

The Uniqueness and Unprecedented Policy of Donald Trump's Presidency Dealing with America's Domestic Issues

سياسة رئاسة دونالد ترامب لمعالجة القضايا المحلية في أميركا

التي تتسم بفرديتها وسياستها التي لم يسبق لها مثيل

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Abstract:

It is clear and widely accepted that, not just in America but also globally, American presidential elections are the most anticipated, televised, and talked about. But in 2016, America saw the election of Donald Jr. Trump, the country's first prosperous billionaire, who faced harsh criticism from many citizens for being a populist, anti-science, and unsuited for the delicate role of president of the US. As a matter of fact, Trump's four years in the White House revealed previously unheard-of levels of ideological polarization, division, and divisions in the country. Indeed, a great deal of writing has been written about Trump's domestic policies. As a result, this article discusses the environment in America during President Trump's tenure and how he came under fire for his un-presidential behavior, xenophobic statements, hate speech

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directed at immigrants, indifference and denial about COVID-19 and climate change, and his use of fake news in his tweets.

Key words: Donald Trump, Ideological Polarization, Xenophobia, Fake News, Anti-Science.

ملخص:

ومن الواضح والمقبولة على نطاق واسع أن الانتخابات الرئاسية الأمريكية هي الأكثر توقعاً وتلفزيوناً وحديثاً، ليس في أميركا فحسب، بل أيضاً على الصعيد العالمي. ولكن في عام 2016، شهدت أميركا انتخاب دونالد الابن ترامب، وهو أول ملياردير مزدهر في البلاد، الذي واجه انتقادات

قاسية من العديد من المواطنين لكونه شعبياً، معادياً للعلم، وغير مناسب للدور الدقيق لرئيس الولايات المتحدة. في الواقع، أربع سنوات في البيت الأبيض كشفت من قبل عن مستويات غير معروفة من الاستقطاب الإيديولوجي، والتقسيم، والانقسامات في البلاد. والواقع أن قدرًا كبيراً من الكتابة قد كُتبت عن سياسات ترامب المحلية. ونتيجة لذلك، تناقش هذه المقالة البيئة في أميركا خلال فترة ولاية الرئيس ترامب وكيف تعرض لإطلاق النار بسبب سلوكه غير الرئاسي، وتصريحاته التي تنم عن كره الأجانب، وخطاب الكراهية الموجه ضد المهاجرين، وعدم الاكتراث وإنكاره بشأن COVID-19 وتغير المناخ، واستخدامه للأخبار المزيفة في تغريداته.

كلمات مفتاحية: دونالد ترامب، الاستقطاب الإيديولوجي، كره الأجانب، الأخبار المزيفة، مكافحة العلم.

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1. Introduction

Every four years, millions of Americans participate in this democratic event by casting their votes in the US presidential

election, which is a significant event. People from all around the world, including Americans, fervently and passionately gather in front of their televisions to see the development of their vibrant and thriving democracy over the past 250 years and to cheer for their preferred candidate. In 2016, Americans chose their 45 US president, Donald Jr Trump, a Republican for four-year tenure. In fact, it was Hillary Clinton, who achieved a landslide victory in the popular vote but lost the Electoral College to Trump. In the aftermath of Trump's presidential election, vitriolic criticism poured from not only his Democratic counterparts, but from his Republican party as well as the general mainstream, stating that he is not skillfully experienced to hold the Executive power, head of the state and Commander in Chief.

Unequivocally, Trump is a businessman par excellence, his grandfather as well as his father Frederick Trump was a German immigrant, who built their own empire as a prosperous real-estate mogul. In Trump's first weeks in the Oval Office, the president received heavy criticism targeting his policy, stating that he was lacking skills and knowledge to lead a great and powerful country such as America. Democrats as well as Trump party's members "Republican" described him as a populist, anti-science, anti-elitist. Indeed, Trump's presidency was characterized by many American political experts as unique, unparalleled, and particular in the amount of events and incidents that occurred during his four year tenure. But also in terms of the amount of division, polarization, and fissures in American society. Therefore, this paper aims at discussing the climate in America during Trump's presidency, and how he was attacked for his unique attitude as a president, his Xenophobic rhetorics targeting immigrants, people

of color, and Muslims; his hate speech, polarization, climate change denial, and policy dealing with Covid-19.

2. America's Atmosphere During Trump's Presidency

The United States was classed by the Economist as a 'flawed democracy', as opposed to a 'full democracy', partly because of declining public trust in American political institutions as evidenced by polls conducted by Pew, Gallup, and other organizations. The American political system has recovered from serious threats to its institutions in the past, such as the Civil War, the Palmer Raids, McCarthyism, and Watergate, according to some analysts (Fukuyama, 2017). Prior to Trump's presidency, America was already divided among many internal issues, such as health care, education, mass shootings, and taxes, to name a few. According to the Pew Research Center, during the first year of President Trump's presidency, the political divide between Republicans and Democrats has widened. The divisions between Republicans and Democrats on fundamental political values on race, immigration, national security, environmental protection, and other areas reached high levels during Barack Obama's presidency. However, in Donald Trump's first year as president, these divisions have grown even larger, according to the Pew report released in 2017.

In addition to the growing gap between the two political parties, American public opinion became more polarized and divided over those domestic issues. But as Wilentz declared, in a country as diverse as America," there are always tons of divisions". According to Marist statistics from December 2016, 17% percent of Americans thought president Barack Obama was one of the worst presidents. After four years, Trump was still

viewed as deserving of the title by 83% percent of Democrats, 43% percent of Independents, and 13% percent of Republicans. Furthermore, 57% percent of Americans disagree with the job Trump has done since taking office (Santhanam, 2021).

3. Trump's Unpresidential Behaviour

There are numerous and significant ways in which president Trump is different from nearly all 43 of his predecessors. His corporate career has demonstrated an unwavering awkward regulation whenever they stood in his way. His election was predicated on a traditional populist campaign that energised a fervent base of primarily white middle- working class supporters, who feel frequently quite justifiably that the system has failed, marginalized, and abandoned them. During his four years in office, president Donald Trump has challenged established norms and taken an unusual approach to the nation's institutions. This strategy is expected to leave a lasting, damaging, and controversial legacy in Washington, DC, even after his one-term presidency.

Donald Trump, the first president without prior military or political experience, failed to internalize public duty, military discipline, and constitutional respect. He was not exposed to bureaucratic principles and violated presidential norms, such as meddling in elections and seeking foreign support, setting him apart from other presidents.

Trump fell short of the expectations of those who assumed he would adapt to the role and adopt more traditional presidential conduct after assuming office. Political experts strongly believe that manners are crucial and necessary than laws. Trump's

"unpresidential" behavior was one way he courted his supporters (Pfiffner, 2020). In an unprecedented manner, Trump exploited the nation's growing fears and divisions and prioritized loyalty above all else during his early days as a candidate and up until his attempts to rig the 2020 election.

The majority-white working-class voters felt ignored or muted over the years, and Trump offered them a voice. He concentrated his efforts on empowering this base, referring to them as the forgotten and neglected men and women of our country in his inaugural address. Trump's singular style of governance was reflected in his becoming the first American president to face impeachment twice. He was accused of trying to secure his position in the White House by inviting foreign meddling in one case. And instigating an almost unimaginable revolt in the other. Trump refuted the accusations made against him in both cases, claiming that his rivals most of whom are 'leftist-elitists' are trying to destabilize him.

When Trump took office in January 2017, he promised to stop "American Carnage" and put the country "first". He painted a picture of a United States that was overrun with crimes, gangs, and drugs, and covered in rusted-out factories. History will remember Trump as a person who focused solely on himself and left chaos and carnage for his predecessor, according to presidential historian Jeffrey Engel. Trump has accused every member of Washington's elite, even those in his own party of being a part of a corrupt cabal that he intends to overthrow. Additionally, he has worked to cast doubt on the authority of numerous, well-established organizations including, the Federal Reserve, which Trump accused of attempting to elect Hillary

Clinton, the Intelligence Community, which he compared to the Nazis, and the American Electoral system, which he claimed was rigged, up until his victory (Fukuyama, 2017).

Trump reverted to the contentious themes of his 2016 campaign and the idea of "American carnage" in his inaugural address while running for reelection. "We are now in the process of defeating the radical left, the Marxists, the anarchists, the agitators, and the looters," stated President Trump during his 2020 Fourth of July speech at Mount Rushmore, South Dakota. He continued, "Angry mobs are trying to tear down statues of our founders, deface our most sacred memorials and unleash a wave of violent crime in our cities". Historian Michael Beschloss viewed that the majority of presidents throughout history have recognized that their appearances at national monuments typically serve as an opportunity to act as a unifying chief of state, rather than a partisan divider.

4. Trump's Xenophobic and Racist Rhetorics

Trump's presidency was marked by xenophobic statements, racism, polarization, and criticism of science, the environment, and health experts. In 2015, he hinted at his campaign, labeling Mexican criminals as "sent" and asylum seekers as animals. He also cast doubt on Obama's election validity on several occasions, claiming that there were fraudulent votes and that those statements were baseless and without any evidence.

Part of the reason Trump won office was his vitriolic attacks on immigrants from the start of his campaign. He demanded a complete ban on Muslims entering the country, and he kept his word by forbidding visitors from seven nations with a majority of

Muslims from doing so. The former president went further by asking four Congresswomen of color, three of whom were born in the United States to go back to their countries and fix the mess, instead of giving their opinions. Trump objected to protecting immigrants from El Salvador, Haiti, and African nations, which he called "shithole countries," during conversations with members of Congress in the Oval Office. Trump demonstrated his willingness in order to keep out asylum seekers with his policy of separating children from their parents who were applying for asylum at the southern border.

In order to redirect defense budget toward wall construction, President Trump proclaimed a national emergency in 2019 after failing to secure financing for the construction of a border wall. Congress turned down the president's request for funds, which had never happened before. The president then proceeded to spend money in any case by using the National Emergencies Act of 1976 (Edwards, 2021).

5. Trump's Policy of Polarization and Division Using Social Media Platforms

According to Foa and Mounk (2021), there were already constraints on democracy and democratic principles in America due to newly established behavioral patterns, such as growing division. Trump and his allies frequently asserted the existence of a deep state controlled by the elite that intended to obstruct the president and the reforms he wished to see through. Since the 1980s, socialization trends, identity transformations, economic transformation, and technology advancements have all contributed to an increasingly polarized American society (Iyengar, 2021). According to Horwitz, Trump's allegations about

the deep state will exacerbate his supporters' fury, anger, and mobilize their partnership and erode trust in the legitimacy of the state and the federal government.

As a matter of fact, there has always been a small percentage of Americans who believe in conspiracies, are prepared to give up democracy in order to keep power for themselves and tolerate violence in order to achieve their objectives. However, their power has been restrained due to the unwillingness of the party to completely support their goals; this divide has become apparent in the GOP, particularly during the turbulent Trump years.

Trump addressed everyone directly on Twitter, offering commands, criticism, compliments, threats, and commentary to prime ministers and the general people alike. From former Secretary of State Rex Tillerson to Defense Secretary Mark Esper, Trump has occasionally fired Cabinet ministers with a tweet. His tenure was characterized by frequent accounts of his irrational, furious outbursts in both the White House residence and the Oval Office; he posted frequently on Twitter late at night or early in the morning, often revealed his mood. The conservative Fox News channel is Trump's favorite media outlet. He was interviewed many times on Fox & Friends mocking, bullying, and praising his supporters.

On social media, where Trump could speak with relative impunity, he frequently exchanged lies. But in his late days in office, Trump went a step further, promoting disinformation to his tens of millions of followers on Facebook and Twitter and elevating fringe conspiracy theories (Gittleston, 2021). As of July 2020, Trump had lied more than 20,000 times, according to the

Washington Post Fact Checker (Kessler, et al. 2020). Some of his falsehoods were insignificant, such as his assertion that his picture appeared on Time Magazine's cover more frequently than anyone else's or that more than a million people attended his inauguration (White House, 2017). Some of his falsehoods had more repercussions than others, such when he tweeted that hundreds of Muslims in New Jersey rejoiced following the collapse of the World Trade Center.

Thanks to new mass communication technologies, propaganda became more persuasive and widespread in the 20th century, notably under fascist regimes. This type of propaganda was mostly funded and supervised by governments, but as the ideological disagreements became less pronounced, so did the propaganda's blatant slant. However, the emergence of social media has undermined many of the barriers that prevented fake news from spreading in democracies; in particular, it has made it possible for anyone to create and share content without paying much attention whether this content is genuine or fake and misleading.

Facebook is accused of promoting "filter bubbles," where offensive or disagreeable content is hidden while agreeable content is displayed. In the days leading up to the 2016 US election, posts with headlines like "Pope supports Trump," "Hillary sold weapons to ISIS," and "Filipino agent suspected in Hillary email leaks found dead" went viral. A Stanford University study claims that 159 million people visited fake news websites during the election, with most disseminated news stories supporting Trump.

When US networks like CNN and the New York Times asked Donald Trump questions he did not like, he attacked them by calling them “fake news.”. Indeed, Trump and his supporters echoed his own mistrust of the media. In fact, Collins Dictionary’s word of the year for 2017 was fake news and though Donald Trump has made an effort to take credit for the term “ fake news”, calling it “ one of the greatest of all terms i have come up with”. The term has been applied to depict content from a variety of political viewpoints. In addition, many fear that the term’s current use to undermine any perspective or information that the speaker disagrees with could be detrimental to democracy and the capacity to discern what is true (Staton, 2017).

Former US presidents sought to unite the country. "Republican and Democrat, we are all Americans," President Ronald Reagan said during a Fourth of July speech in 1986. Historians point out, though, that a significant chunk of President Trump's speech encouraged polarization. Mr. Trump declared that You work harder, but you are actually smarter than them during a rally in North Dakota. We'll refer to ourselves as the super-elite from now on. We represent the ultra-elite. The number of hate crimes against immigrants and people of color that were reported to the police increased after Trump's election. Furthermore, a surge in hate crimes has been documented in the counties where Trump has held rallies.

Trump promotes defamatory remarks against minorities. By tweeting explosive, unsubstantiated anti-Muslim videos posted by Jayda Fransen, the deputy head of the far-right group Britain First, Trump outdid himself. Prime Minister Theresa May retorted through a spokesperson, calling Trump “wrong” for supporting

the group's agenda that disseminates "hateful narratives that peddle lies". Members of parliament attacked Trump the next day, calling him "fascist" and "stupid". In the century-long military relationship between the United States and Britain, this was never seen before (Coll, 2017).

When confronted with evidence, trump frequently says he was joking. However, it appears that he intentionally offends his opponents. He occasionally spreads conspiracy theories to disparage personal rivals, as he did when he tweeted rumors regarding MSNBC anchor Joe Scarborough's involvement in the "unsolved mystery" of an intern's murder (Coll, 2017).

When Trump questioned the television network's license, Republican Senator Ben Sasse became enraged and stated that it is frankly disgusting the way the press is able to write whatever they want to write. In a press statement, the senator questioned Trump on if he was abdicating his pledge to "preserve, protect, and defend the First Amendment". Senators unanimously decided on August 16, 2018, to distance themselves from Trump's criticism of the media. They passed a resolution stating that they were in favor of a free press and that the press is not the enemy of the people as Trump already claims (Edwards, 2020). The resolution reiterated that the vital and indispensable role that free press serves to inform the electorate, uncover the truth, act as a check on the inherent power of the government, further national discourse and debate, and otherwise advance the most basic and cherished democratic norms and freedoms of the US.

Trump's inclination to question the objectivity of journalists, especially those he views as personal or oppositional—has a detrimental effect on press access. His disdain for minority and

female reporters has wider implications, leaving them vulnerable to vitriolic critics, bullying, and intimidation from his supporters. Press freedom is severely impacted by Trump's attitude toward journalists, since he frequently calls media coverage "fake news".

Due to Trump's excessive use of social media platforms, many have even questioned if the president Trump has the right to ban users from his Twitter Account or if doing so would violate the First Amendment. The Knight First Amendment Institute at Columbia University filled a complaint, and the courts did find that Trump's blocking of Twitter was unlawful; the administration has appealed the decision. In fact, Trump believes that some media figures are helpful, thus, he would never restrict or exclude the press as a whole. At his political rallies, he greets Sean Hannity of Fox News (Bell, 2019).

A joint resolution urging President Trump to condemn racist and anti-Semitic hate groups was unanimously passed by the House and Senate in September 2017. This action was taken in response to the President's first, ambiguous response to the White Nationalist violence in Charlottesville, Virginia, in August. In the end, Trump signed the measure (Edwards, 2020).

After Twitter decided to identify Trump's tweets last year, the account turned to become a center for false information and fake news. The tech company previously owned by Jack Dorsey accused Mr Trump in May 2020 of using manipulated media in his tweets. Additionally, it restricted Trump's posts for "glorifying violence" after he posted during the Black Lives Matter demonstrations, stating that when the looting starts, the shooting starts, inciting for violence (Edwards, 2020).

6. Trump's Environmental Policies and Strategies Dealing with Covid-19

For the last past years in America, the focus has been on Donald Trump's stance on climate change. Although the US is the top emitter of greenhouse gases, the president has consistently undercut the diligent work of researchers studying climate change. The Trump administration did everything within its power to stop climate science and outreach from the outset. Numerous scientists have voiced their concerns about being marginalized. The administration then took the term "climate change" out of numerous official scientific and policy publications. The government rendered a number of significant scientific panels and committees inoperable, including those that dealt with climate change (Sangomla, 2020).

In a groundbreaking move, the journal Nature released an essay on October 5th, 2020, outlining the harm that Trump has caused to science in general and explaining why it might take decades for it to heal. Maryland Climate Scientist Raghu Murtugudde viewed that the Republican party has supported the fossil fuel sector, while ignoring the widespread public support for taking action on climate change. Because of his personal connections to this business in general, Donald Trump elevated it to a new level

According to Bomberg (2021), Trump set out to significantly alter environmental regulations. Organizational reorganizations and policy modifications limited financing for scientific research and selected influential individuals who were antagonistic to environmental preservation. Many of Trump's policies might be swiftly reversed if Biden were elected. But

Trump changed things in a more significant way. He eroded trust in knowledge, science, and the government, he emphasized the value of putting America "first" and portrayed environmental preservation as "job killing".

During his first year in office, Trump declared his intention to withdraw from the Paris Climate Agreement. He claimed that the agreement placed “draconian” financial obligations on Americans during the announcement, which was made in an effort to slow down climate change. It is just one of many times that Trump has withdrawn from an international accord because he believes the US was not treated fairly. Apart from Trump’s decision to withdraw from the agreement, efforts to roll back numerous environmental regulations in favor of ostensible economic opportunities have dominated the Trump administration’s record on energy and the environment. Biden is anticipated to undo many of the environmental policies that Trump used executive order to implement (Sangomla, 2021).

The US's 2018 production boom, boosted by Congress's 2015 lifting of crude oil export ban, surpassed other oil-producing nations. Trump claimed victory over rising gas costs and economic growth. However, the Environmental Performance Index placed the US 26th in drinking water quality and sanitation, and 16th in air quality, despite Trump's claims of having the "Cleanest water" and "Cleanest air" in the world whenever asked about the climate change issue.

Former US president Donald Trump frequently highlights the severity of climate change by citing blatantly erroneous statistics. Now running for president, Trump has maintained in his

speeches and interviews that the threat of nuclear war is a far more pressing concern than climate change. In an interview with Fox in 2023, Trump reiterated a statement he made during his November campaign. He stated on Fox that When he hears people talk about global warming and that the ocean will rise in the next 300 years by 1/8th of an inch. For Trump environmentalists talk about ridiculous stuff and the only threatening issue is nuclear warming not climate change. Gary Griggs, an earth and planetary sciences Professor at the University of California, Santa Cruz, who specializes in sea level rise research, described Trump's statements as totally out of touch with reality and simply untrue. For the professor, Trump has no idea what he is talking about. And for years, he purposely denied the reality of climate change and its effects for the coming decades.

After Covid-19 struck, polls revealed that many disapproved of the way Trump handled the pandemic, which has since claimed the lives of over 800.000 Americans (analysis by the Peterson Center on Healthcare and the Kaiser Family Foundation).

Trump said in a CNBC interview that the virus is totally under control. It is one person coming from China. Despite his assertion, Mr Trump, according to Chowkwanyuan, failed the nation in a number of important areas, including on the rhetorical stage, where a president gets to use the pulpit. Rather, he disregarded scientific knowledge. Chowkwanyuan viewed that Mr Trump should be given some credit for the rapid development of Covid vaccines.

Many people think Trump is closer to former US presidents who left the country in a bad moment, like Herbert Hoover or James Buchannan. And that Trump's presidency did end with the

economy extremely fragile and unstable. His presidency ended with the nation less united and more fragmented. During President Trump's last year in office, his administration focused mostly on the federal response to the coronavirus pandemic, which proved to be its tremendous failure. When the pandemic reached its climax in the closing months (Vazquez, 2021).

Following his populist appeal and contempt for professionals, Trump frequently disregarded scientific data while formulating policies. According to him, the concept of global warming is a Chinese "hoax". Significant environmental protection rules were canceled and reports of global warming were routinely ignored at the Environmental Protection Agency. These policies were similar to those of other recent Republican presidents, but Trump deviated significantly from the scientific consensus that other presidents would have taken more seriously due to his public attacks on the government's most senior health scientists and his rejection of scientific evidence from the COVID-19 pandemic (Pffner, 2020).

Former president Trump questioned if it would be possible to inject patients with disinfectants. At the White House briefing of April, 2020, Mr Trump said that he had observed that disinfection "Knocks it (COVID-19) out in a minute". However, the suggestion was promptly shot down by William Bryan, the Department of Homeland Security's Chief of Research and Technology, who stated, it was not being taken into consideration. The medical community swiftly criticized the idea of utilizing disinfection products in that manner. Chief medical correspondent for CBS News Dr Jon La Pook stated on CBS that just because something works outside of the body does not mean that people

should bring it inside the body, where it could potentially cause severe damage. He continued that the last thing you want is somebody hearing this kind of a statement.

As speculation and rumors spread on social media platforms, the makers of Lysol and Dettol released a statement clarifying things. They made it clear that under no circumstance should our disinfectant products be administered into the human body through injection, ingestion or any other route. They stressed in the statement the dangers of using disinfectants to cure COVID-19.

Dr. Anthony Fauci, Head of the National Institute for Infectious Diseases and Allergies had warned of the probable dangers of using hydroxychloroquine, but early in the outbreak, Trump had pushed for its use as a potential "game changer" in the fight against COVID-19. In order to combat the effects of COVID-19, Trump even suggested looking into the internal use of bleach, disinfectants, and ultraviolet light. In many occasions, Trump criticized corona virus testing, which scientists claimed was crucial to containing the spread, at a rally in Tulsa, Oklahoma. He bluntly declared that whenever you test, new cases will appear. And for Trump the right thing to do was to avoid testing individuals. When asked was he kidding, Trump replied that he was serious in his proposal (Pfiffner, 2020).

Dr. Fauci emphasized the challenges of the political climate in 2020 due to extremism and the rejection of science. Scientific American endorsed Joe Biden for the first time in its 175-year history, citing Trump's attacks on researchers and public science agencies. The prompt creation of two Corona-virus vaccines in December 2020 was a triumph, but the pandemic management

was marked by significant and sometimes lethal errors. The journal's endorsement of Biden was a response to Trump's statements and attacks on science.

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7. Conclusion

Undoubtedly, many of the traditions of the office were abandoned and changed, and there was a shift in the tone, style, and customs of presidential leadership in America during Trump's four years tenure. Trump declared boldly during his presidency that everything revolves around and is about him. The statement made by Trump in 2019 that he has Article II, where he has the right to do whatever he wants as president reflected his authoritarian stance and his desire to control everything since he is above all, at least in his own perception. He tried many times to break social norms and codes. During a live news conference on April 13, 2020, Trump asserted that he, and not the country's governors, would determine when to lift the stay-at-home and shelter-in-place directives in reaction to the coronavirus epidemic. According to Trump and his loyalists, the president has the green light, absolute authority over the country and the people as well. This mindset is dangerous since the US is the beacon of democracy, freedom, equality, and liberty.

A large portion of the American populace lost faith in state institutions, truth, and democracy as a result of Trump's acts and demeanor. He exacerbated racial tensions and deepened societal divisions. He also played a part in America's inability to contain the COVID-19 pandemic. The Biden administration's ability to revoke many additional policies could result in their impacts being

temporary. Trump's predecessor Mr Biden will face challenging issues in his path to unit, build, and gain the public and institutional trust that were already lost under Trump's presidency.

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