

Presentation on Project 2025

Sponsored by the Democratic Committees of
Blue Hill, Brooksville, Orland and Penobscot

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Images with Reconstructed Notes (not entirely as delivered on Sept. 7)

Welcome and thanks for coming!

This is not a panel of experts. It's a panel of concerned citizens just like you. We may have some useful background that helps us understand the subject, but that's it. Oh, and we were willing to put in the time!

Over the next two hours, we will watch a short video, then hear from 6 panelists covering subjects of most interest to our area. After the panelists, we will answer questions you submit on cards, then we will be open to questions from the floor.

We have many handouts, but we ask that you take only one of each kind per household. We don't have a financial sponsor and we print these ourselves.



(Watch the video: here's the link <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vYXZ6iJJSgM>)
That was fun, wasn't it!



Mandate for Leadership?
~Or~
Blueprint for a
Fascist Takeover

Not "Conservative" at all...

➔ **FACTS:** Project 2025 is ongoing, & America First Policy Institute is writing similar plans. ? Was author Dans "fired as a PR move" ?

They call it a "Mandate for Leadership". I call it a "blueprint for a fascist takeover".
Unapologetically.
It's certainly not "conservative" ~ it's radical! But is it fascist?

What is Fascism?



Measures outlined in Project 2025 meet the criteria

Fascism is a **far right, authoritarian, ultranationalist** political ideology and movement characterized by:

- A **dictatorial leader**
- Centralized autocracy and **media control**
- **Militarism**
- Forcible **suppression of opposition**
- Belief in a natural **social hierarchy**
- **Subordination of individual interests** for the perceived good of the nation or race
- **Strong regimentation of society** and the economy
- **Re-writing the past to control the future**

Why fascist? Well, the plan shares these and other attributes of fascism.

- "Dictator on Day 1" (Unitary Executive)
- Media control (many methods contemplated)
- Use of the military to conduct raids and quell protests
- A "natural hierarchy" of wealth supported by "trickle up" economics
- suppression of "alternative lifestyles"
- scapegoating the "other": immigrants, LGBTQ etc
- banning books, CRT, "wokeness"
- rewriting history to control the future (by removing words like slavery, to make the past seem noble and pure)



And, here's the danger. We've already seen it on TV. It's worth remembering that the would-be dictator stood by and did nothing about it for hours - and now with the Supreme Court decision on presidential immunity for crimes committed in office, we could expect worse. In a memorable quote, Kevin Roberts (head of the project) said that the country is in the midst of a "second American Revolution" that will be bloodless "if the left allows it to be." What is he implying? That if we resist, we will be gunned down?

“Christian” Nationalism

“When Fascism comes to America, it will be wrapped in the flag and carrying a cross”

Attributed to Sinclair Lewis, author of “It Can’t Happen Here” (novel, 1935)

Trump’s \$60 “God Bless the USA” Bible contains a copy of the Constitution, Declaration and Pledge, erasing the separation between church and state.



OK, you don't like the word Fascist. You would prefer "Christian Nationalist?" Sinclair Lewis nailed it in 1935: when fascism comes to America it will be wrapped in the flag and carrying a cross. Note the symbolism embodied in the Trump vanity bible: the contents are the marriage of church and state, nestled between the same covers. (Along with Lee Greenwood!)

Pillar 1: The Planning Document: it's been written, 900+ pages Now they are working on implementation...

Pillar 2

Recruit loyalists

- o Collecting tens of thousand of loyalty- pledged applicants.
- o There's an online application (but only if you give them your email.)

Pillar 3

Train for official positions

“Learn how to push the programs that will make the agenda move.”

The “Presidential Administration Academy” will train through videos and coursework

Pillar 4

Put plan into action on Day 1 through an **UNDISCLOSED** set of measures involving:

- o Executive orders
- o Regulations designed to defeat existing rules
- o Legislation
- o Judicial appointments
- o More... unpublished

The Plan has four aspects they call "pillars". Some might call them "phases" but they overlap. Pillar 1 is "that little 900+ page book" that all 6 of us together couldn't digest fully. The other 3 "pillars" are all in active development: recruit, train, and take over. Somewhere between pillar 3 and pillar 4 there is the November election, followed by court battles, and an inauguration. If Trump is not elected, Heritage Foundation has already said they will write a Project 2028. And there is much they may be able to sneak through anyway, using Congress.

Pillar 2 - Recruit Loyalists

- There are currently about **4000 political appointees** "sitting atop about 10 million civil service employees and contractors"
- Political appointees "carry out the President's policies" and **must** be loyal to him. **Loyalty is more important than credentials or experience.**
- "You're fired" - assume **no job security**, long hours under political pressure
- **Extensive, intrusive vetting**, as for a high level security clearance (who's your family and friends, what's on your social media, etc.) ~ "clean up" any records that would embarrass the President if they became public.
- **Bogus argument:** the President was elected by and represents THE PEOPLE, therefore his wish is your command, rather than established law or regulation. **FACT:** not since 2004 has a Republican president been popularly elected. Are we a nation of laws, or of one man?

Pillar 2 is to recruit loyalists. The Heritage Foundation is doing the recruitment. They will only recommend people who are in the cult - who believe for instance that Trump won the 2020 election. If you, the recruit, have skeletons in your closet, it would not surprise me in the least if those skeletons became useful "kompromat" to keep you in line. Loyalty is more important than experience or qualifications. Does anyone smell some patronage opportunities? The civil service system was, in part, originally designed to thwart that kind of abuse.

Pillar 3 - Train those Loyalists to Take Over Presidential Administration Academy Videos

<https://www.propublica.org/article/video-project-2025-presidential-training-academy-trump-election>



You, too, can watch some of the videos thanks to a leak

If vetted, Trump would be ineligible to serve in his own administration!

- national security breaches
- bankruptcies
- convicted felon
- other indictments
- dubious "friends"
- mercurial personality

You can watch a bunch of the training videos: the URL's are on the "Resources" handout. In the videos, the recruits are being repeatedly told that they should obey the President's whims, because he was ostensibly elected by THE PEOPLE, and our government is supposed to represent THE PEOPLE. As mentioned in the previous slide, no Republican presidential candidate has gotten the popular vote since 2004. If Donald Trump becomes president it will be because of the electoral college, not the majority of voters. Another irony: by the screening criteria of the videos, Trump would be ineligible to hold office in his own Administration.

Pillar 4 - Hit the Ground Running

“Dictator on Day 1”

- Is Trump’s intention really “Dictator **FROM** Day 1”?
- Trump would need **only a day** to put in place a **comprehensive order** that would allow the rest of Project 2025 to proceed over the first 100-180 days. Is that the plan?
- A day 1 goal: Reinstate Trump’s **Schedule F** (Executive Order), adding many thousands more proven loyalist positions that can be terminated at a whim
- History suggests aspiring authoritarians, unable to seize control through persuasion, commonly resort to violence. **Would our military comply?**

The Christian Nationalists behind Project 2025 will be ready on Day 1 and done with most of their takeover within 180 days. Do we take to the streets? Even if they succeed in using the US military to quell protests and round up people who, they say, "hate America"?

Pillar 4 Some of the Aims of Project 2025

- End no-fault divorce
- Complete ban on abortion without exceptions
- Ban contraceptives
- Additional tax breaks for corporations and the 1%
- Higher taxes for the working class
- Eliminate unions and worker protections
- Raise the retirement age
- Cut Social Security
- Cut Medicare
- End the Affordable Care Act
- Raise prescription drug prices
- Eliminate the Department of Education
- Use taxpayer money to fund religious schools
- Teach “Christian” beliefs in public schools
- End free and discounted school lunch
- End civil rights ad DEI protections in government
- Ban all African American and gender studies
- Ban books and curriculum about slavery
- End climate protections
- Increase Arctic drilling
- Deregulate big business and the oil industry
- Promote and expedite capital punishment
- End marriage equality
- Defund the FBI and Homeland Security
- Use the military to break up domestic demonstrations
- Incarcerate and then Deport millions of immigrants
- End birth right citizenship
- Ban Muslims from entering the US
- Eliminate federal agencies: FDA, EPA, NOAA and more
- Continue packing courts with right-wing judges

Don't bother to take notes, panelists will discuss!

There are so many objectionable provisions in this massive plan that it's hard to know where to begin. Just take a second and run your eyes over this list, but don't worry, there's more. The next 5 panelists will provide some of the details - the "What". (So far we've explained the "How". We also have handouts that explain the Who and Why.)

Project 2025 on the Environment

*Climate change does not exist
"Drill, Baby, Drill!"*

- **REVERSE Climate Change Goals**
 - Withdraw from International Climate Agreements
- **Restructure and Disempower Federal Agencies: Purge existing personnel, replace with loyalists**
 - EPA "On Day One"
 - Dep't of the Interior: NOAA
 - * Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research (OAR)
 - * National Weather Service
 - Dep't of the Interior: National Park Service
 - * Public Lands Antiquities Act
- **Discredit and remove Climate Science**
- **Eliminate Environmental Justice Goal**
- **Impacts on Maine!**

Project 2025 aims to END all current and future Climate Change initiatives, scientific research and data, and funding for the transition to renewable energy. It directs the president to withdraw from all international climate agreements and repeal the Inflation Reduction Act. The new goal would be to make the US "energy dominant" - to maximize the development of fossil fuels on public lands and subsidize the profits of the oil and gas industry. Thousands of employees in the environmental agencies would be fired and replaced with anti-environment hires. All climate change scientific endeavors, data, even the official language in government documents will be scrubbed to rid reference to climate change as caused by the burning of fossil fuels. Existing environmental justice goals would be discarded. Disaster recovery from extreme weather events would be left to the states. The impacts of the Project 2025 plan would be disastrous for the environment and all life on the planet - people, the oceans, wildlife.

Project 2025 on Education

a hyper-libertarian agenda

- **The Plan**
 - Start by abolishing the U.S. Department of Education
 - Block grant most remaining program funds to states to do with as they wish
 - E'l'y + Sc'y ED: Voucherize and deregulate it
 - H'r Ed: Cap student loans; stop all loan forgiveness
 - Within 10 years: abolish the federal role in E'y and S'y education
- **What's Wrong With This?**
 - Funding collapse of 50% or more for kids in concentrated poverty, greatly restricted funding for higher education
 - Abandonment of the nation's commitment to common schools, schooling as a major driver of social justice, economic competitiveness, an informed citizenry and personal well being
- **Much of This Underway Right Now In a Growing Number of States**

What is stunning about the Project 2025 vision is that its stated goal in education is to make sure that all parents can use whatever public funds are available to educate their children with other children just like themselves in any way they wish or, if they prefer, not educate them at all. From the time of Horace Mann, our public schools have been the one place where the people who poured into our country from every country on earth came together to build one country. Going to these common schools was required by law because we saw our schools as the great equalizer, our chosen tool for enabling every child, irrespective of color, ethnicity, religion, gender or wealth, to lift themselves up and get ahead. We did not leave that dream up to parental choice, because we knew that every one of us depends on that dream coming true for all of us. The Project 2024 dream for education is not a project for bringing us together and opening up opportunity for everyone. It is a project for further atomizing our society, building division and short-circuiting opportunity for those most dependent on our schools for a better life.

Project 2025 on health care and public health

A judgmental, intrusive, un-scientific agenda

- “Restore” and promote the “nuclear family”
- Stop abortion: no funding for the “week after” pill, disallow abortion drugs, collect intrusive data, prohibit taxpayer funded abortion travel, defund all abortion providers and stop abortion medical training
- Prohibit Medicare from negotiating drug prices
- Promote Medicare Advantage Plans
- Deny all gender affirming care to transgender patients
- Cut funding to the Department of Veterans Affairs
- Medicaid: Cut funding, switch to state block grants, eliminate federal oversight, allow state voucher programs, limit lifetime benefits, allow stricter work requirements and stricter qualifying criteria.
- Remove DEI programs from NIH and make it easier to fire employees
- Prevent the CDC from putting out public health advice. Revoke mask mandates.
- Actively discourage Physician Assisted Suicide: Rebrand HHS as “Department of Life”
- Freely grant licensing waivers and exemptions under beefed-up RFRA enforcement (*RFRA = Religious Freedom Restoration Act*)

Much of the public criticism of Project 2025 has revolved around its health related proposals. Like the education proposals, some of them are obvious attempts to impose a particular "Christian" doctrine on the whole of society. However, it almost seems like cruelty is the point, rather than compassion - one of the main tenets of the Christian religion. The proposals would keep health care expensive, increase the private profit-making role, disallow non-judgmental care, intrude on the doctor-patient relationship, reduce reliance on science, and disadvantage those who are the least fortunate and most vulnerable (which can be seen as part of the fascist playbook.)

Project 2025 on the Economy

A “Trickle-UP” Strategy

- **Subvert the administrative capacities of the Federal Government**
 - Replace experienced professionals with loyalists - a “spoils” system
 - Eliminate entire federal agencies with critical economic missions
 - Withdraw the US from international economic organizations
- **Weaken Financial and Consumer Markets**
 - Weaken regulation (which undermines investor confidence)
 - Create a “grifter’s paradise”
 - Weaken or dismantle the Federal Reserve
 - Stoke inflation
 - Weaken or eliminate the Federal Trade Commission
- **Undermine Labor Markets**
 - Curtail unions
 - Eliminate aid to states for worker education
 - Deport 12 million undocumented workers
- **Impede Housing**
 - Close Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac
 - Reduce incentives for multi-family and low-income housing
- **Institute Regressive Taxation**
 - Flat tax or national sales tax etc
 - Lower tax rates for the wealthy (income, capital gains and estate)
 - Across the board 10-20% tariffs on imports
- **Weaken Social Security**
 - by means not fully disclosed (privatization?)
 - increase retirement age to 69
 - reduce revenue to the SS trust fund

Our capitalist economy depends on basic honesty and competence of its managers and the ability of the legal system to constrain rogue behavior. The federal financial regulatory system is a legacy of the New Deal and is the bedrock of public confidence in our economic system. Project 2025 would undo that legacy by replacing professionals with people loyal to the agenda of a mercurial President Trump. His agenda will change moment to moment reflecting what promotes the self interest of this known liar, grifter and con artist. It will be increasingly difficult for our businesses, consumers, investors, and trading partners to maintain confidence in the future of our economy. Those that can't leave the system will be left holding an empty bag in the form of trillions of national debt, built up largely under Republican administrations through massive tax cuts for corporations and the wealthy, as well as elective wars.


Project 2025 on the Law

*“Reform”
the
Department
of Justice*

- **Who wrote Chapter 17 on the DOJ and what’s his agenda?**
- **What are the “Additional Essential Reforms”**
 - Greatly expand political appointees across the board, especially Civil Rights, FBI, EOIR
 - No DEI considerations in hiring
 - Consolidate functions (effect: fewer “careers”, e.g. in Public Affairs Dept.)
- **How has the DOJ “lost its way”?** (Examples)
 - Russian “interference”, Hunter’s laptop, monitoring social media
 - By investigating demonstrators at school boards and health care clinics
- **Specific reforms**
 - Reorganize the FBI, make Director report to President
 - Stricter sentencing and more use of the death penalty; tough on crime
 - Litigation priorities to conform with President’s policy agenda
- **What is meant by “Defending the Rule of Law”?**
 - Day 1: terminate all cases that “run contrary to Administration policies”
 - Eliminate independent agencies e.g. CFPB
 - Overhaul Division of Civil Rights
 - Stop “illegal” curing of ballots and other voting “abuses”
 - Honor “parents” right to side-track school board meetings
 - Enforce immigration violations by “criminal aliens”

The author of this chapter is Gene Hamilton, who is the co-founder of America First Legal - a right-wing law firm with an extreme political agenda. He also served in the Trump administration, participating in several of its most draconian immigration and border policies. His June 2023 interview with Kevin Roberts, of the Heritage Foundation (can be found on YouTube), is instructive. Major take-away from this chapter is a "vast expansion of the number of [political] appointees," while reducing the number of career employees. In Trump-style double-speak, this politicalization of the DOJ is referred to as the "de-weaponization" of the DOJ.

What about Trump’s “Agenda 47”?

- Trump wrote that he “knows nothing” about Project 2025. But he also said “I disagree with some of the things they’re saying”.
(Which is it? You know nothing or you disagree with it? Your buddies wrote the thing!)

- Trump has previously praised P2025. The plan says (p. xiii) “...one set of eyes reading these passages will be those of the 47th President...” *Trump reads policy documents?*
- CBS News found “at least 270 proposals” in P2025 that “match Trump’s past policies and current campaign promises” *examples: ~ eliminate Dept of Education ~ mass deportations*
- Before Trump’s 2016-2020 term, Heritage Foundation wrote a similar book:
Trump instituted 64% of its recommendations *examples: leaving Paris accords ~ more oil drilling*
- Bottom line: **P2025 will provide the people and tools Trump needs to achieve what he perceives as greatness.** His sycophants will provide the essential narcissistic supply. (Or, are the “Christian Nationalists” *using Trump* to achieve *their* long desired agenda?)

So now that Project 2025 is in the news and people are starting to wake up to the implications, Mr. Trump is running away from it. His disavowal has zero credibility. The more we learn about Mr. Trump’s peculiar brand of narcissism that makes him so vulnerable to flattery, the more it looks like he is actually being used by the Christian Nationalists to further their own socially repressive agenda. But we also know that he is a huge admirer of strongmen who rule undemocratically, with ruthlessness, so Project 2025 is right down his alley.

Who does Trump think is "great"?

Donald Trump is frequently compared to 20th-21st century dictators he seems to admire.

- He invited the brutal Philippine leader **Rodrigo Duterte** to the White House during a very friendly phone call.
- He has long admired **Vladimir Putin**, saying "He's been a leader far more than our president has been a leader"
- As well as expressing admiration to **Kim Jong Un** of North Korea, saying "obviously he is a pretty smart cookie"
- His admiration for **Viktor Orbán** is well known.
- His wife Ivanka said that he kept a book by **Hitler** at his bedside. ("My New Order: A Collection of Speeches", not "Mein Kampf")

Here are some of the people Trump apparently most admires. What would happen if they were to become politically toxic with his voting base? You can expect that he will forswear any prior admiration. Whenever another one of his close associates "bites the dust", the standing joke in our household goes like this: (*Trump impersonator*) "Oh, I don't think I know him...was he the guy who made the coffee?" Loyalty in Trump's world is a one-way street - to him, and not to the Constitution.

Find the parallels with Project 2025

Agenda 47
CONTRIBUTE
SHOP
LEAD THE OFFICIAL 2024 Republican Party Platform HERE
President Trump's 20 CORE PROMISES TO MAKE AMERICA GREAT AGAIN!

However, this platform is nowhere near as detailed as Project 2025

- 1 SEAL THE BORDER AND STOP THE MIGRANT INVASION
- 2 CARRY OUT THE LARGEST DEPORTATION OPERATION IN AMERICAN HISTORY
- 3 END INFLATION, AND MAKE AMERICA AFFORDABLE AGAIN
- 4 MAKE AMERICA THE DOMINANT ENERGY PRODUCER IN THE WORLD, BY FAR!
- 5 STOP OUTSOURCING, AND TURN THE UNITED STATES INTO A MANUFACTURING SUPERPOWER
- 6 LARGE TAX CUTS FOR WORKERS, AND NO TAX ON TIPS!
- 7 DEFEND OUR CONSTITUTION, OUR BILL OF RIGHTS, AND OUR FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS, INCLUDING FREEDOM OF SPEECH, FREEDOM OF RELIGION, AND THE RIGHT TO KEEP AND BEAR ARMS
- 8 PREVENT WORLD WAR THREE, RESTORE PEACE IN EUROPE AND IN THE MIDDLE EAST, AND BUILD A GREAT IRON DOME MISSILE DEFENSE SHIELD OVER OUR ENTIRE COUNTRY -- ALL MADE IN AMERICA
- 9 END THE WEAPONIZATION OF GOVERNMENT AGAINST THE AMERICAN PEOPLE
- 10 STOP THE MIGRANT CRIME EPIDEMIC, DEMOLISH THE FOREIGN DRUG CARTELS, CRUSH GANG VIOLENCE, AND LOCK UP VIOLENT OFFENDERS
- 11 REBUILD OUR CITIES, INCLUDING WASHINGTON DC, MAKING THEM SAFE, CLEAN, AND BEAUTIFUL AGAIN.
- 12 STRENGTHEN AND MODERNIZE OUR MILITARY, MAKING IT, WITHOUT QUESTION, THE STRONGEST AND MOST POWERFUL IN THE WORLD
- 13 KEEP THE U.S. DOLLAR AS THE WORLD'S RESERVE CURRENCY
- 14 FIGHT FOR AND PROTECT SOCIAL SECURITY AND MEDICARE WITH NO CUTS, INCLUDING NO CHANGES TO THE RETIREMENT AGE
- 15 CANCEL THE ELECTRIC VEHICLE MANDATE AND CUT COSTLY AND BURDENSOME REGULATIONS
- 16 CUT FEDERAL FUNDING FOR ANY SCHOOL PUSHING CRITICAL RACE THEORY, RADICAL GENDER IDEOLOGY, AND OTHER INAPPROPRIATE RACIAL, SEXUAL, OR POLITICAL CONTENT ON OUR CHILDREN
- 17 KEEP MEN OUT OF WOMEN'S SPORTS
- 18 DEPORT PRO-HAMAS RADICALS AND MAKE OUR COLLEGE CAMPUSES SAFE AND PATRIOTIC AGAIN
- 19 SECURE OUR ELECTIONS, INCLUDING SAME DAY VOTING, VOTER IDENTIFICATION, PAPER BALLOTS, AND PROOF OF CITIZENSHIP
- 20 UNITE OUR COUNTRY BY BRINGING IT TO NEW AND RECORD LEVELS OF SUCCESS

You can check out Agenda 47, the Trump and Republican platform. You will find some of the same provisions as in Project 2025. But, of course, Agenda 47 does not have details that are involved with recruitment and training of loyalists, or the implementation measures that will be undertaken in the first 6 months. That's left to the Heritage Foundation or that other group that's keeping a VERY low profile, the "America First Policy Institute". (Some investigative journalist should do a deep dive on that organization.)

*DON'T FALL FOR THEIR TRICKS

Red & White & Blue

- Trump is trying to distance himself from Project 2025 by referring to his plan as Agenda 47.
- Both these plans propose the same policies and ideas.
- As public awareness of these toxic plans increases, they will rename and reinvent to confuse and redirect attention.
- It is the **SAME** plan no matter the name.

Agenda 47 = Project 2025

Project 2025
PRESIDENTIAL TRANSITION PROJECT



The bottom line is this: Trump and his minions can run, but they can't hide. This dangerous, un-American, un-Constitutional plan IS the plan. It's a very thorough plan. Brilliant in its evil simplicity, with the devil lurking everywhere in the details. For example, just for a minute picture in your mind exactly what it would take to round up and deport 12 million immigrants within 180 days. The detention camps, the mistaken identities, the separation of families, the loss of essential workers, the temptation to round up and deport other citizens who protest, the lack of countries that will accept the deportees, and then what? Years of languishing (or worse) in detention camps? You can take almost any of the plan elements and run it through a thought experiment like this, and arrive at a similar dystopian end.

What do we **DO** about it?

Authoritarian impulses will always be with us: it's what our Constitution was designed to thwart. History suggests if we don't get a handle on the situation, there will indeed be a revolution.

Near term:

VOTE for Democrats

HELP Get Out The Vote this November!

DEMAND better reporting and fact checking by your media sources

BOYCOTT "X" and other untrustworthy media

Long term:

- **Publicly and boldly** repudiate the authoritarianism of Project 2025/ **make it political suicide**
- Build a **nation-wide coalition** of like minded progressive organizations/think tanks and **articulate the progressive vision for the future**
- **Reform capitalism** so it works for everyone: **support progressive taxation**
- **Restore civics education & support public education** at all levels
- **Call out fanatics** (Christian Dominionists & Opus Dei) **Reform the Supreme Court**

But Project 2025 does not have to be our future. There are near term things we can do, some more obvious than others. Don't elect Republicans until they have freed themselves from the MAGA cult. Losing big time this November would be an excellent wakeup call that could save the party! Start being critical of your news sources and demand an end to both-sides-ism and false equivalency. A convicted felon is not a normal candidate! Longer term, we need to reform capitalism so that it works for everyone. Very interestingly, some of the far-right politicians are starting to realize that they need to pay attention to the economic aspirations of the working class if they are going to have any hope of getting their repressive social agenda adopted. Let's beat them to it: reform capitalism while at the same time retaining our hardwon freedoms and a social agenda that liberates the human spirit from mandatory repressive doctrines. That is truly the American way. We are Americans, we can do this. We **MUST** do this.