

Trump's 4 Years in The White House: Promises vs. Disasters

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We are only a day away from the 2020 US Elections, so we assumed that it would be an ideal opportunity to look back to the last four years of US politics and the effects of the Trump presidency on the country. We divided the article into nine main titles in order to mention the significant events efficiently, since you are probably aware like the rest of the world, the days in Trump presidency were full to the brim.

Promises Made Promises Unkept

We will start by checking whether if President Trump had kept his promises or not by looking at his three main promises he made during his campaign. The first and most popular promise of his was "The Wall" on the Southern border of the US which will separate the US from Mexico. The Business Insider has a timeline article on Trump's journey with the wall and the public expectations, by using this timeline, we can track the reduction of the exaggerated promotion of "The Wall" after he was elected as president. (1) His pre-election promises included the phrases "I would build a border like nobody's seen before." and "I will make Mexico pay for that wall.", after the election, not only could he not make Mexico pay for the wall, he shutdowns the government for three weeks during the holiday season in 2018. This government shutdown left millions of families without any income during the period of the year their spending is at its highest. This unsuccessful government shutdown resulted in his "Mexico will pay the wall" promise to come back, however, after a month, \$3.8 billion was taken from the Pentagon's budget by declaring a national emergency. One and a half years later, Trump claims the wall is "almost finished", while nearly half of the total plan was finished.

His second main promise was to cut taxes in order to make economic growth even higher than 4%. He did cut taxes and the growth did increase, however, the increase itself and its duration were very short. After the tax cuts in 2017, the growth rate was 2.4% and increased to 2.9% in 2018. (2) The growth rate was decreased to 2.3% in 2019, and due to COVID, it is expected to be around -20% at the end of 2020. (3) The boost that the tax cuts gave to the economic growth was temporary, but corporate taxes were cut from 36% to 21% permanently. With a new 180,000 US jobs promised, an update to the North American Free Trade Agreement between the US, Canada, and Mexico was implemented without any prevention power for jobs being outsourced from Mexico. Lowest since WW2, only 11% of the GDP is made from manufacturing. (4) His promises to cherish the US economy was also unkept, in this case.

As we all heard about somehow, his taxes for the last four years were only \$750. The same report revealed ridiculous facts about his finances such as him being in debt for more than \$1 billion and some of his tax deductions included \$70,000 hair styling for TV and "consulting fees" for his daughter Ivanka Trump. (5)(6) One of his promises during his campaign was to announce his tax returns and financial situation, however, he did not announce anything, all of this information and many more were leaked.

Hopes in the Cages

Before becoming the party's presidential candidate, Trump initially promised to ban all Muslims from entering the US. He suggested that a total and complete shutdown should remain until the US authorities "can figure out what's going on". After he became the presidential candidate, he changed his views in favor of a thorough security check for the Muslims upon their entrance to the US.

As president, he introduced three travel bans, 2 of which became quickly overruled by the courts. But later on, the US Supreme Court ruled that Trump's ban on six mainly Muslim countries can go into full effect, making the third ban attempt a success. The current ban restricts travelers from Iran, Libya, Somalia, Syria, Yemen, Venezuela, and North Korea. And in January, further restrictions on immigration were announced, to include six more countries. Citizens from Nigeria, Eritrea, Sudan, Tanzania, Kyrgyzstan, and Myanmar will now be blocked from obtaining certain types of visas. (7)

In 2016, Trump had repeatedly told his supporters that every single undocumented immigrant (referring to more than 11.3 million people) "have to go". As the election approached, he softened his stance, and after the election, he scaled his projection back to 2-3 million deportations of people who "are criminal and have criminal records, gang members, drug dealers".

In the year 2019, 267,000 people were deported from the US. Although it is a greater number than that of 2018, it still is significantly lower than the peak year of 2012, when 410,000 people were deported under the Obama administration. Trump's plans for immigration reform also faced defeat this summer when the Supreme Court ruled against his administration's bid to repeal Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, which protects about 650,000 young people who entered the US as children without documents.

Because of the immigration laws of the state of Texas, many migrant families are being separated from their children. The border guards are allowing the children in the country, but then refuse the entrance of the rest of the family, thus separating them. Afterward, it is said that these children are shuttled to various places in the US, while little or no records are taken about the whereabouts of their parents or how to contact them. In 2019, a federal judge ordered officials to hand their names over to immigration lawyers, which finally attracted the attention of the American Civil Liberties Union. After this, various unions began working to reunite these families. It turned out that under the Trump administration, 1500-2500 children are separated from their families every year. Moreover, nearly 5 out of 6 of the separated parents are also in the US, either freely or under detention. After the civil unions' efforts, many children were reunited. But more than 500 children are still separated and their families can not be found. President Trump also claims that he takes the matter seriously and works to reunite these children, however, he denies the obvious fact that these children were separated from their families at the border, claiming that "coyotes"(human traffickers) brought these children at the border. This denial of a fundamental fact makes it even harder to actually reunite the families. (8)(9)

Make America White Again

We published many articles about the ongoing protests in the US since June, you are free to read them to have an insight from our perspective. [\(10\)](#) [\(11\)](#) [\(12\)](#) Additional to what we have already written, we should look at how the Trump administration dealt with racism for the last 4 years. On various occasions during his first presidential campaign, some people protested his racist speeches and promises against almost every non-white and non-christian community, those protestors were encountered with violence on every occasion. After his election, the number of occasions that white supremacist groups got together and marched in public, the number of hate crimes reached 16-year-high numbers in 2018, the number of mass shootings and hate crimes is continued to rise in 2019, still, no condemnation was received from the White House. Even during the first Presidential debate, Trump refused to condemn white supremacy on live television while millions across the world watched. His “response” to the protests being photographed in front of a church and hiding in the White House bunker after he sent in “law enforcement officials — the National Guard, Secret Service police, local police, US Park Police, and state troopers” [\(13\)](#) was just sitting right with his overall past behavior and speeches.

During his presidency, Trump nominated a total of 217 Supreme Court justices, federal circuit, and district judges, this number is the highest rate for the first term of any president except Jimmy Carter’s presidency when the courts were being expanded. [\(14\)](#) This shows the excitement and the hurry he is in to “Make America White and Republican Again”. On top of all that, in October 2018, Trump nominated Brett Kavanaugh for the Supreme Court, who has a very conservative and controversial career path until that moment even before being accused of sexual assault and throwing a tantrum in front of Congress during his hearing. [\(15\)](#) In extremely recent news, Trump made another very controversial nomination for the Supreme Court which also ended up sworn into the court: Amy Coney Barret. Her inadequate career as a judge and very conservative political view were criticized besides the fact that she was nominated in a hurry after the death of RBG in order to make the Supreme Court 6 Republicans and 3 Democrats before the election. It would not be unfair to say Trump did his best to “Make America Great” for himself and others like him.

Neither the police brutality nor the Black Lives Matter protest was new to the US news cycle. The detailed media coverage and the recorded footage -thanks to the cellphone technology- of the Black murders by police were the reason for the awareness and the often protesting of police brutality in the last decade. We can definitely say the Trump administration did not make the situation any better with their open hate speeches and lack of punishment against the hate crimes. [\(16\)](#)

Government So Small It Is Inside Our Bodies

On October 22, 2020, American comedian Sarah Silverman tweeted a clip from her podcast with the caption “government so small it’s inside me”, in that clip she was talking about how she can understand that people want small government, and then she claims “Yet, somehow those same people want to legislate every single one of my holes.”. [\(17\)](#) For this subtitle of the article, we cannot summarize Trump’s effect on American politics better ourselves. Cultural and political

corruption of the US and a president who makes a hate speech on TV encouraged some people to show their own religious/political beliefs to control someone else's body/life.

This brings us to the Restrictive Abortion Laws issue which has been an ongoing issue since ever, however, recently, some governors manipulated the pandemic response to ban abortion care from being provided in their states. As the running excuse, conservatives claim their own religious beliefs define abortion as a sin then the government should banish it, but government banishing abortion would only end the safe abortion care, hence putting the lives of many people with unwanted pregnancies in danger. (18) This is another way to enhance poverty and mass incarceration rates in non-white communities by enforcing the continuation of unwanted pregnancies and criminalizing the act of abortion. And this opposition against abortion is labeled as being "pro-life", but the core of it could not be farther from it. We can support this sentence by pointing out some well-known facts: even though there have been 1415 gun-related incidents which resulted in 1536 deaths since 2017 (19), there have been no attempts to end gun violence by Trump's government. Additionally, we previously mentioned the children in cages crisis at the US borders, anyone who names themselves "pro-life" and protecting the babies cannot be a supporter of such a lack of policies to protect children. This is simply hypocrisy.

Another issue conservatives tend to claim as a "sin" is the sexual orientations and gender identities other than heterosexual and cisgender. Famous homophobes, such as his Vice Mike Pence, of the Trump cabinet, were certainly open about their opinions against marriage equality. With a long political career, Mike Pence is also popular with his hate speech and policy act against the LGBTQ+ Community. On numerous occasions, he denied criminalizing the hate crimes against LGBTQ+ people in Congress. (20)

Denying All the Facts

Over the four years of Trump's presidency, he has lifted restrictions on countless environmental regulations. He saw these either as a remnant of the Obama era or as an obstacle for the industry. Instead, he accelerated the construction of pipelines and opened a wide area of wilderness to oil and gas drilling. In addition to all these, he intends to withdraw the US from the Paris Climate Change Agreement, which is a widely accepted international agreement for combating climate change. Ironically, due to the articles of the agreement, he cannot withdraw until 4 November 2020, which is the day after the US elections. (21)

President Trump often contradicts the scientists and science authorities as well. He increased the industry representation in the EPA (Environmental Protection Agency) while decreasing that of scientists. He is also an outspoken critic of WHO since he blamed WHO for the increase in COVID'19 deaths. He even threatened WHO by vowing to freeze the US's funding to the agency. (22)

Of all these erroneous moves, two recent cases surpass all. In his statements in February 2020, he says that COVID'19 is a "mild flu" that should not cause any distress. However, in unpublished interviews in the same month, he states that the virus is far worse than flu. This clearly means that he intentionally misinformed his people. His second error, to say the least,

was his recommendation of injecting disinfectant substances into the body in order to prevent the virus' spread. This idea was quickly dismissed by every medical authority, warning that this could prove fatal. Nevertheless, Mr. Trump's half-baked advice proved to be healing, not to the patients but to his opponent Joe Biden. [\(23\)](#)

Mocked and Faked Reputation

Trump always promised his people to "make America great again". However, his America First policy is backfiring when it comes to international relations. His border wall ideal greatly worsened the USA's relations with Mexico and the Latin American states. He also wanted to impose a ban on all Muslims from entering the US, as we mentioned earlier. Although he could only impose a ban on 6 countries, his ambitions greatly worsened American relations with Muslim countries and the 6 banned countries. In fact, under the Trump administration, the only relation that got better was the American-North Korean relations.

It is clearly seen that under the Trump regime, the favorable views of the US dropped drastically

Worsening the reputation of the US is one thing. However, Trump has faced humiliation, too. In the UN General Assembly on 25 September 2018, he gave a speech. In his speech, he claimed that his administration had accomplished more over two years than almost any administration in American history. Upon these words, delegations of other countries started laughing, which caught Trump by surprise. He even said that he was not expecting this reaction but that is okay. [\(24\)](#)

Another humiliation was seen when Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau was caught gossiping about Trump, with Angela Merkel of Germany and Boris Johnson of the UK. Although Trudeau did not say anything harmful about him, Trump later called him "two-faced". [\(25\)](#)

One other reason why both the US and Trump have a low reputation is the increasing amount of fake news. Media is of vital importance for any modern democracy but is also vulnerable to be abused. In America, the public is exposed to an unprecedented amount of fake news, which usually benefits Trump by manipulating the facts. On the bright side, people are usually aware of the existence of fake news and approach the news cautiously. According to a research [\(26\)](#), 70% of Americans feel that fake news and misinformation have greatly affected their confidence in government institutions. From this point, we can say that issuing fake news is a backfiring strategy. But it still is a manipulation tool and has to be stopped somehow.

Almost Drained Himself Instead of the Swamp

On December 18, 2019, Trump faced a huge threat to his presidency in the form of impeachment. The House of Representatives, with a Democratic majority, approved articles of impeachment on charges of abuse of power and obstruction of Congress. However, the Senate, with a Republican majority, acquitted Trump of these charges on February 5, 2020. He became the third president of the US to ever face removal by the Senate. Although he was found not guilty by a tiny majority, the whole impeachment progress harmed his reputation greatly.

Another shady issue about him is surely his ties to Russia. In 2016, US intelligence agencies concluded that Russia was behind an effort to rig the US election against Hillary Clinton, with a state campaign of cyber-attacks and fake news stories on social media. This campaign was quickly attributed to Trump and many allegations arose. Although both Trump and Russia denied all the allegations, even the possibility of a US president getting help from Russia is fearful and unacceptable for many Americans. [\(27\)](#)

In his first three years in the presidency, Trump has placed more lobbyists to cabinet posts than his recent predecessors did in eight years. This puts a substantial amount of initiative in the hands of people with ties to the industries they are supposed to regulate. The Cabinet choices are also a sign that Trump's pledge to "drain the swamp" is in fact not a serious attempt to change the way Washington works. Instead of staring down "the unholy alliance of lobbyists and donors and special interests", in his words, the influence industry has flourished during his administration. [\(28\)](#)

Abandoning The Ship First

Is not that ironic that not only after a year later Trump administration disbanded the White House pandemic response team the world has collapsed with a deadly pandemic? Or is it just horrifying bad luck of the American people? After seeing the damage caused by the administration downplaying the thread, I think the latter. In the last year of his first term, it is understandable that Trump did not want to leave the office with a crushed economy (faced with the worst global crisis since the Great Depression[\(29\)](#)), in order to minimize the damage that economy will get, he downplayed the thread and encourage the people to go on with their usual lives. This decision caused more than 200 thousand American lives and almost 30% contracted economy. [\(30\)](#)

Blaming China, calling it "Chinese Virus", giving people false hopes about the virus ending and the vaccine being on the way, and calling the country's highest-ranking infectious diseases expert Dr. Fauci a "disaster" and discrediting his advice could not make the virus go away at the end. [\(31\)](#) By downplaying the thread he also encouraged the "anti-maskers" that are people who refuse to wear masks because "they are free to do whatever they want to", in short, they are selfish and do not care about society. On October 2, 2020, Trump himself tested positive for COVID and, no, he did quarantine, on the opposite, he did a surprise drive-by for his supporters risking the lives of the secret service agents in the car with him. [\(32\)](#) After his recovery, he continued his presidential campaign, to get more insight on that you can check out our series of articles "[US Elections Marathon](#)". As Trump's National Security Advisor said to him on January 28, 2020, "This will be the biggest national security threat you face in your presidency... This is going to be the roughest thing you face.", he spent almost all of his last year of first term dealing with COVID. [\(33\)](#)

Conclusion: Did He "Make America Great Again"?

When we look back to four years ago, saying that America became more divided and polarized would be accurate. His never-ending shenanigans and scandals in the office were far from making America better in any sense, let alone great. "The Daily Show" started a series they

countdown “Trump’s Top 100 Scandals” because he had hundreds of them during his first term. The number 100 in that list is the time he tried to buy Greenland [\(34\)](#), I recommend you to check out the other 99. To conclude our article, we can say he definitely did not “Make America Great Again” and he did not intend to.