixwdj/Does_Party_Trump_Ideology%3F.pdf?dl=0

Are people conservative because they are Republicans? Or is it the reverse: people are Republicans because they are conservatives? Understanding the influence of partisanship on one's issue positions and the influence of one's issue positions on partisan affiliation has vexed scholars for decades because the two identities are so closely connected. Available evidence is open to interpretation. And though much has been said about this long-standing question, the concepts are nearly impossible to disentangle in modern America. Ideology and partisanship are highly correlated, and have become even more so over time.¹ Thus scholars have talked about a kind of partisan polarization that assumes that citizens hold consistently ideological views. This is largely because partisanship, issue positions, and one's self-described ideology are all so highly correlated. But the question remains as to whether citizens are primarily ideological or partisan. The election of Donald J. **Trump** as the 45th president of the United States **helps us answer this** important question. The virtue of Trump is that **he defies ideological categorization while simultaneously being the leader of a major political party.** This makes it possible to leverage Trump's ideological schizophrenia to address the question of how partisanship and ideology interact. An example from 2016 helps illustrate the idea. In December of 2016 Politico reported that **"in July 2014 just 10 percent of Republicans held a favorable view of [Vladimir] Putin,** according to a poll conducted by the Economist and YouGov. By September of 2016, that number rose to 24 percent. And it's even higher **today: 37 percent** of Republicans view Putin favorably, the poll found in December" (Nussbaum and Oreskes, 2016). Essentially, **Republicans became four times more likely to view Vladimir Putin favorably** over the course of about two years. The left panel of Figure 1 displays a more detailed picture of the change in opinion among both Republicans and Democrats over this period of time. What explains this dramatic shift in opinion among Republican respondents? Over this period little had changed in formal relations between Russia and the United States. Russia's invasion of Crimea in Ukraine took place shortly before the first poll (in February of 2014) and the U.S. response had largely involved merely disputing the legitimacy of the annexation through diplomatic means.² There were no other major Russia-related events to change opinion in this period, and the latter poll in 2016 was done long before the true scope of accusations about Russian meddling in American elections became widely known (in September of 2016 the story had barely been reported anywhere). **This period,** however, broadly **coincides with the rise of Donald J. Trump** as a political figure, his successful nomination as the Republican candidate for President, and eventual election as the President of the United States of America. Thus, **the question to ask is to what extent Trump,** his position within the Republican Party, and his relationship to the president of Russia **altered Republican answers to public opinion questions.** We suggest, and will show through a novel survey experiment, that **these** types of **changes in responses of Republicans are rooted in partisan loyalty** rather than thoughtful ideological changes in attitude about Russia or Vladimir Putin. **Evaluations of Putin are far from the only area** where Republicans have recently made a dramatic shift. **Historically, Republicans** have been the political party more likely to **favor a conservative approach to trade policy**—often favoring the expansion of free trade agreements

between the United States and other countries. However, since Donald Trump entered the 2016 presidential campaign by descending a golden escalator, **Republican support for free trade has similarly declined**, now hovering around only 30% support (see the right-panel of Figure 1. Remarkably, in less than two years, **support for a bedrock principle of conservatism fell by nearly 50%** among members of the Republican party. Moreover, opinions of Putin and free trade are not isolated issues. In fact, similar stories could be told about Republican attitudes on immigration policy, Wikileaks, and other matters.³ These dramatic changes raise several important questions. First, how much does Trump and his views of politics, policy, and world affairs affect rank and file Republican voters? More broadly, how are citizens' opinions of political issues influenced by the position of parties and party leaders? Secondly, how could opinion on these important issues change so dramatically among Republicans over such a relatively short period of time? One possible explanation is many Republicans followed the new leader of the party and simply changed their minds about these issues when Donald Trump's campaign offered its novel message. On the other hand, it may also be the case that Donald Trump's unique issue positions, while alienating many traditionally conservative Republicans, brought in a new cohort of Republicans who supported the President's unique suite of issue positions. The first explanation suggests that partisans may not have strong attachments to particular issues while the second explanation allows for closely held issue positions with weaker attachment to a particular party affiliation. Trump's style will actually allow us to test his endorsement effect on a constant group of voters. Though partisans remain divided on the question of Trump's value to the republic, political scientists can welcome his rise for one unique reason: Trump is positioned to help scholars untangle this extremely thorny problem. Those who study public opinion have long debated whether people affiliate with a particular party because of the issue positions that they already strongly hold or whether people adopt the issue positions of the political party they have chosen identify with for other reasons. Put another way, **to what degree do people hold issue positions independent of their partisanship and to what degree are their issue positions weakly held reflections of their chosen party's platform?** Furthermore, to the degree that both of things occur, how much of each effect is going on and for which kinds of citizens? Putting the question in these terms suggests thinking of two key groups: partisan loyalists and ideologues. In this dichotomy, **pure partisan loyalists are unswervingly loyal to their party, but they care very little (if at all) about the underlying issues endorsed by the party. Changing issue positions by a party causes no problem for these people as they simply adopt the party's new position.** Loyalists merely **take the party line on all questions—regardless of whatever that position might be.** **True ideologues**, on the other hand, would behave in exactly the opposite fashion. These people **should be highly loyal to the underlying principles and policies** that arise from those principles. Loyalty to those ideas implies that ideologues people should remain faithful to those principles regardless of which party or partisan leader espouses those views. Of course, most people likely fall somewhere between these pure types with a mix of partisan loyalty and

ideological commitment. **Distinguishing these two** types—partisan loyalists from ideologues—is, however, extraordinarily **difficult because partisanship and ideology virtually always run in the same direction**. This is especially true in contemporary America. As long as Democrats are more likely to be liberals and Republicans are more likely to be conservatives it becomes extremely difficult to cleanly distinguish between these types. Enter Donald J. Trump. **The great virtue of Trump for research design is that he defies ideological categorization**—especially in the period under consideration in this paper: the 2016 campaign and the very early part of his presidency in 2017. President **Trump regularly takes** (and as a candidate took) **multiple positions on multiple issues**. Many of these positions rested **on opposite sides of the ideological spectrum**. For example, Philip Bump, of The Washington Post pointed out in the spring of 2016 that “Donald Trump took 5 different positions on abortion in 3 days,” a remarkable record made all the more notable by the fact that one of the positions was to uphold Roe v. Wade, while a separate version of his position was that abortion should be outlawed and women who obtained an illegal abortion should be punished.⁴ Trump sometimes offered contradictory statements within the same sentence. In a May 25 interview with Yahoo News, he is quoted as saying “I don’t want to have guns in classrooms, although in some cases, teachers should have guns in classrooms, frankly.” Rare is the candidate that can effectively get away with such behavior.⁵ **Trump’s very ideological incoherence makes it possible to study how people react to ideological cues given by the leader of a major political party**. What is special to Trump—and perhaps unique—is that in many cases these cues go in the opposite direction of the traditional party orthodoxy. Thus, this unique politician affords us the opportunity to see which people follow the party and cue giver versus adhering to a fixed ideological position. In other words, **when Trump**, as the leader of the Republican party, **announces a policy position that has been traditionally embraced by liberals, do Republicans, who typically self-identify as conservatives** **accept the liberal policy as the new position of their party or do they stick to their ideologically conservative guns?** **The findings of this paper**—which performs exactly this experiment in early 2017 before Trump had much of a governing record to scrutinize⁶—**are** as follows. **When told that Donald Trump supports a liberal policy, Republicans are** **substantially more likely to also endorse this policy** **compared to the same question with no mention of Trump’s position**. The same is also true, to a smaller extent, when Republicans are informed that Trump supports a conservative policy. Furthermore, these treatment effects vary across the population. Low-knowledge respondents, strong Republicans, those who approve of Trump, and **self-described ideological conservatives are the most likely to respond to the treatment condition in both a liberal and a conservative direction**, depending on the content of the treatment not on the ideological predispositions of the group. The random presentation of either a liberal or conservative Trump position provides our experiment with excellent internal validity. However, the project also has better external validity than previous experiments involving fictional candidate positions or vignettes because President Trump has actually taken each of the issue positions presented. The implications of this paper are that many **people react just as we would expect partisan loyalists to react**.

Many people's expressed issue positions are malleable to the point of innocence, and self-reported expressions of ideological fealty are quickly abandoned for policies that—once endorsed by a well-known party leader—run contrary to that expressed ideology. However, we also note that not everyone behaves this way. In fact, our experiment gives evidence that, among Republicans, the politically knowledgeable, those who do not approve of the cue-giver, and self-described moderates and liberals are not all that likely to change their views when informed of President Trump's positions. On balance, however, the picture is one of people who emphasize partisan attachments over ideological principles. We conclude the empirical section of the paper by noting that for a one dimensional model of ideological beliefs, being shown a "liberal" Trump's policy positions moves Republicans nearly halfway towards being pure independents.

(b) Trump will just call criticism of the plan "fake news." His supporters will believe him.

Bernstien 17 — 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//dmr>

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 it's 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." **Last week Emerson College** political communications professor Spencer Kimball **published a poll comparing the public's trust in main stream media to the public's trust in Donald Trump.** The poll was shared the next day by President Trump himself under the headline, "Trump administration seen as more truthful than news media." **The poll found that 49 percent of voters consider Trump to be truthful,** versus 48 person of voters who find him untruthful. The **researchers then compared that confidence rating to trust in the news media, which 53 percent of voters considered to be untruthful, a 14-point gap. A key finding of the poll shows that voters find the Trump administration to be more truthful than the news media.** The partisan split was obvious, with the overwhelming majority of Republicans saying Trump is truthful and 88 percent considering the media untruthful. Democrats overwhelmingly found Trump untruthful and 62 percent found the media to be truthful. Tens of thousands of people saw the poll when it was tweeted out by the president, leading to an outpouring of responses for Spencer Kimball. "It was very intense," Kimball said of the response. "I would say the negative comments were three to one, at least in emails I received or phone calls I received from people who were upset about the poll results." **Trump's approval ratings are hovering around 49 percent,** according to the Real Clear Politics average. While that's certainly nothing to brag about in the so-called honeymoon period after the election, **it matches up pretty well with the Emerson poll on the president's truthfulness.** Kimball defended his work and had to explain to critics "This is how people are really thinking. It's not ten percent of the country that trusts Trump, maybe it's 45 percent and not 49 percent, but it's right up there." **What is most concerning,** though was less the reaction to the particular poll, but **a growing tendency by media consumers to only read or watch those things that confirm their preexisting biases or ideologies.** "It's scary," Kimball said. **"If you report something and people don't like it they will refer to it as 'fake news.'"** The back and forth accusations over fake news come from both the left and the right, from Democrats and from President Trump who has routinely denounced unfavorable polls or critical coverage as fake news. The tendency for media consumers across the ideological spectrum to engage in selective exposure and confirmation bias is a worrying trend. "Both sides are using this as a way to dismiss credible information," Kimball warned. **With more than 60 percent of American adults getting their news from social media, and about half getting their news from only one source, it is easier than ever to personalize both the sources of information and the facts themselves.** "We're in a very politicized environment and we are now in a situation where a lot of people try to get the news from a politically congenial echo chamber," said Cathy Young, contributing editor at Reason magazine.

No diversionary war — Trump will Tweet, not strike.

Bershidsky 17 — Leonid Bershidsky, Columnist at *Bloomberg View*, 2017 ("Trump's Forever War of Diversion," *Bloomberg*, January 25th, Available Online at

<https://www.bloomberg.com/view/articles/2017-01-25/trump-s-forever-war-of-diversion>, Accessed 02-18-2017)

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 Yanukovich 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.

Advisors check unilateral strikes---they'll step in and stop him---and military ignores the order.

Feaver 17 — (Peter Feaver, Ph.D., Harvard, Professor of Political Science and Public Policy at Duke University, “President Trump and the Risks of Nuclear War,” 11-17-17, <http://foreignpolicy.com/2017/11/17/president-trump-and-the-risks-of-nuclear-war/>)

When the president wakes up the military

It is a different matter in the other context: **when it is the president who wakes up the military and tries to get them to go from peacetime to war, i.e. to launch a preventive nuclear attack.**

In the preventive case, it is not reasonable to believe that the streamlined procedures of an emergency response would operate without anyone raising objections. **The steps the president would have to take in order to pass a nuclear order to someone who could physically launch the missiles would simultaneously alert the rest of his national security team. Efforts to bypass the senior leadership would themselves further alarm subordinates, increasing the likelihood that they would draw in the rest of the national security team, even if ordered not to. The military is trained to reject illegal orders and the president trying to order the military to go from peacetime to nuclear war without consulting with his national security advisors would set off alarms** up and down the system about whether the orders were legal.

The president does not need anyone else to help him fire off a tweet, but he **does need many others to help him fire off a nuclear intercontinental ballistic missile.** If he were trying to do so **it would take an enormous effort of persuasion that would involve many more people than are involved in the streamlined, launch-under-attack scenario.** What would happen in this second scenario? That question led to the second major topic of concern in the Q&A period: how robust is the military training to resist illegal orders and how confident could we be that the Pentagon would view an order to “launch a preventive nuclear war without notifying my national security team” to be illegal? In testimony, **General Kehler repeatedly emphasized that the military does not follow orders blindly** and the ubiquity of **lawyers at multiple**

layers of command gives us high confidence the legal questions would be asked (and need to be answered) before a nuclear strike actually happened. This is true, though it is also true that the military are trained that authenticated orders from the national command authority have a presumption of legality. (Note: the presumption is even stronger in launch-under-attack scenarios, because the United States has long embraced the legal concept of anticipatory self-defense, which could result in a decision to strike under circumstances where the United States has not yet suffered an attack, but one is deemed to be imminent or even underway.) Nevertheless, I am inclined to share General Kehler's confidence that a rogue president would find it exceedingly hard to persuade the military to act in preventive war scenarios as rapidly as they are trained to act in launch-under-attack scenarios. Part of this comes from my understanding of the civil-military context of national security. Presidents already find it challenging to persuade the military to embrace policies that the military object to — and which are far less consequential than preventive nuclear war. Another of my books, *Armed Servants*, explores in some detail the push and shove of civil-military relations. And still a third (co-authored with Chris Gelpi), *Choosing Your Battles*, shows that the military are hardly chomping at the bit to initiate the use of force. To be sure, I also found, in *Guarding the Guardians*, that the military did favor a system inclined to the always rather than the never side of the always/never dilemma. This is in part why U.S. political leaders insisted that there be civilian control of the arsenal. Yet all of these policies were the result of a lengthy bureaucratic struggle that involved many more people than just the president and the few nuclear operators required to launch a missile. The longer timeline of a preventive war scenario gives the opportunity for all these actors to weigh in on the president's decision. Yes, the president could still carry the day, as President George W. Bush did in 2003 when he ordered the invasion of Iraq in a similar preventive scenario. But Bush's team spent over a year debating the decision. The military weighed in repeatedly. And, crucially, Congress voted to give the president the authority to do what he did.

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Extend: “Base Already Angry”

Base is already angry — tariffs prove.

Aleem 18 — Zeeshan, Vox staff writer, “Trump thinks he has nothing to lose in a trade war with China. He’s wrong.” April 5, 2018 <https://www.vox.com/2018/4/4/17196972/trump-china-trade-war-tariffs//dmr>

Beijing has set its sights on industries that could hurt Trump’s political base. China and the US are threatening to impose massive **tariffs on each other in an escalating game of chicken** — and it could end up hurting President Trump and the GOP at the ballot box. On Tuesday, the **Trump** administration **announced a list of** more than 1,300 Chinese exports — including toys, electronics, shoes, clothing, and furniture — that it plans to hit with 25 percent **tariffs**, or border taxes. The tariffs are intended to punish Beijing for restricting US investment in China and stealing American intellectual property. Combined, they would affect about \$50 billion worth of Chinese exports. The very next day, **China struck back**, unveiling its own list of US exports that it plans to hit with 25 percent tariffs. The proposed package could affect more than 100 American-made products, including cars, airplanes, and soybeans — the top US agricultural export to China. Combined, they would cover about \$50 billion worth of US exports, perfectly mirroring the US tariffs. “If someone wants a trade war, we will fight to the end,” Wang Shouwen, China’s commerce vice minister, said at a press conference Wednesday announcing the move. On Thursday China launched a challenge against the legitimacy of Trump’s tariffs at the World Trade Organization, which could set off a lengthy legal process. China has not announced a date for implementing its tariffs because it says its move will depend on whether Trump actually pulls the trigger on his proposals. The White House is allowing US industries to weigh in on the proposed tariffs before making a final decision, and the list may ultimately change. But even the prospect of a tit-for-tat trade war between the world’s two largest economies caused stocks on Wall Street to plunge Wednesday morning. Trump defended the move on Twitter on Wednesday and pushed back against the idea that the US was on the brink of a trade war. “We are not in a trade war with China, that war was lost many years ago by the foolish, or incompetent, people who represented the US,” Trump wrote. “Now we have a Trade Deficit of \$500 Billion a year, with Intellectual Property Theft of another \$300 Billion. We cannot let this continue!” “When you’re already \$500 Billion DOWN, you can’t lose!” he added. But **Trump** certainly **does have something to lose. China is deliberately targeting US industries** like auto manufacturing **that Trump has made a key focal point of his economic policy as president**. And **the health of those industries is of particular political importance as the midterm elections approach**. Beijing is also looking to hammer US agricultural exports produced in states that Trump and the GOP consider vital strongholds. If China imposed its proposed tariffs, it would cause demand for those US exports to slump in China, and that in turn could dent profits and cause layoffs in those industries. **“While Trump has a lot of support for getting tough with China on trade, if his actions start hurting farmers and manufacturing workers, that support may prove to be very thin,”** Edward Alden, a trade expert at the Council

on Foreign Relations, told me. Trump's trade attacks on China could hurt him politically. The tariffs that the US and China have proposed aren't final yet. The US tariffs are currently in a "notice and comment" stage, during which domestic industries will have the opportunity to express their opinions on the proposed policy. The administration intends to hold a public hearing on May 15, and companies can file official objections to the policy until May 22. White House press secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders said on Wednesday that if China doesn't offer concessions to the US, the proposed tariffs will lock into place. "I would anticipate that if there are no changes to the behavior of China ... then we would move forward" with tariffs, she told reporters. Analysts say Trump could end up walking back the scale of the tariffs considerably, especially if major companies like Walmart, which sells many of the Chinese products that would be affected by the tariffs, push back hard. But Trump is more likely to be swayed by China's quick and fierce response to his proposals. China's threat to put tariffs on soybeans is something the administration will take particularly seriously, analysts say. China dwarfs every other country in the world in its demand for soybeans and buys about a third of the US's soybean crops. If Beijing imposes 25 percent tariffs on US soybean imports, it would deal a devastating blow to the industry. As Bloomberg News's Joshua Green notes, the biggest soybean producers in the US include Ohio, Iowa, Missouri, and Indiana — states in the heart of Trump country where neither the president nor his party wants to see economic instability during the 2018 or 2020 elections. "The fact that Beijing put soybeans on its list is a signal that China is not going to pull any punches," Christine McDaniel, who served as senior trade economist in the George W. Bush administration, told me. Many of China's other tariff choices are clearly politically motivated as well, like orange juice, much of which comes from the battleground state of Florida. Chinese tariffs on corn crops could hit swing states in the Midwest like Iowa. Analysts say **Beijing knows that targeting these industries is a good way to get Trump's attention, since** much of Trump's trade policy, like renegotiating NAFTA, has been built around finding ways to increase jobs for domestic manufacturing. States in the Rust Belt like Michigan and Ohio **are** key states for auto production, and they're also **key** states **for Trump's base**. Employment isn't the only thing that would be affected. US tariffs on Chinese goods may make items such as, say, Chinese-made shoes more pricey. That, in turn, would mean US consumers could start buying fewer goods, slowing down the pace of the economy. Trump may end up staying the course and going through with every tariff he proposed. Or he could try to negotiate a deal with China in which both countries impose less severe — and less politically sensitive — tariffs on each other.

Extend: “Hasn’t Fulfilled Immigration Promises”

Link Isn’t Unique — Trump already hasn’t fulfilled immigration promises.

Hamilton 18 — (Keegan Hamilton, 1-19-2018, "How Trump's war on immigrants could backfire," Published by VICE News, https://news.vice.com/en_us/article/paq839/how-trumps-war-on-immigrants-could-backfire, Accessed 6-30-2018, JWS)

All this comes as no surprise: **Trump did exactly what he’d promised during his campaign. His rationale for the war on immigrants**, shaped by Bannon and Miller, **has always been to** return jobs to native-born workers and enhance public safety. That reasoning **appeals to the nationalistic instincts of Trump's base** — those who believe that foreigners mean lost jobs, higher crime, and more terrorism. The White House did not respond to a VICE News inquiry about Trump’s immigration policies, which included a request to interview Miller. **Yet despite the first-year offensive against immigrants, Trump has** somehow still **failed to follow through on several key pledges. He has no money to build the wall.** The courts have struck down his attempts at a Muslim ban. **Sanctuary cities still receive federal funding. And** there’s a growing possibility, advocates and experts say, that **his policies could** backfire, **helping the very gangs he claims to be fighting**, worsening the global refugee crisis, and **galvanizing political opposition** that costs Republicans control of Congress.

Extend: “Base Resilient — Republicans Change Dispositions”

Base support is guaranteed — there is literally nothing he could do to shake his supporters.

Michaud 17 — 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///dmr>

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**.

Extend: “Base Resilient — Fake News”

Trump controls spin to maintain base support — Conservative media echo chamber.

Rubin 17 — 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//dmr

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.”

Extend: “No War — Trump Will Tweet”

Empirically Denied — Trump will tweet, not start a war. DACA proves.

Thrush and Haberman 17 — Glenn Thrush, White House Correspondent at *The New York Times*, and Maggie Haberman, White House Correspondent at *The New York Times*, 2017 (“Trump’s N.F.L. Critique a Calculated Attempt to Shore Up His Base,” *New York Times*, September 25th, Available Online at <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/09/25/us/politics/trump-nascar-nfl-protests.html>, Accessed 09-29-2017)

President **Trump was restless on the flight home from** his rally on Friday night in **Alabama**, griping about the size of the crowd, wondering how his pink tie played with his audience and fretting about the low energy of the Senate candidate he was there to bolster.

But there was **one part of the trip** that **cheered him up**, according to three people close to the president: rallygoers’ **thunderous approval of his attack on** Colin **Kaepernick**, a former N.F.L. quarterback, for kneeling in protest during the national anthem, a slam punctuated by an epithet-laced suggestion that team owners fire employees who disrespect patriotic tradition.

Over the weekend, Mr. Trump, while with a small group of advisers in the dining room of his golf club in Bedminster, N.J., asked a few members what they thought of his attack on Mr. Kaepernick. The response, according to one Trump associate, was polite but decidedly lukewarm.

Mr. **Trump responded by telling people that it was a huge hit with his base, making it clear that he did not mind alienating his critics if it meant solidifying his core support.**

“The president’s critics have it wrong,” Kellyanne Conway, a White House adviser who served as Mr. Trump’s campaign manager and pollster in 2016, said Monday. “They call him impulsive. He is intuitive.”

Mr. **Trump is seldom at a loss for motives in picking a public fight**, and conflict seems to soothe him in the way that it unnerves others. He loved getting a rise from the players and owners who linked arms in solidarity before Sunday’s slate of football games, aides and associates said. His satisfaction was blighted only by the disapproval expressed by his friend Robert Kraft, the owner of the New England Patriots.

The president’s provocations are a real-time expression of his emotions in the moment and his feel for a crowd. More than anything, **such fights** are a reflection of his focus on what it takes to **keep his restive populist base behind him, and** a ritual of self-preservation intended to **divert attention** from other, more damaging narratives.

But this time, Mr. Trump, who tends to lash out when attacked, seemed to make his comments during comparative quiescence, with majorities of Americans approving of his response to the recent hurricanes and a stopgap budget deal with Democrats that took leaders in his party by surprise.

But White House officials say **the president is deeply worried that his recent show of bipartisanship on the budget and on the Deferred Action on Childhood Arrivals** immigration program with two Democratic leaders — Representative Nancy Pelosi and Senator Chuck Schumer — **endangers his standing with the base.**

Mr. **Trump**, according to the officials, **believes his decision to back Luther Strange** — a struggling establishment conservative in the Alabama Senate race and the reason Mr. Trump went to Alabama — **makes him appear weak.** He has repeatedly expressed unhappiness with his political team for persuading him to back Mr. Strange, who has drawn opposition from many of Mr. Trump's supporters, including Stephen K. Bannon, Mr. Trump's former chief strategist, and not his opponent, Roy Moore, a former judge.

For those reasons, Mr. **Trump leaned right harder than usual** on Friday night. **He chided** Senator John **McCain**, Republican of Arizona, for opposing his latest attempt to repeal the Affordable Care Act, **and he ridiculed** North Korea's leader, Kim Jong-un, as **the "Little Rocket Man."** He also offered the most tempered of support for his purported ally, Mr. Strange — "Big Luther" to the president.

But **his most conspicuous targets were the highly paid athletes, most** of them **black**, who during the playing of the national anthem at football games have protested police brutality and what they say is the systematic racism behind it. **The vehemence was tactical,** but also visceral. Mr. Trump has often taken a dim view of race-based protest and, as the onetime owner of a football franchise in a failed start-up league, he believes owners of sports teams should control their employees.

His top staff was not nearly as enthusiastic, a senior administration official said. There were complaints from some officials that his tweets created another public relations headache at a time when the White House was scrambling to deal with a looming loss on health care, a dangerous escalation in the war of words with North Korea and complicated negotiations over the centerpiece of the president's legislative agenda, tax reform.

But John F. Kelly, the White House chief of staff, dismissed such complaints, telling other aides he fully supported the president's move and that there was no good time for such a conversation.

"Every American should take the three minutes or so that it takes for the national anthem to play to stand up, remove their hat, put their hand over their heart and think about the men and women that have been named, sacrificing their lives, so that song can be played in the stadium," Mr. Kelly, a former four-star Marine general, said in a statement late Monday.

"After that happens, folks should feel free to do whatever they want to do to express their opinions."

Mr. Trump, posting on Twitter on Monday evening, said that claims that Mr. Kelly had opposed his attack were a "total lie!"

Still, **it was a reprise of a formula the president used repeatedly during the** 2016 presidential **campaign — digging in on one side of an inflammatory issue amid praise from conservatives, and enjoying the spectacle of his critics condemning him.**

“He intuitively understands that making compromise with the Democrats is sort of the opposite of what he told his base he was going to do,” said Alex **Conant, a veteran Republican consultant** who was part of Senator Marco Rubio’s campaign team in 2016.

“It’s not a coincidence that the same week he did the DACA deal that he just flooded Twitter with a bunch of red meat for the base,” Mr. Conant added. “I think his fundamental problem is he needs to figure out ways to grow his base, and his instinct is instead to double down on what he’s already got. Whenever he tacks to the middle, his numbers tick up. But he just can’t bring himself to move beyond his base.”