

Violence roils the presidential campaign

This week President Trump visited Kenosha, Wisconsin, the location of a police shooting, and shooting of two protesters by an alleged 17-year-old Trump supporter. Trump met with law enforcement officials in Kenosha and toured buildings that had been burnt down in the riots. Trump has made sure to reinforce the law-and-order theming he has been using for his re-election campaign.

Violence in the city started when police officers responding to a call for help shot the 29 year old Jacob Blake seven times in the back as he tried to enter his car, severing his spine and paralyzing him. Trump, who didn't meet with Blake or his family, blames the violence on "far-left politicians" who "push the destructive message that our nation and our law enforcement are oppressive or racist." Trump also defended the 17-year old Kyle Rittenhouse, who was charged with killing two protesters with a military-style rifle. Rittenhouse, who was charged with homicide, illegal weapons possession, and four other crimes, drove in from Illinois to join groups of vigilantes patrolling Kenosha's streets. A video shows him shooting a protester who tossed a bag at him as well as two other protesters trying to take his gun away. Rittenhouse claimed self defense, and Trump said that he had been "violently attacked" and "probably would have been killed"

On Saturday in Portland, a caravan including members of Patriot Prayer, a far right group, drove through downtown, firing paintballs and pepper spray at police-brutality protesters who had staged demonstrations around the courthouse for months. A 39 year old supporter of Patriot Prayer was fatally shot by an unknown assailant during a confrontation on the street. Trump called the group "GREAT PATRIOTS" defending Portland against "Disgraceful Anarchists"

In a speech, Joe Biden, the Democratic nominee, blamed Trump of stoking division and "recklessly encouraging violence." Biden said he "unequivocally" condemned the "lawlessness" in Kenosha and other cities. Biden challenged Trump's claims that disorder would grow if he were elected. "I'd be looking to lower the temperature in this country, not raise it," said Biden on Thursday" with how much violence there is while Trump is president will it change if he is re-elected?

Trump's Second term and Promises

The Republican Party nominated Donald Trump for a second term this week at a virtual convention, which focuses less on what Trump would do if he was re-elected, and more on what would happen if he wasn't. On top of this the convention broke from the norms in a number of ways, from declining to create a party platform, instead stating it "will continue to enthusiastically support the president's America-first agenda." Other prominent Republicans such as former president George W. Bush, steered clear of the event, which had seven Trump family members speaking. Traditional barriers between campaigning and governing were crossed, as the White House was used as a setting for many speeches.

With how the nomination and Republican National Convention went, not focusing on what Trump would do if he won, let's look back at what the President promised in his last campaign, and how those promises have held up. Making over 280 promises some of his biggest ones fell through. From building the wall and having Mexico pay for it, Trump did build 307 miles of walls, most of that was replacing previous barriers or vehicle checkpoints, and Mexico has paid for none of it costing the United States about \$30 million per mile. A second promise is one he is repeating this year saying "We will also be a country of law and order," Trump himself has admitted that he has failed this promise. This pattern continues on many of his other promises from repealing Obamacare, to cutting taxes for the middle class, and getting rid of the debt and trade deficits. Most pressing is his recent promise on February 4th 2020, in which he said "Unlike so many who came before me, I keep my promises." which is both still untrue and a broken promise in its own right.

“I Keep My Promises,” Trump Said. Let’s Check

Four years ago as a candidate, President Donald Trump made more than 280 campaign promises.

Let’s see how he did:

“I will build a great, great wall on our southern border ...” (*speech, June 16, 2015*)

While Trump so far has built 307 miles of walls along the 1,984-mile border, much of this replaces previous barriers that were dilapidated or blocked only vehicles.

“... and I will have Mexico pay for that wall.”

Mexico is not paying for it. The new wall is costing about \$30 million per mile and will be expensive to maintain, for human smugglers have cut open the wall with \$50 cordless saws.

“We will find them [all unauthorized immigrants], we will get them out.” (*CNN interview, July 29, 2015*)

Trump deported about 750,000 immigrants in his first three years in office, but most were trying to get into the country illegally, not already living here. He never tried to remove all immigrants who lack legal status. He did unleash a reign of terror directed at migrants, including separating young children from family members, and that may be one reason the total number of undocumented immigrants fell slightly. Still, Trump actually deported fewer people in his first three years than Barack Obama had — a comparison neither man will appreciate.

“We will also be a country of law and order. ... The crime and violence that today afflicts our nation will soon, and I mean very soon, come to an end. Beginning on Jan. 20 of 2017, safety will be restored.” (*speech, July 21, 2016*)

Trump himself implicitly acknowledges that he has failed to create law and order, saying, “There is violence and danger in the streets” (*speech, Aug. 27, 2020*). Periodically, he incites that violence.

“The most basic duty of government is to defend the lives of its own citizens. Any government that fails to do so is a government unworthy to lead.” (*speech, July 21, 2016*)

The United States has lost more than 185,000 people to the coronavirus pandemic. On a per capita basis, that's more than twice as many as Canada and five times as many as Germany. America has 4% of the world's population and 22% of the world's confirmed COVID-19 deaths.

“We’re going to work with all of our students who are drowning in debt to take the pressure off these young people.” *(speech, July 21, 2016)*

Trump has sought to alter the terms of student loan repayments so that students would have to pay an additional \$200 billion over a decade. He also attempted to cancel the Public Service Loan Forgiveness program.

“We will repeal and replace disastrous Obamacare.” *(speech, July 21, 2016)*

Trump has not succeeded in repealing the Affordable Care Act, although he is still pursuing a lawsuit that would overturn it. He has never explained what would replace it.

“You’re going to have great health care at a much lower price. It will cost the United States nothing.” *(remarks, July 27, 2018)*

Partly because of Trump's assaults on the Affordable Care Act, the number of uninsured people in the United States has risen for the first time in a decade. An additional 400,000 children are without insurance.

“I will be the greatest jobs president that God ever created.” *(speech, June 16, 2015)*

Job creation continued during the Trump administration at roughly the same rate as in the Obama administration, but the pandemic ended that. There are now almost 5 million fewer Americans with jobs than when Trump took office. In raw numbers, this is the worst jobs record of any modern president.

“It is time to drain the swamp in Washington, D.C. This is why I’m proposing a package of ethics reforms to make our government honest once again.” *(remarks, Oct. 17, 2016)*

Eight of Trump's associates have been charged with or convicted of crimes. Nonpartisan ethics watchdogs have repeatedly accused Trump and members of his administration and his family of

serious ethics violations, and the Manhattan district attorney suggested last month that he was investigating Trump and his company for “possibly extensive and protracted criminal conduct.”

“I’m going to put in ... great conservative judges.” *(remarks, March 20, 2016)*

Trump has appointed conservative (and young) judges across the federal bench, and this will be a major element of his legacy. He was helped by the Senate majority leader, Mitch McConnell, who blocked Obama from filling vacancies; Trump thus inherited an unusually large number of positions to fill.

“We will honor the American people with the truth, and nothing else.” *(speech, July 21, 2016)*

Trump has made more than 20,000 false or misleading statements since assuming office, by the count of The Washington Post.

“We will build the roads, highways, bridges, tunnels, airports and the railways of tomorrow.” *(remarks, July 21, 2016)*

Trump never tried to pass an infrastructure bill.

“We’re going to cut taxes for the middle class. ... We will ensure that the benefits are focused on the middle class, the working men and women, not the highest-income earners.” *(speech, Sept. 27, 2017)*

Trump did pass a tax cut, but it was focused on the wealthy. The nonpartisan Tax Policy Center estimated that for the 2018 tax year, 20% of the benefits would go to the top 1%, and that by 2027, 82% of the benefits would go to the top 1%.

“We’ve got to get rid of the \$19 trillion in debt. ... I could do it fairly quickly ... over a period of eight years.” *(interview, March 31, 2016)*

The debt has surged and may soon be larger than the American economy for the first time since 1946. That’s partly because of his tax cut for the wealthy and partly because of COVID-19.

“We will end our chronic trade deficits.” *(remarks, Oct. 15, 2016)*

The trade deficit is larger now than it was in Obama’s last year in office.

“We will completely rebuild our depleted military. ... We will take care of our great veterans.” *(speech, July 21, 2016)*

Trump has increased the military budget, although he has also taken military funds for his wall. He expanded a program signed into law by Obama for veterans to choose private doctors, while reportedly scolding those who died in wars as “suckers” and trying to keep amputees from participating in a military parade.

“We are going to defeat the barbarians of ISIS.” *(speech, July 21, 2016)*

The United States did overthrow the caliphate of the Islamic State group — a process begun under Obama. But ISIS continues to operate at a reduced level.

“We want to create peace between Israel and the Palestinians. We will get it done.” *(remarks, May 3, 2017)*

Peace between Israel and the Palestinians is as elusive as ever. However, Arab states such as the United Arab Emirates have warmed to Israel.

“Nobody will be pushing us around.” *(speech, June 16, 2015)*

The obvious exception is Russia, which interfered in the 2016 presidential election and now appears to be interfering in the 2020 election as well. Russia has injured U.S. troops in Syria, and it is said to have paid bounties to Afghan militants for killing U.S. troops.

“Unlike so many who came before me, I keep my promises.” *(speech, Feb. 4, 2020)*

Well, no.

Chadwick Boseman's Death

Chadwick Boseman, a famous actor known for diverse roles like Jackie Robinson in "42", and James Brown in "Get on Up". He died at the early age at 43 due to colon cancer which he had been fighting for four years. Chadwick hadn't spoken about his diagnosis publicly and still worked extremely hard even as he fought. It is a shame to see him go.

