



# American History



A moment to remember Deanne

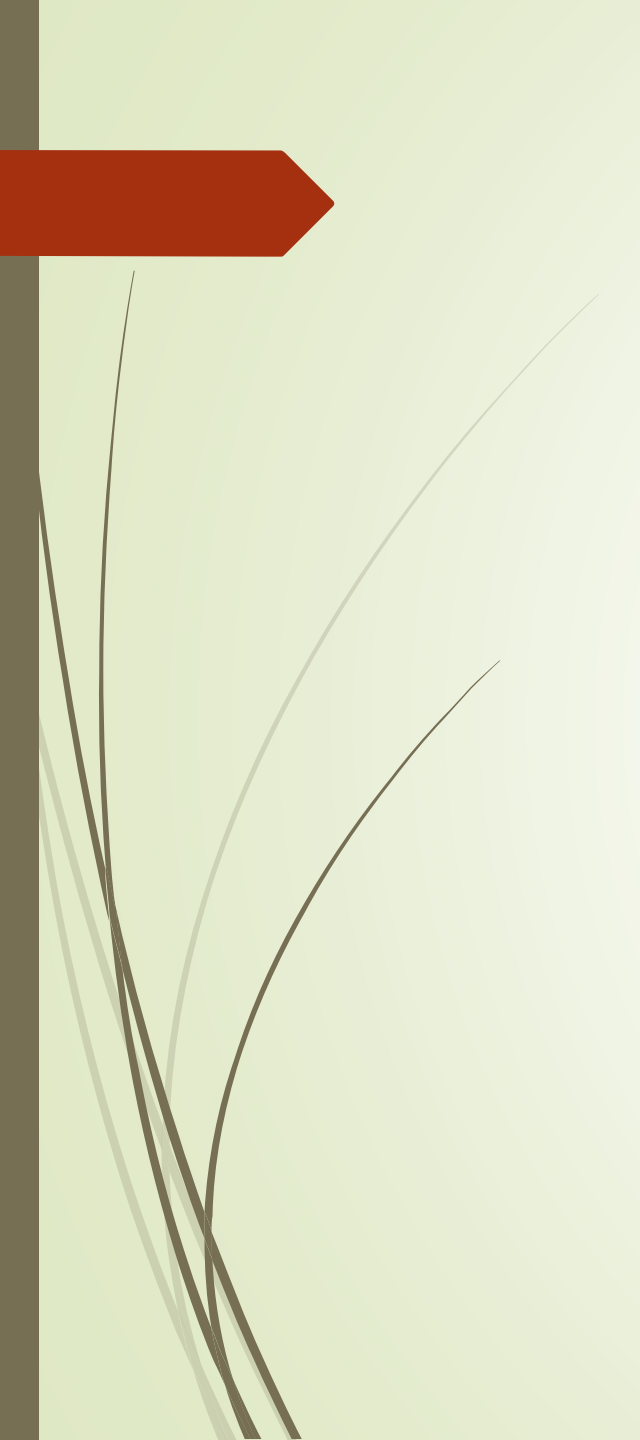
# MAGA America

| Talk | US                               | Time Period | Date of Talk |
|------|----------------------------------|-------------|--------------|
| 56   | The road to MAGA..               | 2001-2017   | June 1st     |
| 57   | MAGA 1.0: First Trump Presidency | 2017-2021   | June 15th    |
| 58   | The Biden interlude              | 2021-2025   | June 29th    |
| 59   | MAGA 2.0 and potential futures   | 2025+       | July 6th     |

# MAGA 1.0: Trump the First Term

- 
- 
- Transfers of power
  - Trump and America
  - Trump and the World
  - White House Life and 2018 Mid Terms
  - Covid
  - 2020 Election





# Transfers of Power

# Trump as President

- 
- ➡ First President without any political or military experience
  - ➡ Substantial business interests: creates “Trust”....managed by “children”?
  - ➡ Multiple legal disputes in process: fraud, tax audits, foreign payments, se
  - ➡ Has “TRIFACTA”....Presidency+ Control of Senate & House

Power constrained by “balanced” Supreme Court “balanced”  
& Conservative (Bush/Reagan) Republicans

# From Obama to Trump





# The transition complete





Taking the oath....prior to Presidential Address  
.....usually a hopeful and inspirational message



# Instead: “American Carnage” Speech

- 
- ➡ America in rapid decline/ Immigration out of control
  - ➡ Foreigners ripping off America and taking jobs
  - ➡ Climate Change a fraud invented by foreigners to cheat Americans
  - ➡ American run by elites, ordinary Americans forgotten
  - ➡ De-industrialisation to be reversed

"The American carnage stops right here, right now. From this day forward, a new vision will govern our land. From this day forward, it's going to be only America first.

.....America first."



# Inauguration Day

Obama Inauguration 2008



Trump Inauguration 2016





# The fight for “reality” begins

Sean Spicer Press Secretary  
(day after Inauguration)



➤ Trump January 21..day after”  
Trump” It looked like a million  
a million and a half...it went a  
the way to the Washington  
Monument.!

.....Ridiculed by media

➤ Press Secretary Sean Spicer  
“this was the largest audience  
to ever witness an  
inauguration, period, both in  
person and around the  
globe.”...Further ridicule

➤ White House Counsellor  
“alterative facts”



# Transfer of power #2: Trump Administration

## “Team of exceptional ability”: least diverse since Reagan,



# Trump Administration: the first two years

- Power restricted by Republican “establishment” ...at least at first
- “Adults in the Room” required to achieve credibility
- Business or military people, no economists, two non white males
  - Ben Carson (black) Housing...no power
  - Nicky Haley (female,) United Nations....ignored

The transfer of power will change again...from cabinet to authoritarian

“The “adults in the room” will be gone in 2 years



# John Mattis: Secretary of Defence 2017-2019



Career Army

- ...”considered leading intellectual”
- ...General Afghanistan invasion
- ...attempts at improving culture mix
- ...defends bombings, civilian losses

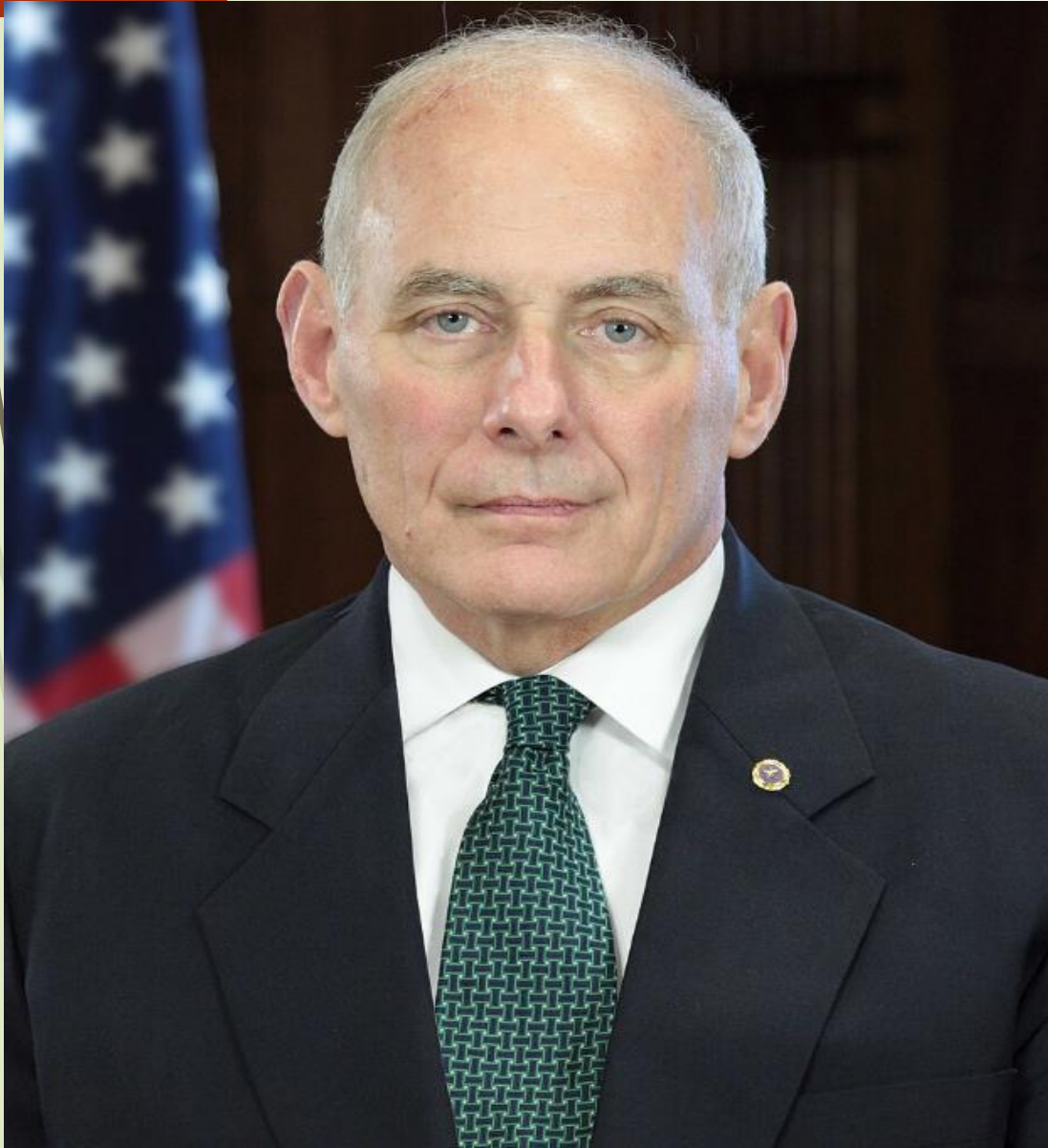
Trump: “the real deal”..”Mad dog Mattis  
Mattis: drives attacks vs Assad Syria after  
another chemical attack.

Refuses to deliver Assad assassination

Resigns Sept 2019

Trump” World’s most overrated general”

# John Kelly, Chief of Staff 2017-2019



- Career soldier. Gulf War, Invasion of Iraq, Head of Southern Command, organiser, ethics focused
- Political “career”
  - Head of homeland security 2017
  - Chief of Staff 2017-2019
  - Family separation policy/ Border Wall
  - Resigns: “Trump cemetery comment, dead soldiers “losers and suckers”+ white house chaos
- Trump insults: “lowlife with a very small brain and a very big mouth” ...” one of the dumbest people I’ve ever met. ...born with a very small brain”...”total Whacko”



# Transfer of power #2 :

- 2017-2018: Role of Cabinet minimised
  - 92% turnover by end of Presidency, 33% staff left before end of first year
  - Those who stayed = those who agreed...and irrelevant
  - Those who left become life-long critics ...and irrelevant
- 2019-2021: Consolidation of power
  - “Cabinet” ceremonial only
  - Preference for “Acting” Secretaries ....no Senate Confirmation, inexperienced
  - Reliance on personal advisors : Steve Bannon, Stephen Miller & Jared Kushner (son in law)

# The New Team:

Stephen Bannon (1953...)

Banker, News podcaster, 2016 election

.Chief Advisor 2017..immigration, “White replacement” advocate...fired by Kelly



Stephen Miller(1985...)

Conservative political activist, work for Bannon

2016 election....replaces Bannon....retains role, immigration, America First, Israel, ....will

Survive into 2<sup>nd</sup> term (2<sup>nd</sup> most powerful man in world)





# Jared Kushner (1981...)

Jared and Ivanka Trump 2017: power couple



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Credit: Bloomberg

Grandparents holocaust survivors  
...Father Charles California real estate.  
....convicted felon, tax evasion witness  
tampering  
...now US Ambassador to France!

Jared takes over father's  
Business 2005 (father in jail)  
...meets marries Ivanka Trump

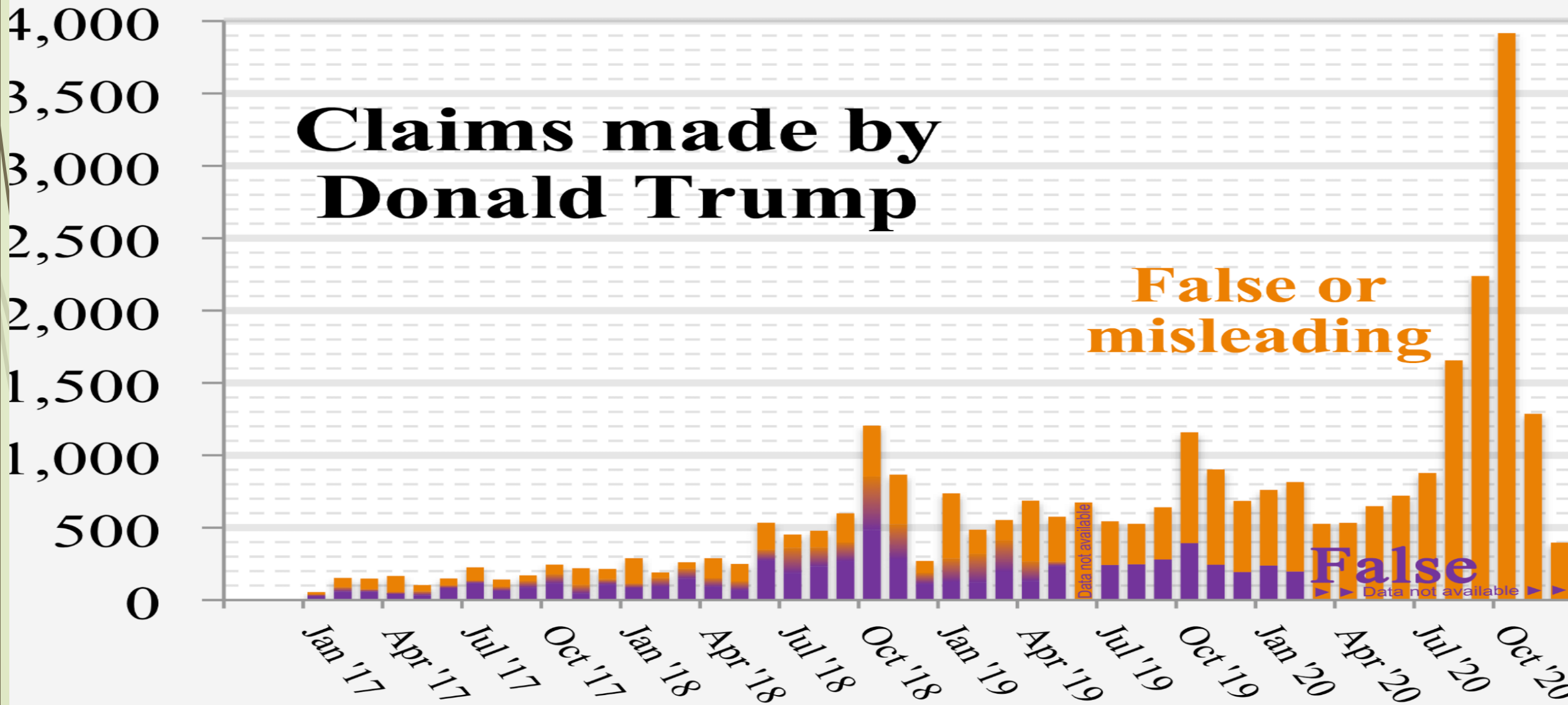
Senior Advisor to Trump 2017  
...Criminal Reform...more rehab  
...Covid response (claims  
....International affairs  
....Advisor 2<sup>nd</sup> term

# The new culture

- Focus on “lost Past”...”Make America Great **Again**”...Noble Cause ?
  - Xenophobia...fear of immigrants, Mexico “not sending their best, sending rapists and murders...some of them good people“
  - Anti institutions & elites : Scientists, “Fake News”....not Real Americans
  - Anti Science: “Climate Change a scam” Covid “like flu”, “Alternate facts”
  - “Free speech”...Out: “hate speech” restrictions: In: insults, profane language
- Preferred media “Tweets”...direct, instant, omnipresent, unanswerable



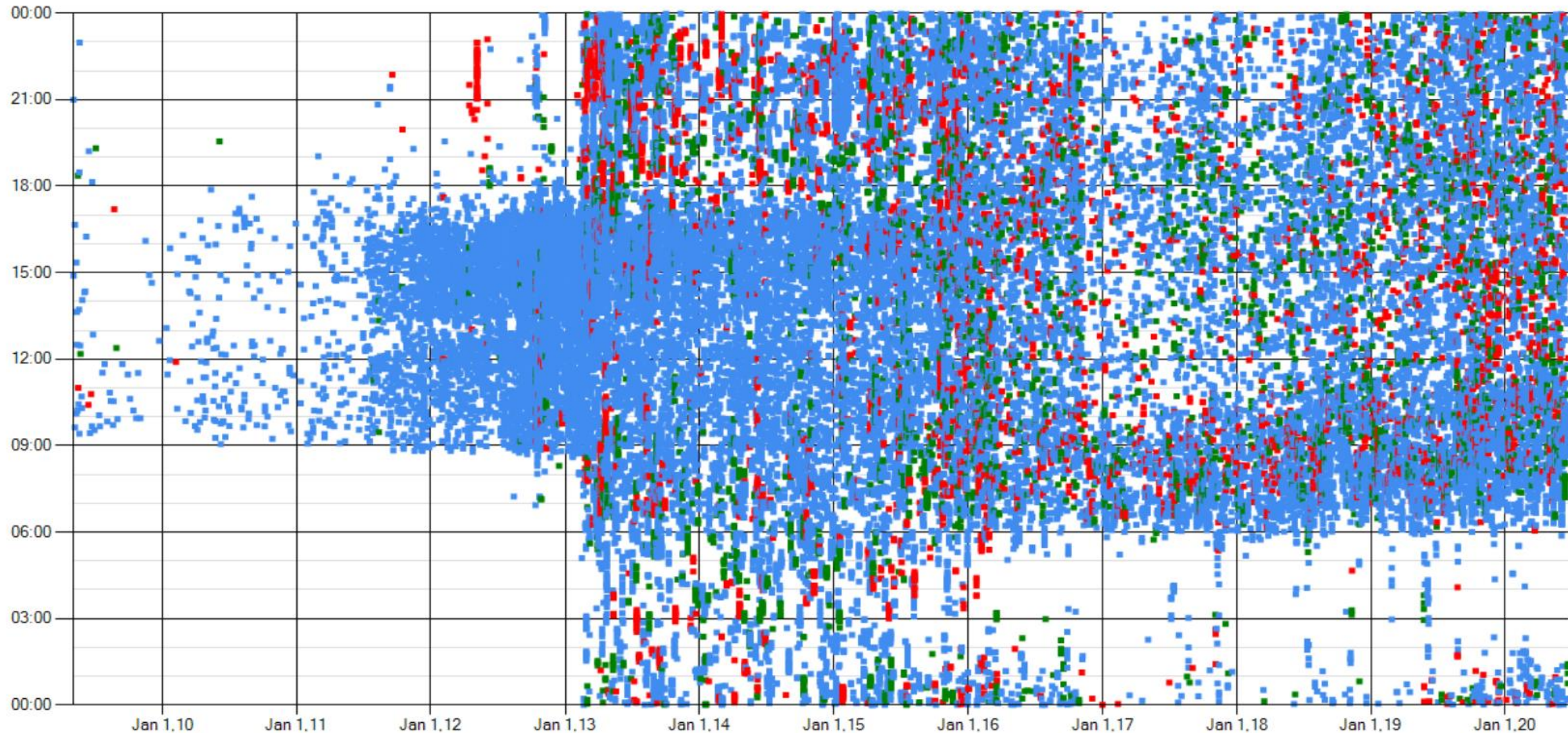
The “new reality” .....whatever the leader says it is



Data: “False or misleading claims” (*The Washington Post*) and “False claims” (Daniel Dale, *Toronto Star*, later CNN).

[illegible]

43436 tweets plotted (11 tweets per day) First tweet=14:54, 4 May 2009  
(Red: Sunday Green: Saturday)





# The new reality: Trump “Twitter posts”



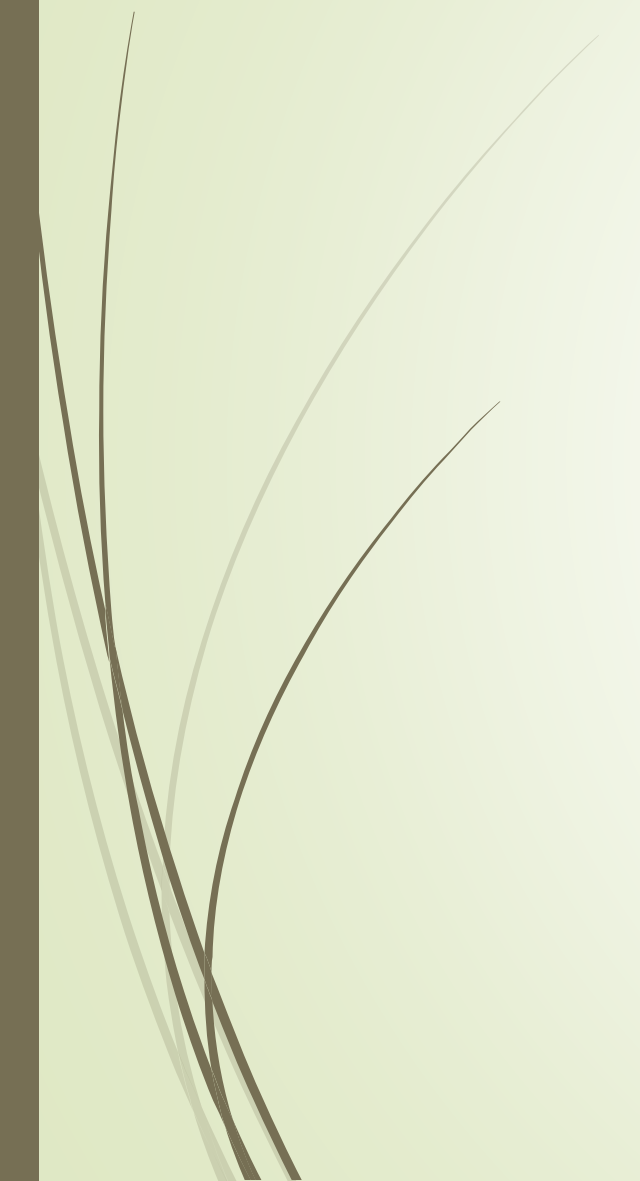
At some point the Fake News will be forced to discuss our great jobs numbers, strong economy, success with ISIS, the border & so much else!



**Donald J. Trump** 

@realDonaldTrump

5:10 AM - 3 Jul 2017



# Trump and America



# Trump Domestic Policy

- Goals: destroy anything created by Obama
  - International agreements
  - Affordable Care
- Domestic Priorities
  - “Repeal and Replace” Affordable Care Act (Obamacare)
  - Tax cuts
  - Tariffs
  - End illegal immigration & “Build that Wall”
- Use “events” for personal advantage

# “Repeal & Replace”

John McCain “war hero” Pres  
Candidate rejects bill...



- ▶ Trump committed to Repeal & Replace ACA (Obamacare) during election
  - ...40 major House, 3 Senate majority
  - ....ACA gaining popularity (not Obamacare!)
- ▶ House passes ACHA
  - ▶ Lowers coverage, under funding
  - ▶ 20 Republicans defect. Fearful
- ▶ Senate split
  - ▶ Public opinion, loss of coverage
  - ▶ Vote fails....Trump anger
  - ▶ John McCain leads revolt
- ▶ Trump continues to attack ACA
  - ▶ ....Supreme Court/ block funds
  - ▶ ....first failure...ACA survives term



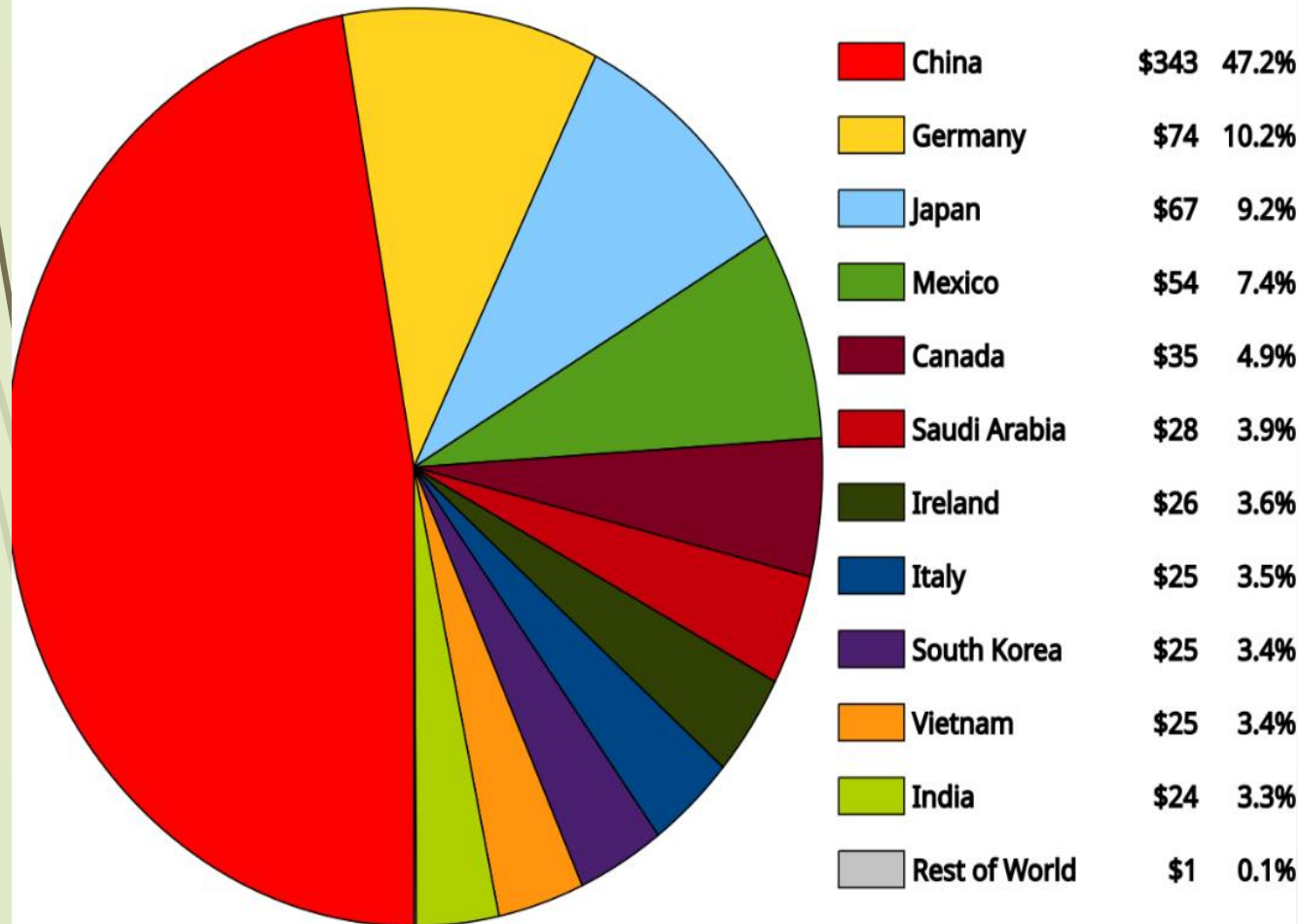
# Tax Cut and Jobs Act 2017

- Reduce Corporation tax rate 35% to 21%
- Reduced tax rates, increased individual allowances
- Impact: Increases inequality
  - Top 1% secured 37% of tax deduction
  - Short term boost in investment,
  - Marginal growth in economy...offset by tariffs

# Trump "Trade War" 2017-2018

China the target

US Balance of Trade Deficit (2014)



Trump and tariffs...consistent view  
...."foreigners ripping off America"

Trump tariffs

...Jan 2018 30% solar panels, appliance

....June 2018 25% steel, 10% aluminium

Chinese & EU retaliate farm& steel

....US farmers lose 50% market

....Trump \$12Bn relief.2018, \$28BN

...reduces US growth by 1%

Attention shifts to Canada & Mexico  
...NAFTA agreement vs US interests?



# USMCA Agreement November 2018

...marginal changes..domestic content, labour laws  
access to dairy

Mexican President  
Enrique Nieto

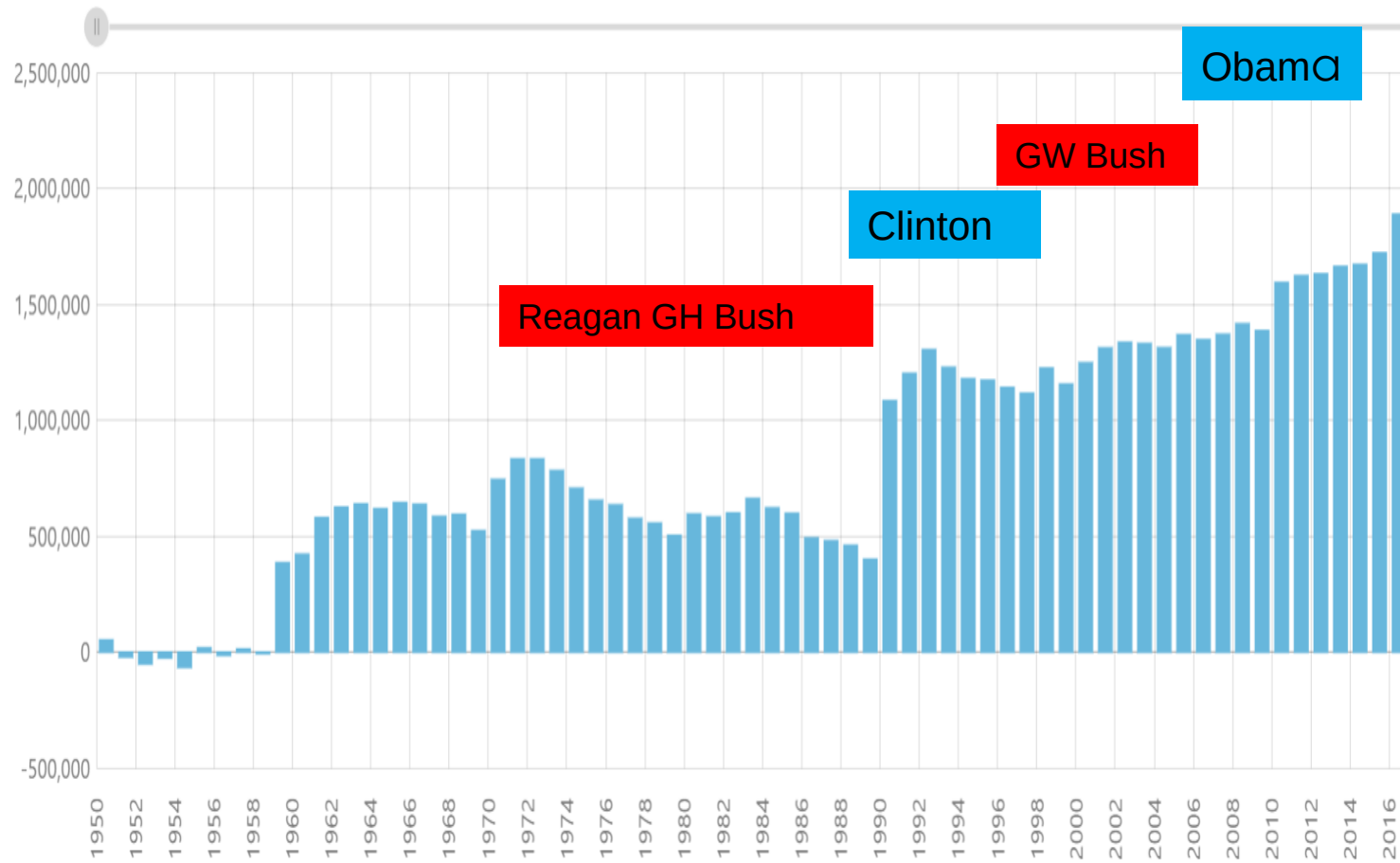
Canadian PM  
Justin Trudeau



# US Immigration 1990-2016

Rising levels of immigration since 1990's  
1m ---2m by 2016, foreign population  
up 9% to 14%

people | 1950-2025



## Multiple causes

- Pull US economy, Push: violence
- Bi-partisan visa relaxation

## Obama Response

- Mass ("fast track") deportation criminals
- "Path to citizenship" children
- Funding. Reforms blocked by GOP!
- System collapse...2 year review

## Political impact

- Mass media spread fear..incidents
- 2016 Election issue



# Trump Immigration Policy

- Trump election commitments
  - “total and complete shutdown of Muslims entering the United States”
  - “I will build a great, great wall on our southern border. And I will have Mexico pay for that wall”
- Trump policies...Executive Orders....no new Immigration Legislation
  - Muslim Ban 2017-2018--- “Remain in Mexico” pending review
  - Reverses “Path to citizenship” DACA )
  - “Zero Tolerance” policy: broad scope, not just criminals, family separation policy

# “Zero Tolerance Policy”

Jeff Sessions Attorney General



- ▶ Alabama Senator...campaign donor
  - ▶ Appointed because “he’s a great donor”
  - ▶ Law career Attorney
- ▶ “If you cross the border unlawfully ... then we will prosecute you. If you smuggle an illegal alien across the border, then we'll prosecute you. ... If you're smuggling a child, then we're going to prosecute you, and that child will be separated from you, probably, as required by law.
- ▶ Trump: “There will be no amnesty—no path to citizenship for illegal immigrants.”



“the brave off to the land of the free”





# Children facility Yuma Arizona 2018





# Families under detention...awaiting separation





# US Mexico Border 2017



Border 1,900 miles

...1,200 Rio Grande

...97% illegal immigrants

...20% Mexico

## History

....no fence 1848-1909

...barbed wire 1909-1978

....GH Bush---first fence

....GW Bush expanded 580

...Obama “virtual fence”

Border 2017

650 miles “fence..barriers, sensors, cameras”



# The border Diego vs Tijuana



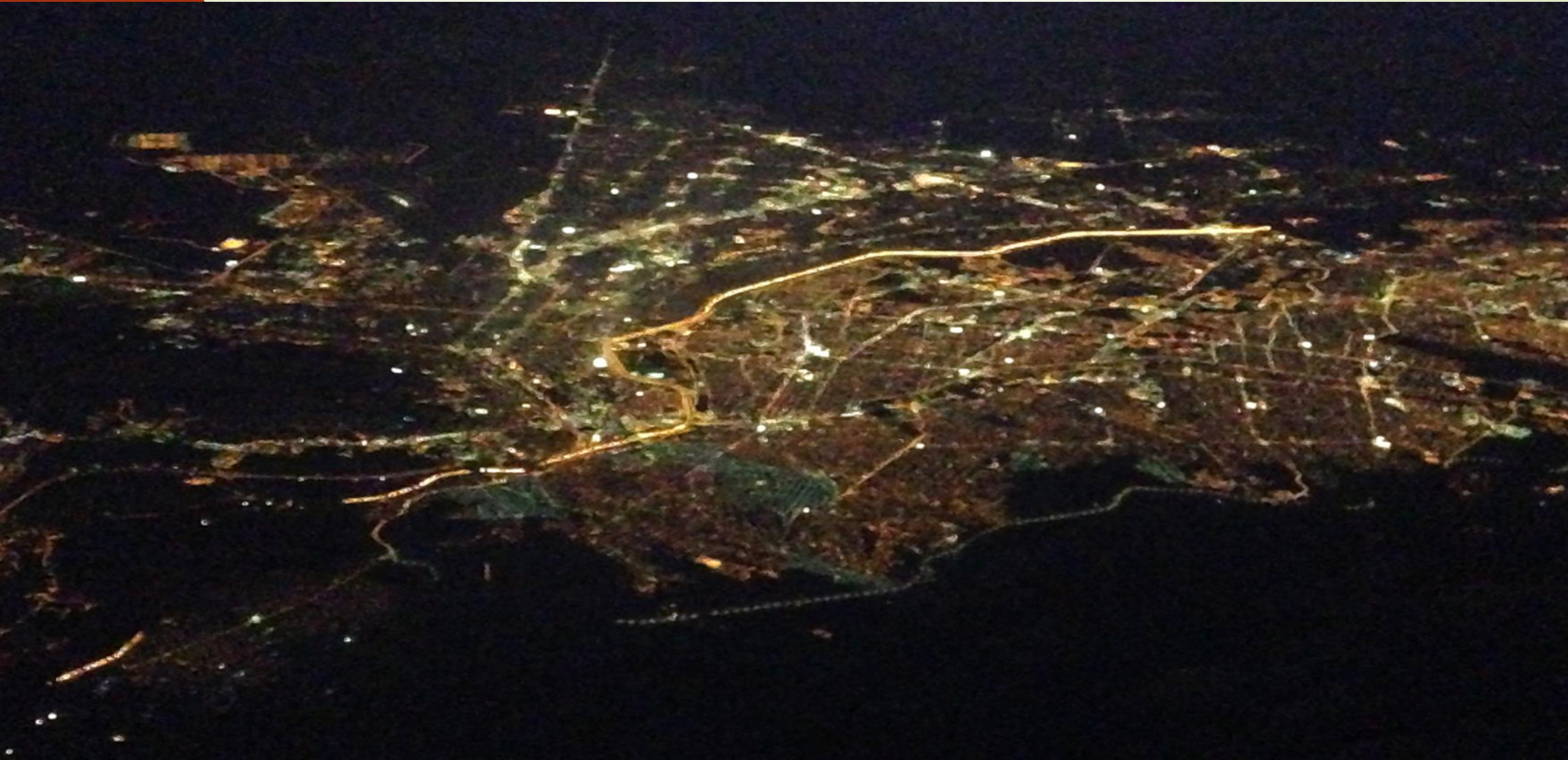


# On the look-out for illegals





# Urban division Juarez vs El Paso





Sonora Desert “barrier”...200-300 victims/ per year





# Rio Grande 1,200 “border”: illegals= “wet-backs”



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Credit: ivanastar



# Building the “Great Wall”

- Mexican President Nieto ““I regret and reject the decision of the United States to continue building a wall that, for years, far from uniting us, divides us. Mexico does not believe in walls.”
- Trump proposal \$28BN 2018 after Mexican rejection, Congress blocked
- Revised proposal Trump transfers \$15Bn from defence budget
- Blocked by Supreme Court...Congress to approve funds, approves only \$2Bn
- Construction start 2019: adds 50 miles of “wall” , upgrade 450 miles of existing



# Trump signing Executive Order to start \$2Bn "Wall"





# Construction/ replacement starts





A moment to celebrate?





# A man and his wall June 2020



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Credit: SAUL LOEB



# Trump immigration policy outcomes

- Immigration levels reduced
  - 10% decline in legal, 50% illegal immigration
  - COVID ends all immigration 2020..”issue” closed...for now
- Impact on children traumatic
  - 5,000 children separated from parents
  - 1,000 never reunited (as of 2025)...foster homes, or in care
- Supreme Court revealed as major constraint
  - Blocks “Muslim Ban”....replace by (legal) Country Ban
  - Ends “family separation policy 2018
  - Restricts Wall. requires Congressional approval...

The solution: Change the Court

# Brief history of modern Supreme Court

## The Liberal Court 1950's-70's (Warren – Burger)

- Civil Rights Legislation. Roe vs Wade..right to abortion (1973)
- School prayer vs constitution
- President below the law (USA vs Nixon 1974)

## ➤ The balanced Court 1980's-2000: (Rehnquist Court)

- Preserves separation of power, right to abortion, affirmative action, gay rights
- But shift to support State supremacy & awards 2000 election to GW Bush

## ➤ The Conservative Court (Roberts Court) 2005- present

- Balance shifts ...pro gun lobby, death penalty
- Removes controls on campaign expenditure (USA vs Citizens United)
- Obama progressive appointee blocked by Republicans for year 2016..

Conservative 5-4 decisions...reject Trump Muslim Ban, anti abortion, redistricting, DA



# Trump Supreme Court Nominees

## ➤ About membership

- Nominated by President...approved by Senate, Appointment for life
- Subject to impeachment....none since 1805 (and acquitted!)
- Role...assess new law vs Constitution...2 “camps”
  - “Textualists” ...fixed document, not subject to amendment
  - “Living Document”...subject to re-interpretation and evolution

## ➤ Membership changes during Trump first term

- 3 “Living Document” justices die or retire
- Trump appoints 3 Conservative “Textualists” (Neil Gorsuch, Brett Kavanaugh, Amy C. Barrett)...hearings contentious but successful

Trump “MAGA Court” in place by 2019...built in 6-3 Conservative majority  
.....too late for First Term



# Other First Term Initiatives

- Eliminate environment protections..reduced funding for enforcement
- End diversity programmes education, “patriotic education” ..eliminate race theory
- Eliminate protection student loan defaults
- Attempt to reduce prison population
  - Total imprisoned rose from 1.2m 2000 to 2.1 million by 2016
  - Impacts Federal (20% prisons only ...reduce prison terms, rehabilitation,
  - Impact minimal 50,000 reduction in prison population





Events...and how to use of them

Mass shootings: :Las Vegas October 1st 2017  
“Harvest Moon” music festival, 20,000 concert goers  
...professional gambler + legal 24 automatic rifles opens fire





60 dead, 400 wounded...largest mass shooting US history....Trump: blames "sick man"...not gun laws



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Credit: David Becker



Hurricanes Irma & Maria...September 2017..devastates  
Puerto Rico .....3,000 “excess deaths”, most due to  
disease, most no power 6 months





# Trump and Hurricane Maria response

About Puerto Rico: US colony, population 3m, US citizens, in Congress but no vote

- Slow response from mainland after hurricane, low initial death count, most deaths by disease after hurricane
- Mayor “We are dying here....“I cannot fathom the thought that the greatest nation in the world cannot figure out the logistics for a small island of 100 by 35 miles....”If anybody out there is listening to us, we are dying, and you are killing us with the inefficiency.”
- Trump: “such poor leadership...they want everything done for them”...“military should not have to handle logistics”...and later....“I hate to tell you this, but you have put budget out of whack”.....and 3,000 people did not die...this was done by Democrats to make me look as bad as possible”

\$40BN aid sent, eventually, bureaucratic delay, unprecedented review process  
...service to normal after 10 month, 200,000 leave island



Trump visit after two weeks .sporting event  
throwing towels “just having fun”, “great towels



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Credit: MANDEL NGAN



California fires 2018...drought, winds, electrical cables  
....2m acres burned, 20,000 houses, \$20BN damage city of  
Paradise destroyed, 103 killed



# Trump & California fires of 2018

- Blames Democratic government & State (80% forest Federal Land)
- “I was with the president of Finland and he said we have a, we’re a forest nation — he called it a forest nation — and they spent a lot of time on raking and cleaning and doing things and they don’t have”
- Federal Aid provided...eventually, threats to withhold aid in future
- Root cause....absence of “Controlled burn” to clear vegetation (as practiced by indigenous) plus construction in fire risk areas



# Summary Trump impact on America 2016-2019 (prior to Covid)

- Affordable Care (“Obama Care”) survives
- Economy stimulated by tax cuts
  - 2016, GDP growth 1.8%, inflation 1.3% , unemployment 4.9%
  - 2019. growth 2.1%, inflation 1.7%. Unemployment 3.5%
- Trade Balance **widens** 16% despite tariffs from \$500BN to \$580BN ( despite surge in US oil production due to “Fracking”...(more on that later)
- US deficit **widens** rises from 100% GDP to 105% GDP, \$18TN 2016 to \$24TN
- Illegal immigration increased from 400K to 900K despite restrictions
  - “Push” factors (violence, crop failures) overwhelm border controls
  - “Pull” factor...employer demand for low cost immigrants rise as economy grows

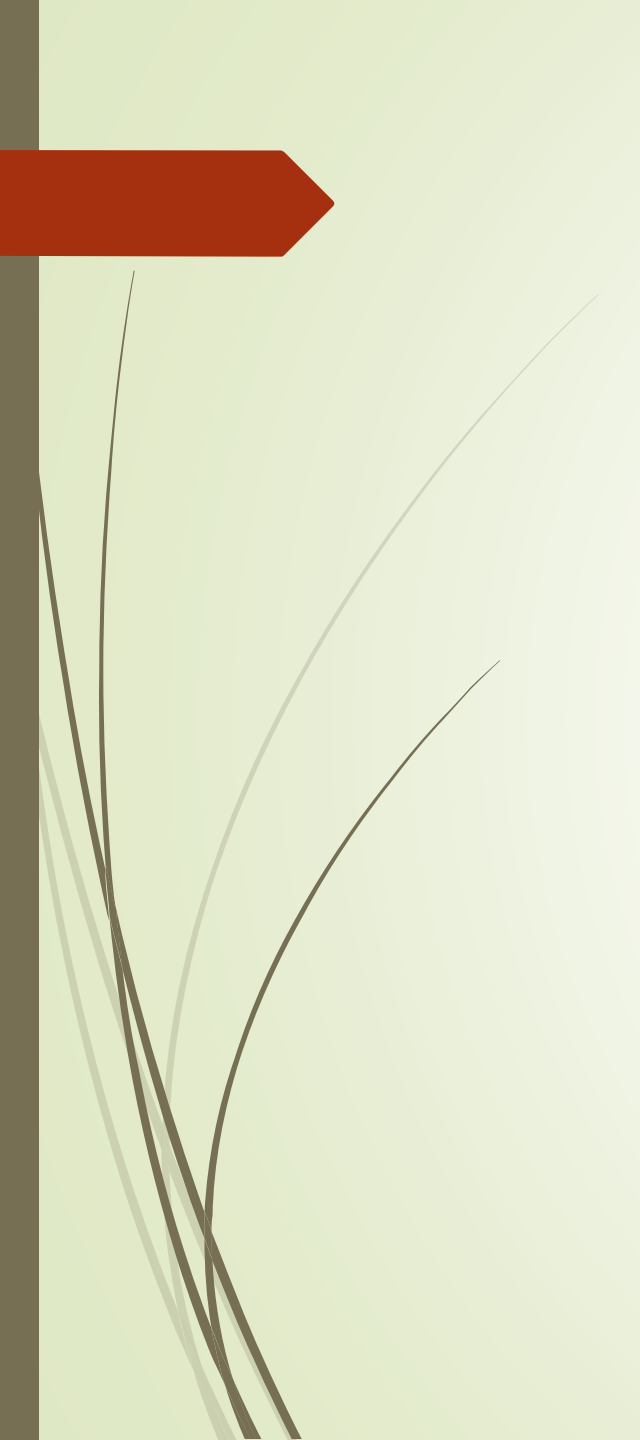


Trump impact on America first term “marginal”  
..noise and chaos blunted by Congress & Courts

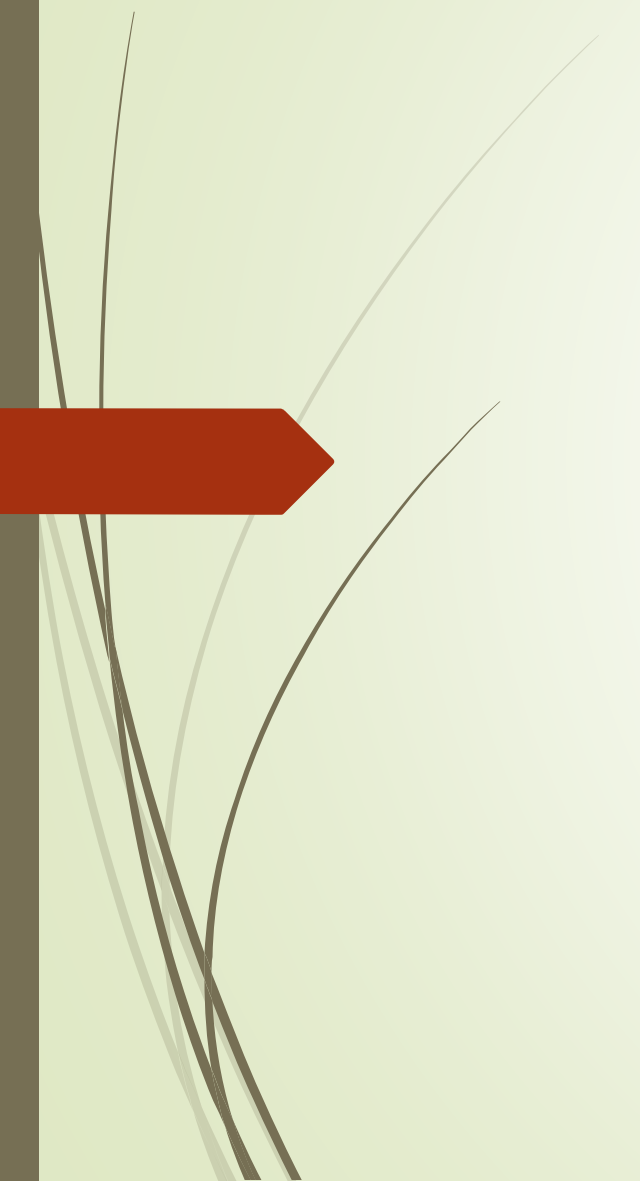
No such constraints on the World Stage

Biggest challenge will be something unexpected  
...and very small.....COVID





Intermission



# Trump and the World

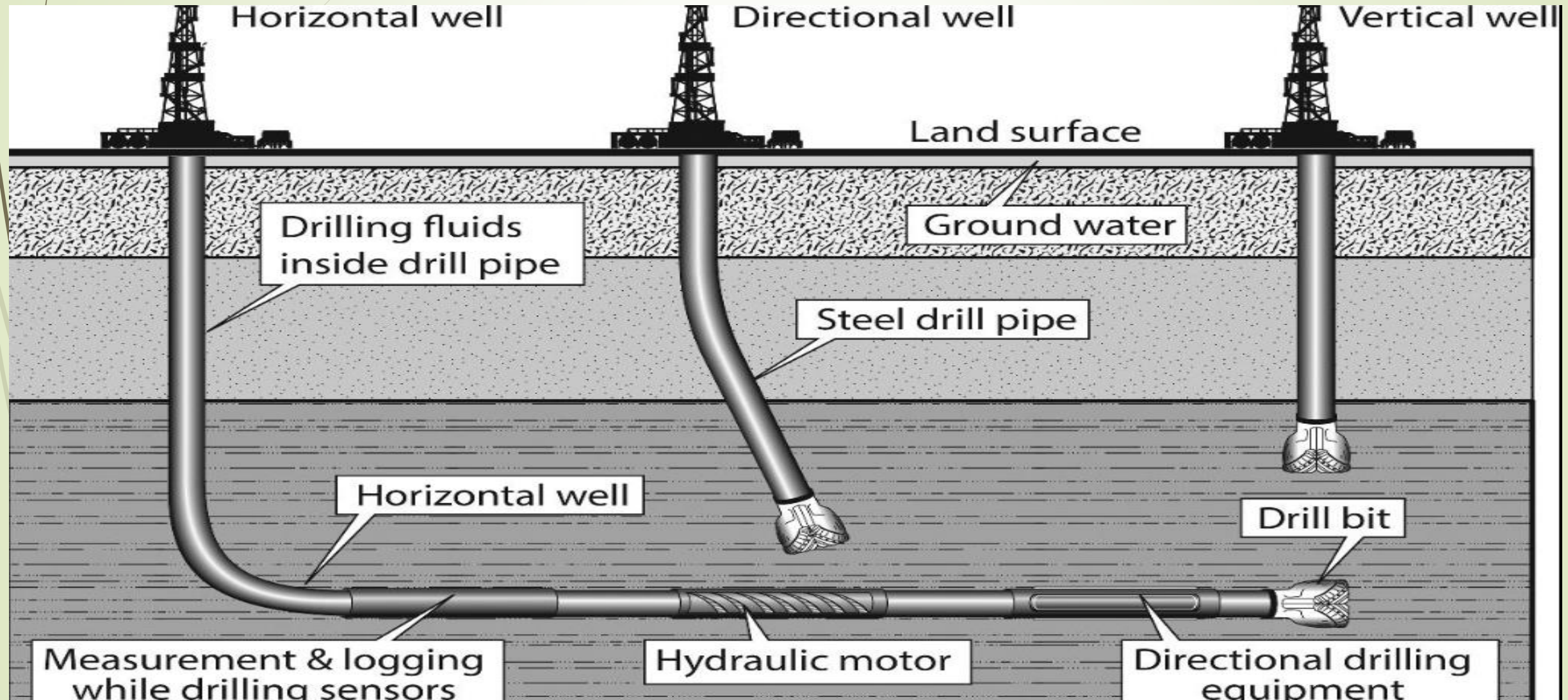


# US and World 2017

- 
- US dominant economically & militarily & energy self sufficient
    - US GDP \$20TN, China \$12TN
    - US Defence \$610 BN, > next 7 nations
  - “Forever Wars” 2017 continuing but winding down
  - Global Agreements negotiated by Obama team, blocked by Congress
  - Economic & political support for Ukraine

US dependency on Middle East Oil ended  
And with that ....need to balance Arab Israeli relations

Fracking: injection of fluids to release “tight oil” .... –  
directional drilling technology (“fracking proven  
1948...drilling technology 1980-2000)





# A Brief History of “Fracking”

- US oil dependency prior to Fracking
  - 1900-1948 US domestic supply sufficient to meet demand
  - 1948-2005 US increasingly dependent on oil imports: 1973/4 Oil Embargo
- Industrialised “Fracking” expands from 2005
  - GW Bush Administration removes environment constraints
  - Obama Administration “pause” expansion... environment issues
- 2016-2020: US becomes largest oil exporter, exports > imports
  - Trump removes Obama regulations...fracking “unleashed”
  - Environment impacts unclear.....investigations discontinued !

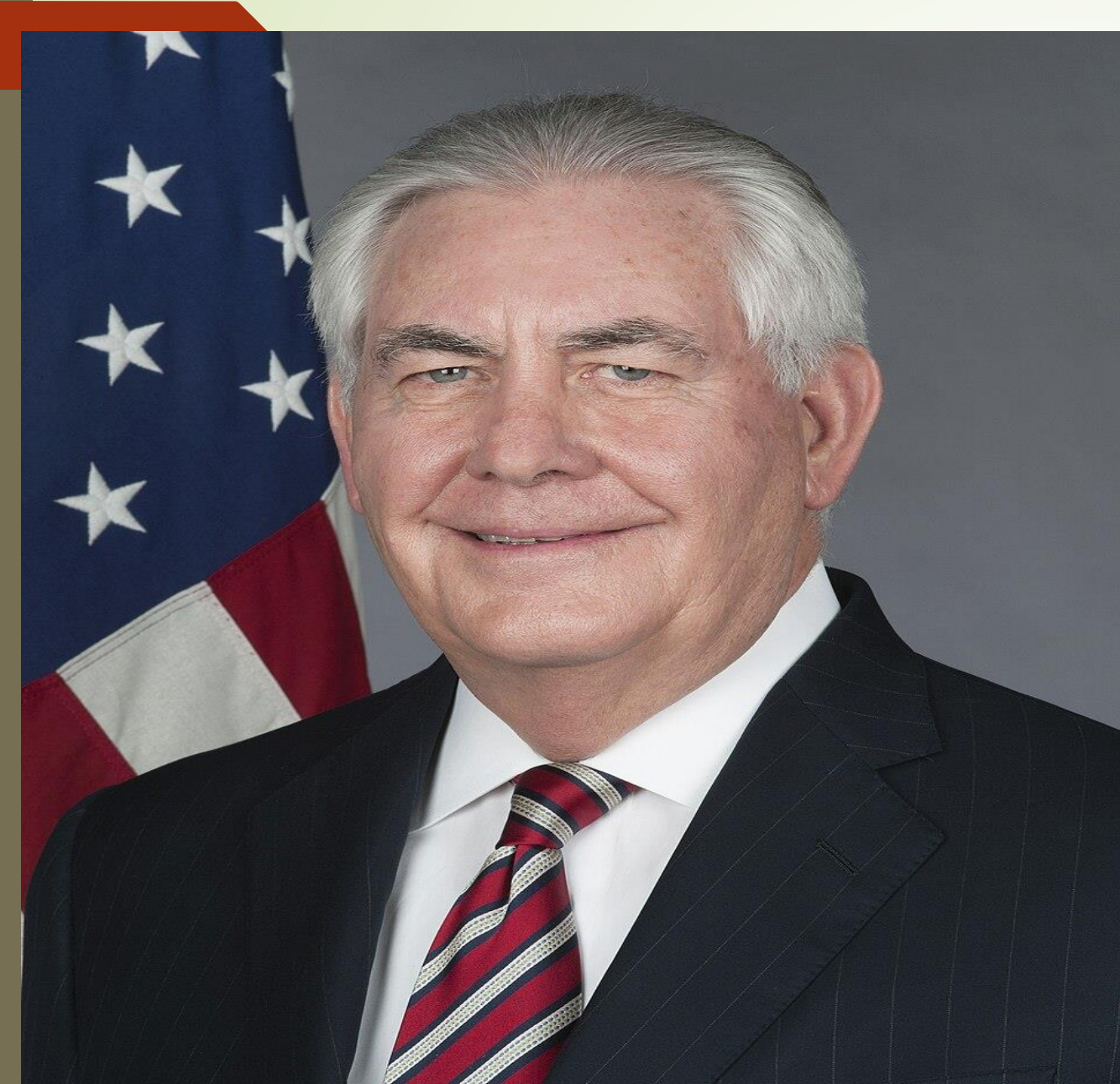
US foreign policy no longer constrained by energy dependency

# Trump and foreign policy

- ▶ “Today, our foreign policy is a complete and total disaster”..“no vision, no strategic purpose, no direction, no consistency. We will no longer surrender this country or its people to the false song of globalism.”
- ▶ “America First means the United States prioritizing its own interests above global commitments and alliances”
- ▶ Allies must “pay their fair share” NATO obsolete, allies “getting a free ride”...  
“The countries we defend must pay for the cost of this defence.”



# Rex Tillerson..Secretary of State (2017-2018)



Chairman Exxon Mobile  
...long term Republican contributor  
....substantial oil business in Russia

As Sec of State  
...reduce costs, discipline  
...opposes Putin & Ukraine  
...Rejects Trump proposal to 10x US  
Nuclear arsenal...calls Trump xxxx“moron”

Trump fires March 2018...by “twitter”  
...challenges Trump for IQ tests in public  
....fires “dumb as a rock”. “lazy as hell”

Replaced by Trump loyalist Mike Pompeo

# Mike Pompeo (Secretary of State 2018-2021)



West Point graduate  
Army officer, Harvard Law School  
Business.....Aviation & oil business  
...bought out by Koch brothers

House Representative 2011-2017  
....Koch brother campaign support  
....Trump supporter since 2016  
....proponent of MAGA beliefs

Director CIA 2017/2018  
...support “advanced interrogation

Sec of State  
....amplifies Trump messages  
....politicises foreign office  
....marginalised by Jared Kushner



# “America First” in action: treaties abandoned

- Paris Climate Change Agreement
- JCPOA agreement with Iran.....return to threats
- Trans Pacific Partnership...ending “Pivot to East”
- Intermediate Range Nuclear forces....build up weapons vs China
- Reverses “Cuban Thaw”...return to sanctions, travel bans
- UNESCO ..UN Educational, Science, Heritage sites protection

Pursues bi-lateral actions vs adversaries and allies on ad hoc basis



# Ending the “Forever Wars”



# Iraq

## Iraq 2017...Obama Legacy

- Central State remains weak, “Government” control Baghdad,
- Sunni (anti Iran) and Shia (pro Iran) rival militia unite vs ISIS
- US providing air & drone support (targeted assassination of ISIS leaders)

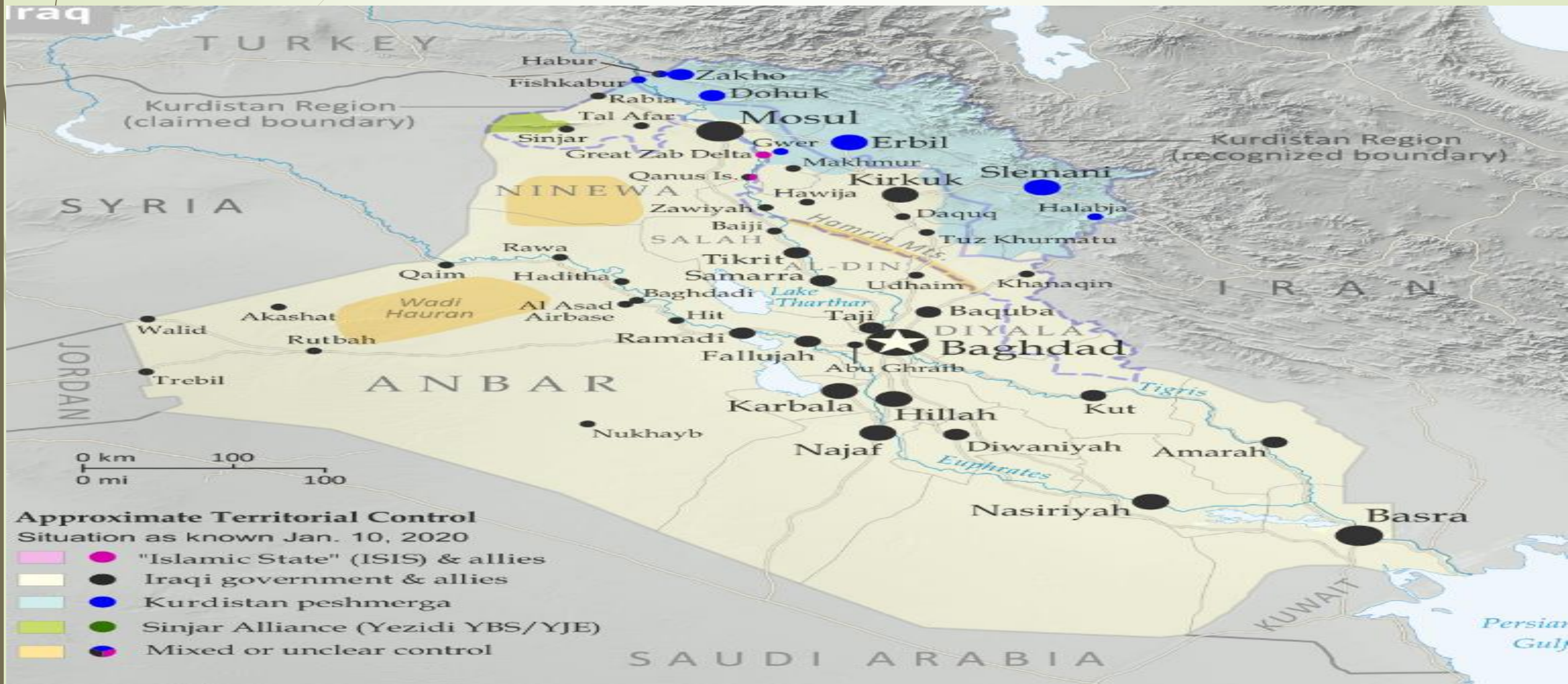
## ➤ Trump 2017-2021

- Continues Obama policy ..air power support
- ISIS eliminated as territorial force by 2019..US casualties minimal

## ➤ Current State ( 2020+): Weak central government “non aligned”

- Neutral position vs Iran and USA
- US retains air bases...2,000 military...minimal influence
- US oil dependency removed by “Fracking Revolution”

# Iraq 2020: The state “restored” weak ....ISIS eliminated, Kurds autonomous, militia warlords





# Afghanistan

## Trump & Afghan President Ghani 2018



## ➤ Trump & Afghanistan...2017

- Claims Obama “surge” failed
- Ups US military from 9,000-15,000
- “fight harder but not tell them when we will leave” Meets with new President Ghani

## ➤ Exit Decision 2018-2020

- Military stalemate...Ghani dependent on US
- Decides to exit...key deal with Taliban
- Commissions negotiation US & Taliban
- no involvement Afghan Government



# Doha Agreement February 2020

US Envoy Khazildad (Afghan US) & Taliban



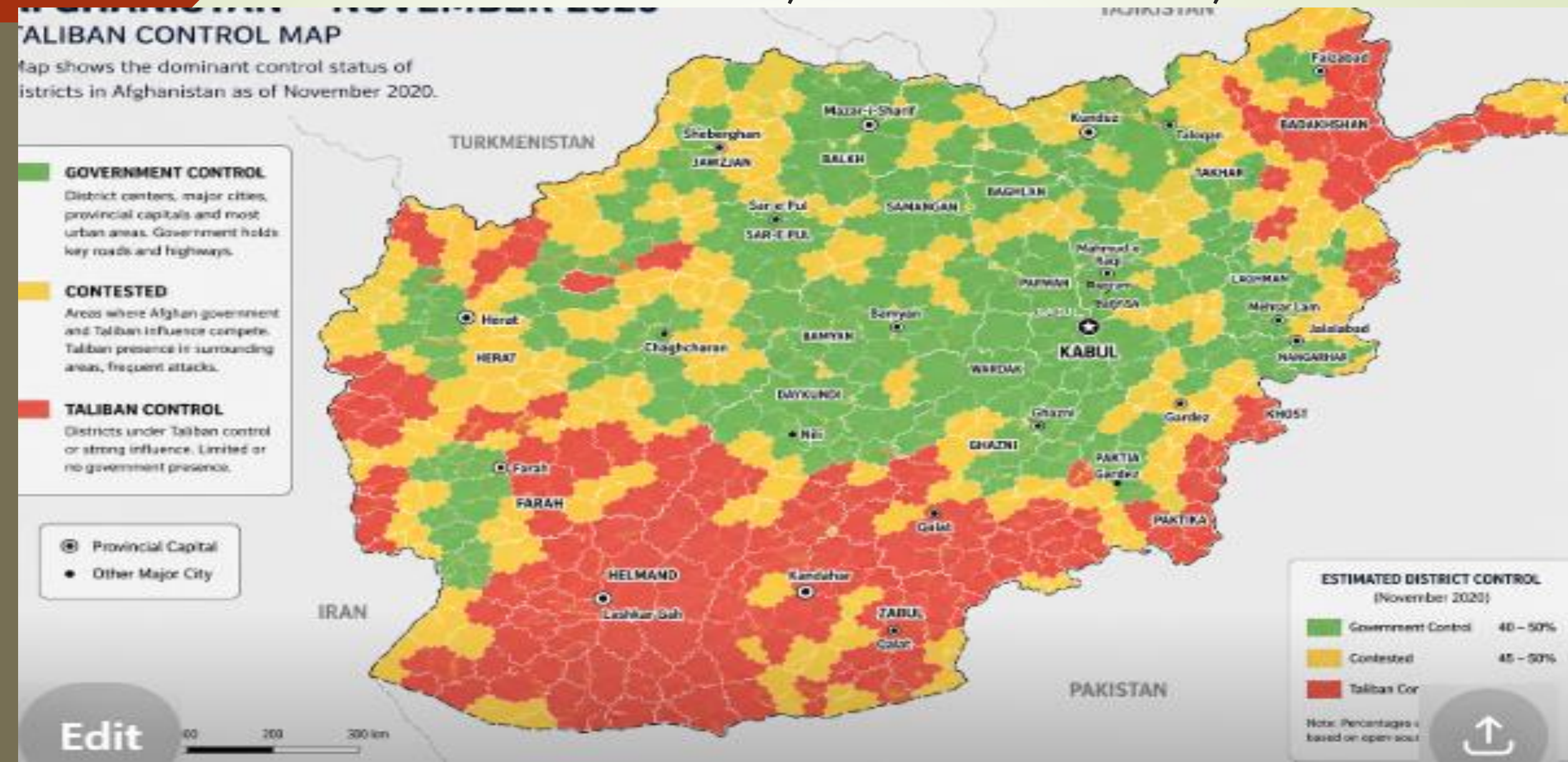
## ➤ Key features

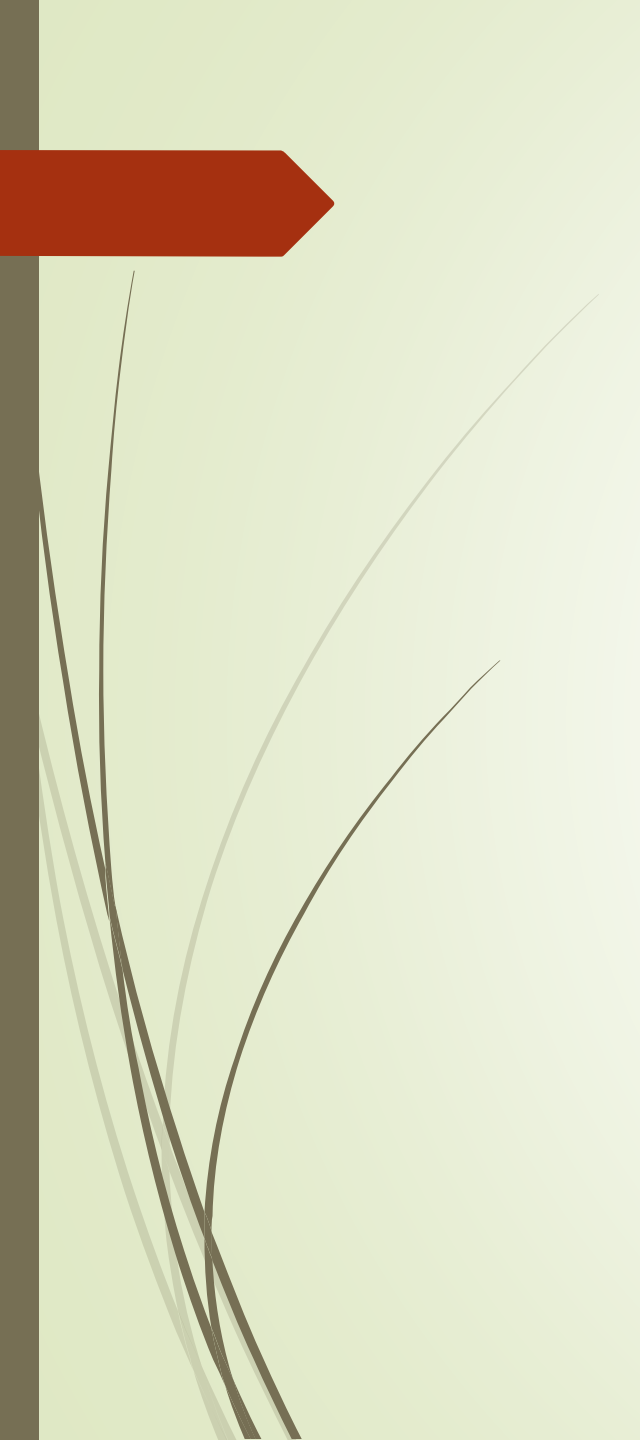
- US to withdraw in May 2021
- Taliban not to attack US or support Al-Qaida
- Free 5,000 Taliban prisoners (done)  
Taliban to reciprocate (don't)
- Taliban to negotiate with Afghan government later (ignored)
- Wait for US to withdraw & consolidate control and build strength



# Afghanistan end 2020

dominate rural areas , infiltrate cities, and wait





Middle East



# Iran

## 2016 JCPOA Agreement with Obama Administration

- Iran reduces enrichment, removes centrifuges, accepts Inspection regime
- US returns Iran weapons pre-payments (Shah purchases) and phases out sanctions
- Iran continues support for proxies (Iraq, Lebanon, Gaza, Yemen)

## ➤ 2017 Trump cancels JCPOA

- Iran resumes enrichment, Inspections blocked
- US seize Iran assets
- Proxy wars continue

## ➤ 2017-2021...ongoing low level conflict

- US targeted assassination Iranian General/ Iran (ineffective) missile attacks US military...
- Proxy wars (Lebanon, Gaza , Yemen) continue

And 6 years later.....here we are

# Trump and Palestine/ Israel

## US Policy prior to Trump

- Constrained by (diminishing) dependency on Middle East Oil
- Direct aid to Israel, but support “two state solution”
- Oppose settlements in West banks illegal..obstacle to peace
- Jerusalem a neutral place shared Muslim/ Jewish/ Christian

## ➤ Trump Administration and Palestine

- Pompeo 2019 “The establishment of Israeli civilian settlements... is not, per se, inconsistent with international law.”
- Jerusalem recognised as Israeli capital, Golan Heights Israel territory
- Two State solution optional ““A lot of people like the one-state solution. Some people like the two-state solutions. We’ll have to see.”

Trump Goal...secure alliance Israel and pro-West states and weaken Iran



# Abraham Accords...September 2020

Bahrain, Israel (Netanyahu) Trump, UAE



Prior to “Accords”

- ..Egypt & Jordan only Arab States to recognise Israel
- ...US fear overt Israel support

Accords signed Sept 2020

- ...Jared Kushner lead architect
- ...Bahrain, UAE, Morocco

Scope

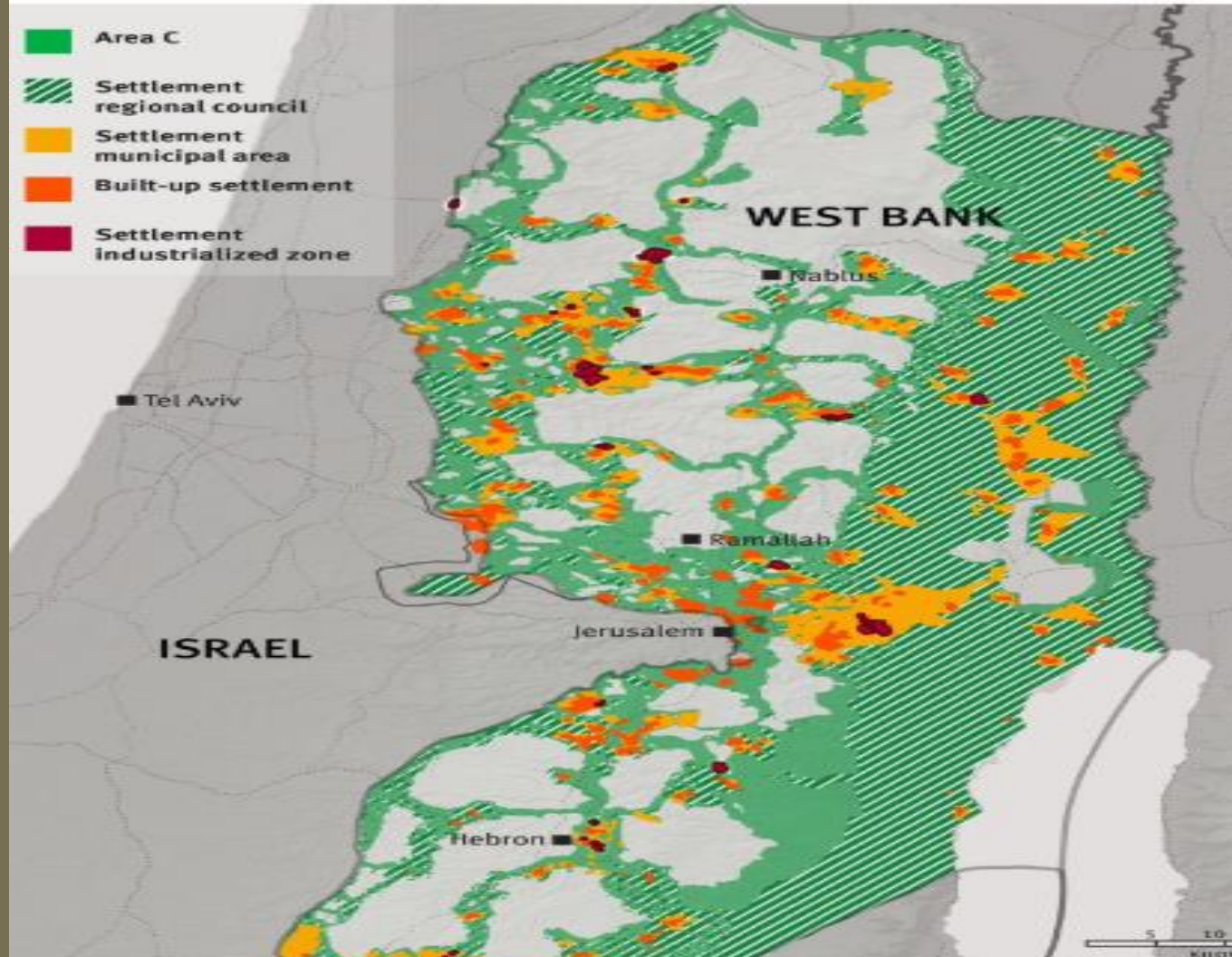
- ...recognise Israel
- ...trade/ tourism

Palestinians ignored

# Palestine issue continues

## Israel Occupied West Bank

There are now more than 500,000 Israeli settlers living in 237 settlements in the Israeli-occupied West Bank and East Jerusalem. Israel prohibits Palestinians from developing the areas it designates for settlement regional council which make up 70 percent of the part of the West Bank under its administrative control, called Area C.



## Areas of Control

....18% Palestinian

.... 20% Shared...5m people

...70% Israel controlled...settlements

## Jewish settlements West Bank/ Jerusalem

1990 ...275,000

2000...390,000

2010... 525,000

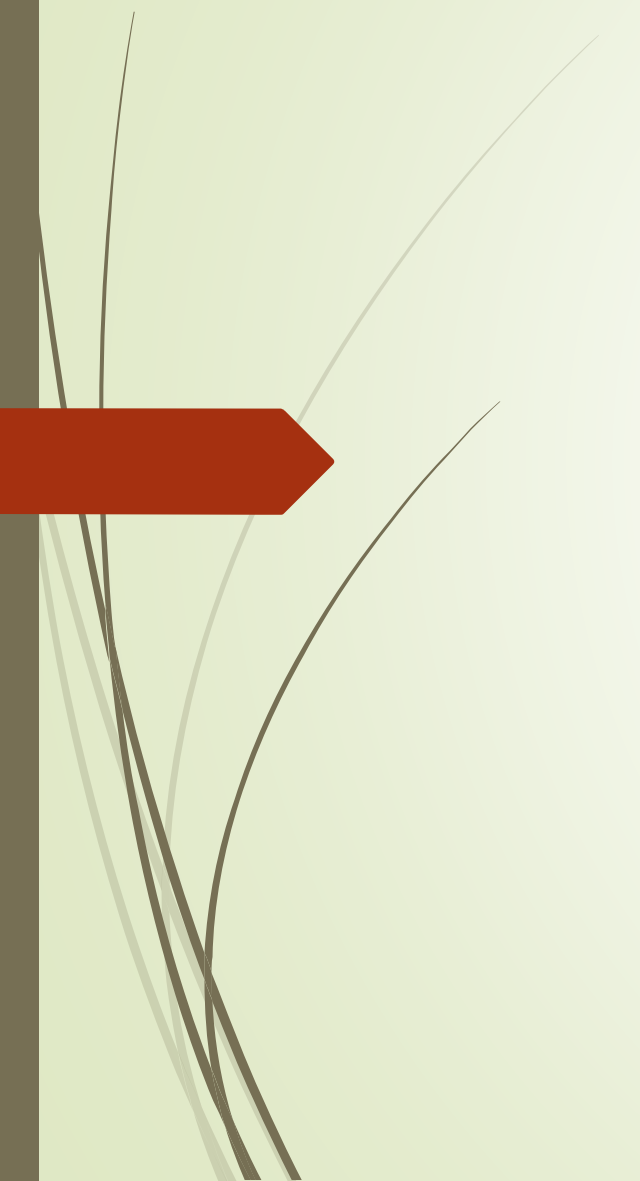
2020... 690,000

.....increasing 30,000 per year

US \$3Bn per year direct aid to Israel

Zero US/ Palestinian contacts after US  
Recognition of Jerusalem as Israel capital





# Trump and Asia

# North Korean interlude

- 2016 “North Korea is a big problem...Kim il Jung “He’s like a maniac... we can’t play games with him.”
- 2017: North Korea continues missile development
- Trump Response “ “North Korean Leader Kim Jong Un just stated that the 'Nuclear Button is on his desk at all times.' Will someone from his depleted and food starved regime please inform him that I too have a Nuclear Button, but it is a much bigger & more powerful one than his, and my Button works They will be met with fire and fury like world has never seen.”....” Little Rocket Man is on a suicide mission for himself and his regime.”  
Agrees 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting ....at Korean border



# North Korean summits

- 2018 Singapore Summit 2018...the first meeting
  - Trump announces “complete denuclearization of the Korean Peninsular”
  - We’re signing a very important document....pretty comprehensive”
  - Agree to Hanoi summit
- 2019 Hanoi Summit February 2019: impasse
  - ...Trump sees “tremendous future for your country”
  - Trump interview “ They have great beaches. You see that whenever they’re exploding their cannons into the ocean. I said, ‘Boy, look at that view. Wouldn’t that make a great condo

The Pyongyang meeting Feb 2019  
.....No agreement Trump cuts meeting short, leaves.  
North resumes nuclear programme





# Trump and China



- ▶ Obama and China

- ▶ “Pivot East”. Trans Pacific Partnership) economic bloc
- ▶ Engage with China.. Climate Change, trade...but hedge

- ▶ Trump election campaign

- ▶ China “ripping off USA”, “stealing our jobs”, currency manipulator
- ▶ “We can’t continue to allow China to rape our country, and that’s what they’re doing.....

- ▶ Trump in office 2017

- ▶ Changes to diplomatic tone: no action currency
- ▶ Seeks China help vs North Korea...no response

# Negotiations with the powerful problematic

Trump & Xi

“ I get along with him great 2018?



2018 Initiates confrontation

.... tariffs In steel, electronics, Machinery

.....China response tariffs on US agriculture

2019-2020 Escalations of tensions

...Expand tariffs

...Bans on Huawei...key supplier

....5 meetings with Chinese Pres Xi

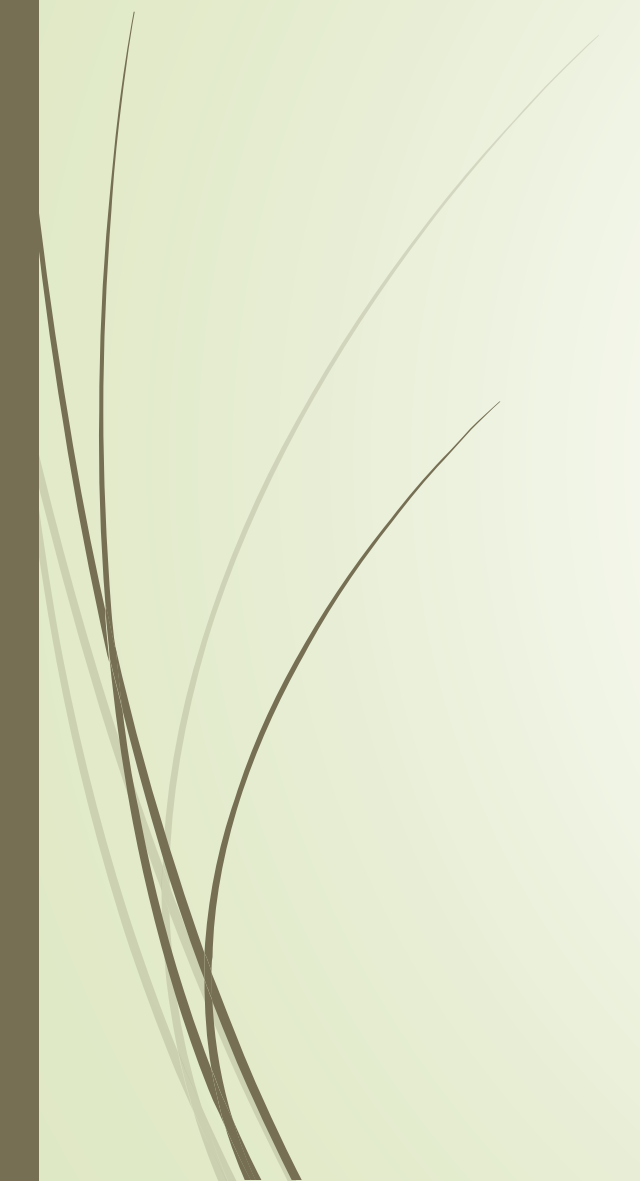
...\$28Bn payments direct to US farmers

....loss of Chinese market

2020....seeks deal,investment

....no response





Russia

# Russian politics 2016-2020

## Constitutional Reforms

- Putin secures unlimited future terms
- State Governors to be appointed by Putin and not elected
- State supervision of electoral process
- Internal repression intensified
  - Opposition media closed down, leaders imprisoned, poisoned (Nvatny)
  - Cult of “Great Patriotic War”...”Stalin a hero”
- Demonization of the West & Infiltration of political campaigns
  - Ukraine labelled as Fascist State/ Maidan revolution labelled Western Coup
  - Active election interference (for Brexit, Anti-Macron, German elections)

USA 2016 election targeted



# Russia & 2016 Election

Institute for Strategic Studies (2009)



- Project Lakhta...Institute for Internet Studies
  - Troll farm: Damage Clinton campaign
  - Hack and disseminate Democrat e mails
  - FBI Report completed April 2019: "Systematic and pervasive"
- Social Media campaigns
  - Undermine faith in elections
  - Funding pro Trump groups
  - "United Muslims of America (\$100K) + 2,500
  - Anti Clinton web-sites
- Meetings/ influencing campaign
  - Attorney General Sessions
  - Jared Kushner
  - Trump meeting July 2016 Russian lawyer...
  - "damaging information about Clinton

Independent investigation commissioned  
May 2017 by DOJ (then independent)

# Trump and Putin

Trump and Putin Helsinki 2018  
(prior to World Cup



Trump visit to Moscow 2013  
...Miss Universe Competition  
...meets with oligarchs  
..."Trump Tower Moscow"  
...no confirmed Putin meeting

Trump – Putin on campaign  
"If Putin says great things about me,  
I'm going to say great things about him."

Meets 6 times during term, no criticism  
"great and powerful leader"

Helsinki summit 2018  
...private meeting  
...Rejects CIA report on interference  
"President Putin says it's not Russia.  
I don't see any reason why it would be"



# The Mueller Report

Robert Mueller (1944-2026)

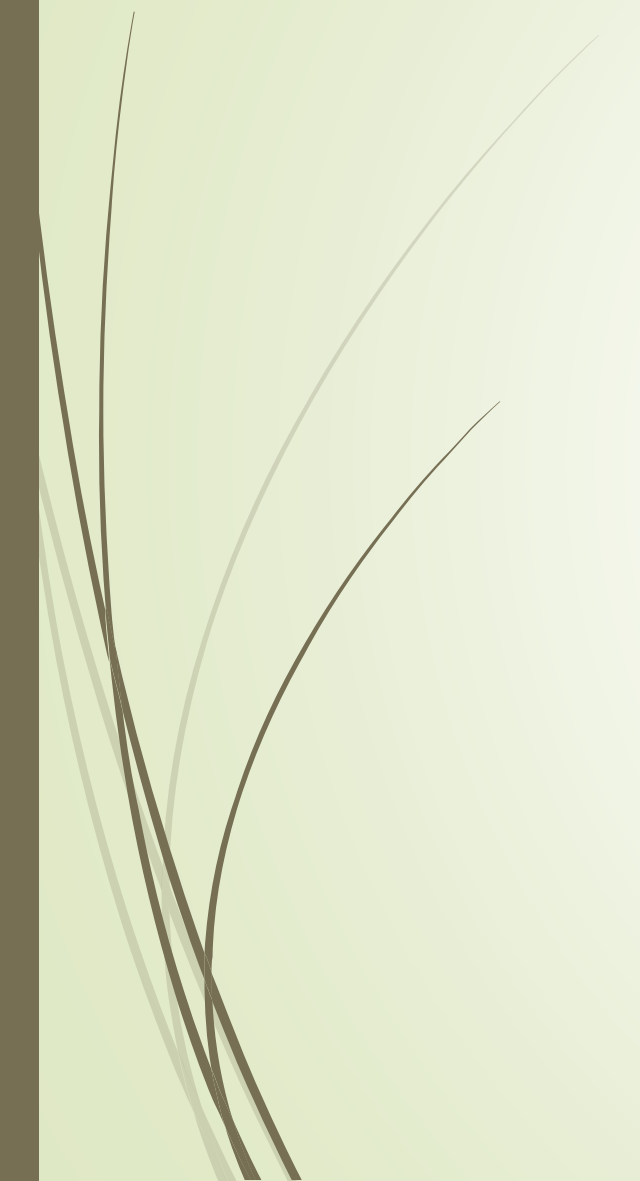


- Background
  - Vietnam veteran...wounded, medal for bravery
  - Law School....Justice Dept. Director FBI 2001-2013
- Mueller Report Investigation
  - Commissioned May 2017 by FBI..FBI Director Comey
  - Scope “Russian Collusion”
  - Trump fires Comey June, fails to Mueller
- Findings
  - Significant Russian influence: “informational warfare”
  - Multiple indictments on Trump team, Russian business
  - “Declines to exonerate Trump,,retires
- Aftermath: Trump “ : claims “witch hunt”
  - On death cancer 2026..."Good, I'm glad he's dead. He can no longer hurt innocent people!"

# Trump and World 2016-2021

- Forever Wars: Ends US engagement Iraq, Abandons Afghanistan to Taliban
- Iran US return to conflict...nuclear programme resumed, proxy wars increase
- Middle East: US moves from “balanced” to full support for Israel
- Asia: No impact North Korea nuclear programme, China trade
- Europe
  - Russia aggression emboldened, information war ignored
  - NATO allies do increase defence by 12% vs 9% during Obama Presidency
  - Alliance weakened by US desire to “buy” Greenland

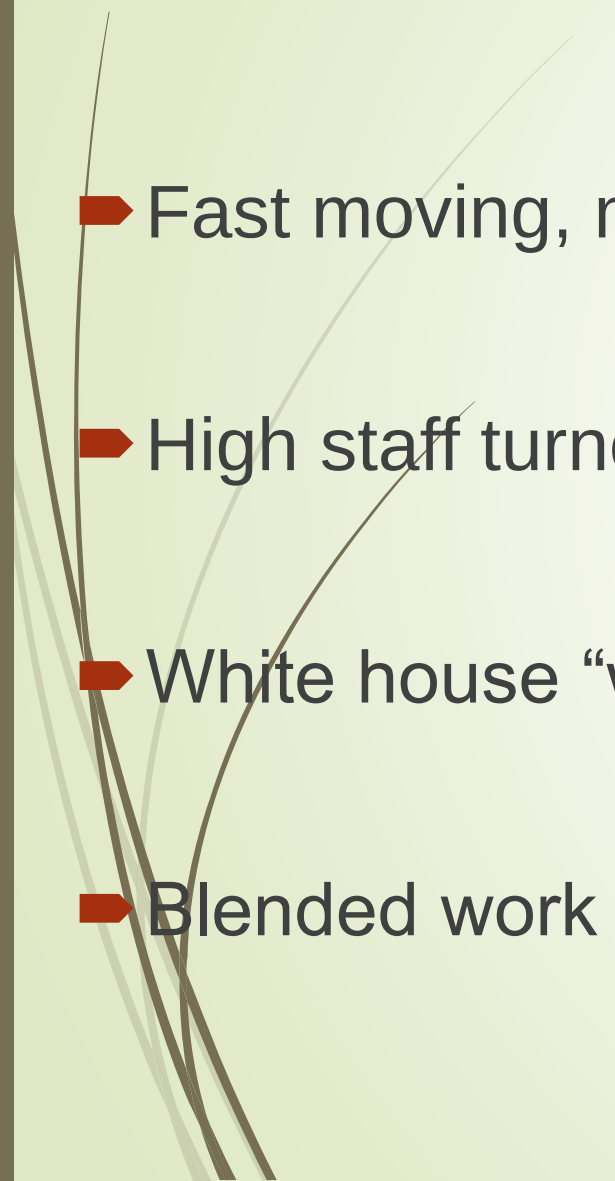




# White House Life



# White House Life 2016-2019

- Fast moving, media driven, centred around Trump
  - High staff turnover, factional disputes (MAGA vs Conservatives)
  - White house “weekday” location. long weekends Mira Largo Florida
  - Blended work and leisure...golfing politics
- 



# Melania first lady



Frequent absence, separate  
New York, Florida White House  
Attends formal occasions

Separate and formal,  
Private life, no political  
Issues...inactive 1st Lady  
Supports/ not lead  
....."Be Best"  
.....Opioid awareness  
...."Anti Bullying"



# At Buckingham Palace 2019

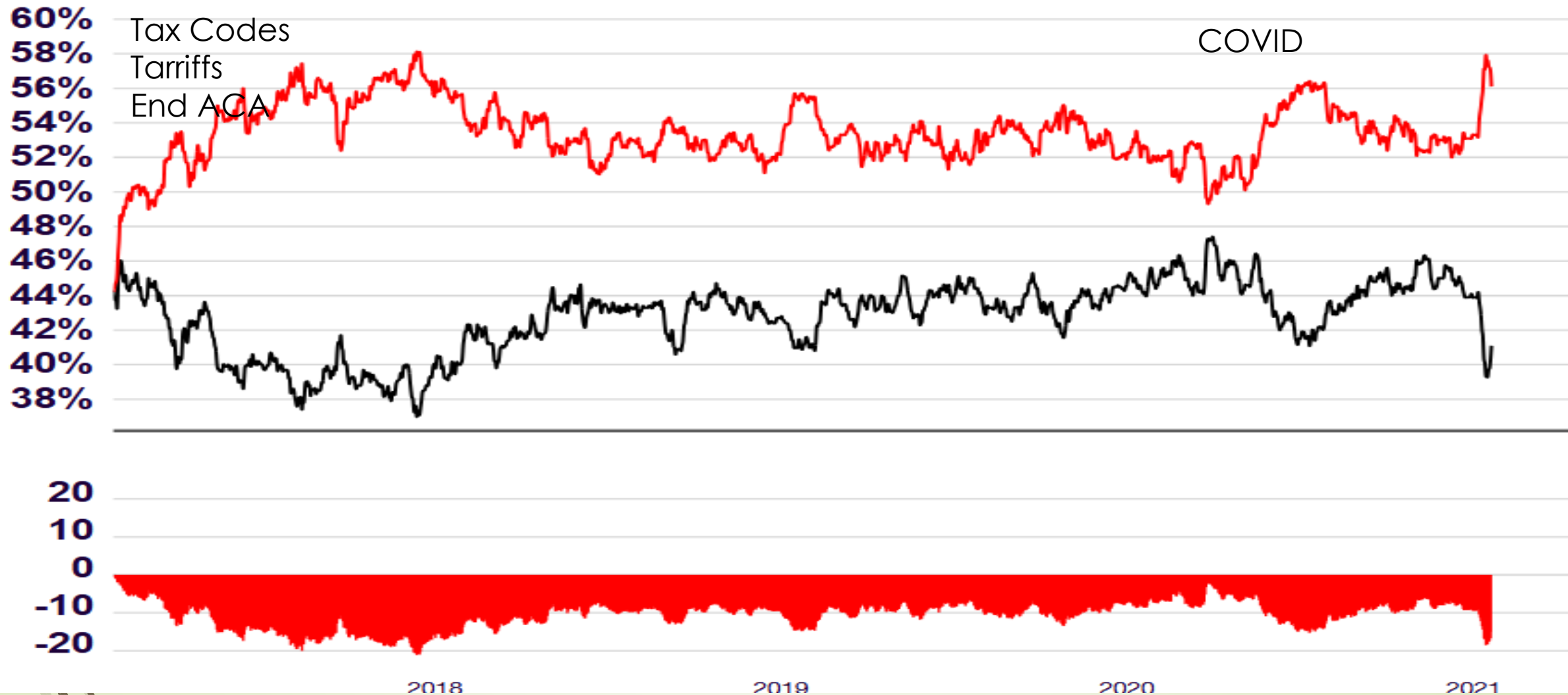






# 2018 Mid-Terms and Covid

# The unpopular President .....lowest average recorded for any President





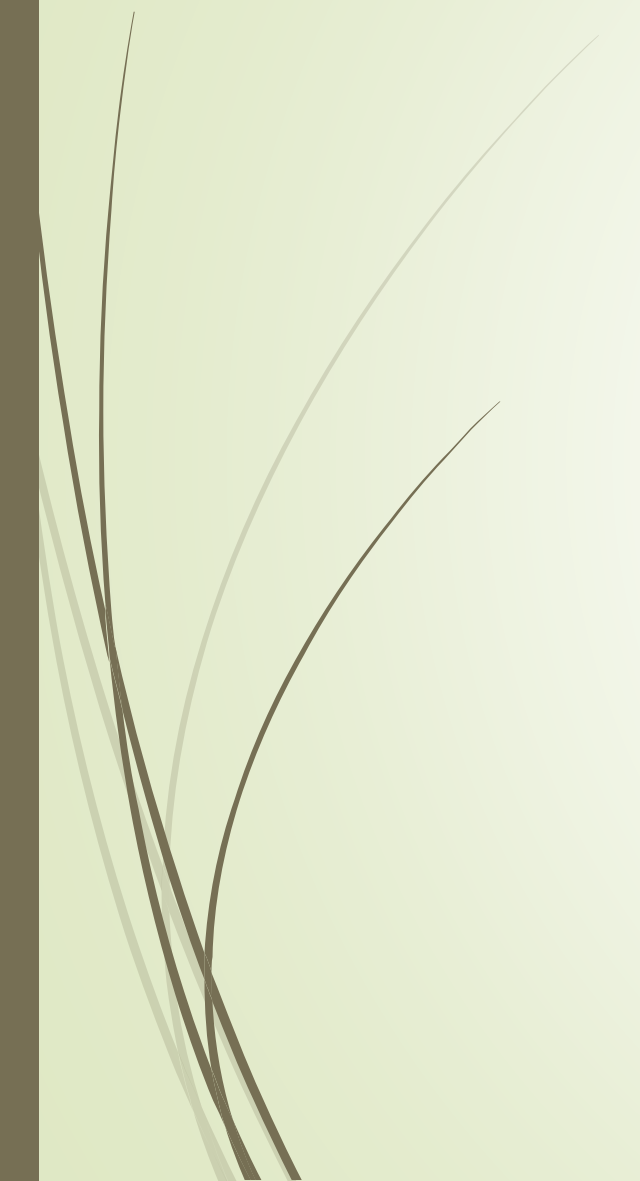
# 2018 Mid Terms

Nancy Pelosi (1940 ....)



- Democrat campaign  
....health care, Russia, behaviour  
....Trump unpopular but MAGA loyal rural
- “Blue Wave”: Trump loses “Trifecta”  
.....Democrats gain 40 seats House and control  
.....Republicans retain Senat3+
- Trumps meets first opposition: Nancy Pelosi
- First female Speaker of the House
  - 2007-2011 Obama , Health Care,
  - 2018-2023 ..Neutralises Trump agenda  
.....“Iron fist, Gucci Glove”

Then came COVID ...and world changed



# COVID & 2020 US Election



# Covid Epidemic

November 2019....first cases Wuhan China (by retrospective analysis)

- ➡ December 27<sup>th</sup> 2019: Chinese confirm “new form of virus”, notify WHO
- ➡ January 23<sup>th</sup> 2020..Chinese ...confirm human to human contagion, first “lockdown”...send Covid genome to WHO
- ➡ February 2020+....Global pharmaceutical companies begin vaccine work
- ➡ March 11<sup>th</sup> WHO announces “pandemic”...5,000 deaths New York

Trump declares “National Emergency March 13<sup>th</sup>

# US Covid Task Force first public meeting..March 2020

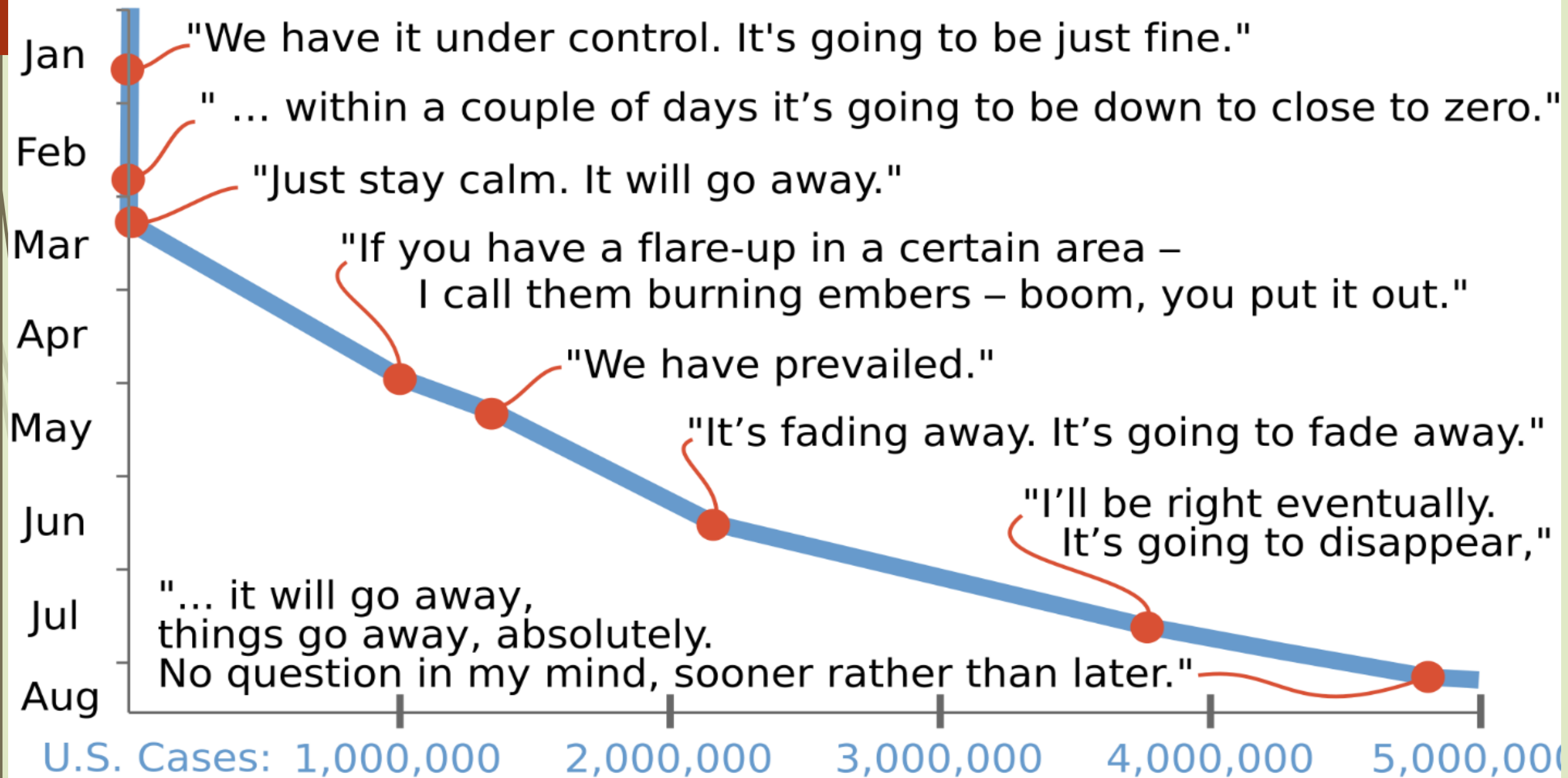




# Covid and USA: Controlling Epidemic

- No National Programme on Lockdowns, masks or social distancing
- Blue States (California, New York, Mid West, North East) aggressive
- Red States (South, Texas, Central (fly-over states)) limited response
- US Government Role
  - Ban international travel
  - Provide advice on masks, distancing
  - Economic support
  - Support Vaccine development

# Trump contradictory messages





# Covid Economic Impact

- ▶ Trump Initial response : Extend/ increase unemployment benefits
- ▶ Emergency....heading to catastrophe during March
  - ▶ Layoffs accelerate ...unemployment rises from 5% to 15%
  - ▶ Economy contracts by 33%....Rapid Response...RED and BLUE!
- ▶ Bi Partisan CARE Act Passed by March 27<sup>th</sup> :\$2 TN Relief Package
  - ▶ Employment protection to businesses to stop layoffs
  - ▶ Direct cash payments to families
  - ▶ Increase unemployment pay

Unemployment declines to 7% by end of year, economy recovers

Economic impact: unemployment from 4% to 15%  
.....offset by higher benefits...not job retention

## US Non farm payrolls





# Operation “Warp Speed”

## ➤ The programme

- Launched March 2020: vaccine by Christmas
- Vaccine by December 2020: Accelerate vaccine development
- Simultaneous development, manufacturing, procurement and approval
- Under military control due to logistics experience

## ➤ Impact

- First Vaccine German/ US Pfizer BioNtech approved December 2020
- Astra Zeneca low cost 85% effectivity available UK & EU
- Adequate supplies available January 2021

Fastest vaccine development ever...US well placed, vaccine & logistics in place  
.....if population accepts vaccine

# Trump & Covid

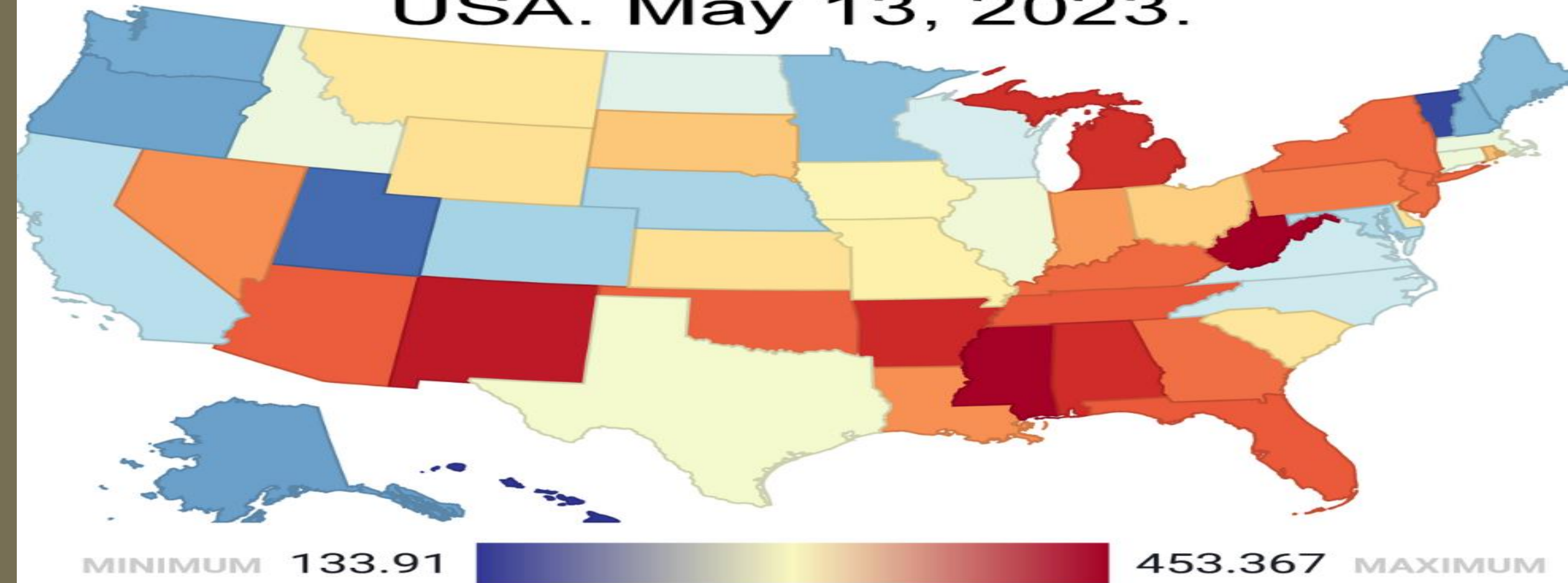
- 
- Positives: : travel ban,
    - Vaccine development
    - Economic aid rapid, bi-partisan
    - Recommends use of vaccine “
  - Negatives/ contradictions...erratic messaging
    - Limits pro vaccine announcements...”I respect your freedoms”
    - MAGA messages vs science, elites, attacks Lockdowns
    - Supports “alternative” solutions Hydroxychloroquine / chloroquine

Overall public assessment polarised ...RED vs BLUE



MAGA and Covid ....significantly higher death rates in  
“RED” (anti vaccination, low lock down) states

**COVID-19 death rates per 100,000.  
USA. May 13, 2023.**



# 2020 Presidential Election

## Economy and Covid central issue

- Covid changes how elections held
  - Rise mail in voting, Delayed counting...fuels conspiracy fraud theories
  - Trump mass rallies ("spreader events), Democrats....use of Zoom
- Republican nomination: Trump unopposed
- Democrat nomination
  - Multiple candidates, Defeat of Trump & MAGA the priority
  - Choose someone trusted, reliable, recognised, Obama VP Jo Biden



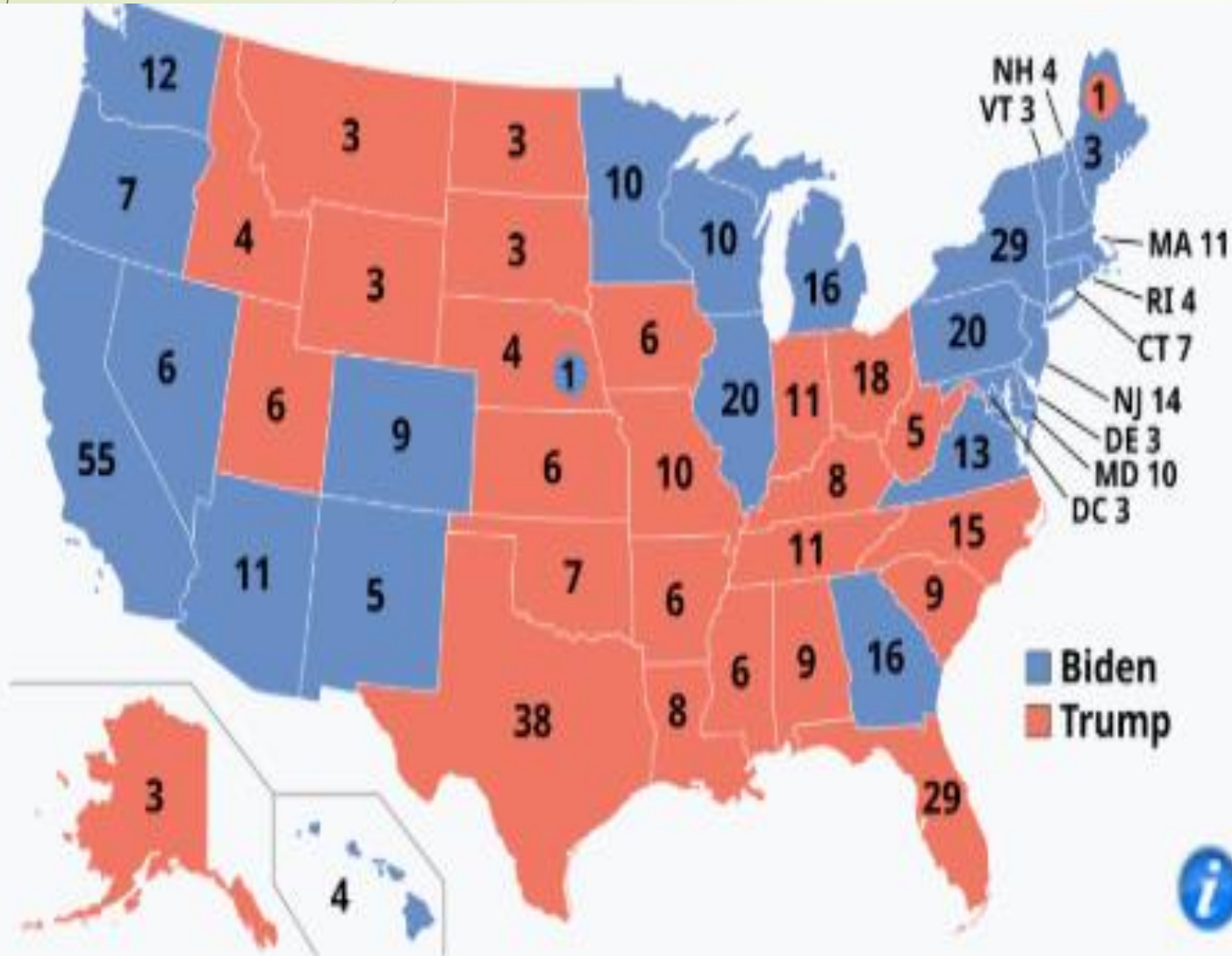
# The 2020 Presidential Election

....competing “Alternative facts”, two Americas

- Republicans (RED) states
  - Trump the decisive great leader
  - “America Great Again”, no new wars, Allies put in place, Russia no enemy
  - Immigration problem solved
  - Greatness cheated by Covid
- Democratic (BLUE) states
  - Trump cruel, racist, erratic and authoritarian
  - America isolated, alliances weakened, enemies emboldened, Russia threat
  - Immigration policies cruel and “un-American”
  - Beating Covid and improving economy needs “mature” leader

# 2020 Election

➤ Biden wins 51% vs trump  
48%...303 vs 232



Voting delays, Trump early  
lead before mail in ballots  
counted

Dems retain House, Senate 50  
vs 50 VP decider

Trump claims fraud files 67 suites  
...all fail...rejects result





Election is “over”

.The fight for the transition of power has just begun

Next Talk 58: The Biden Interlude