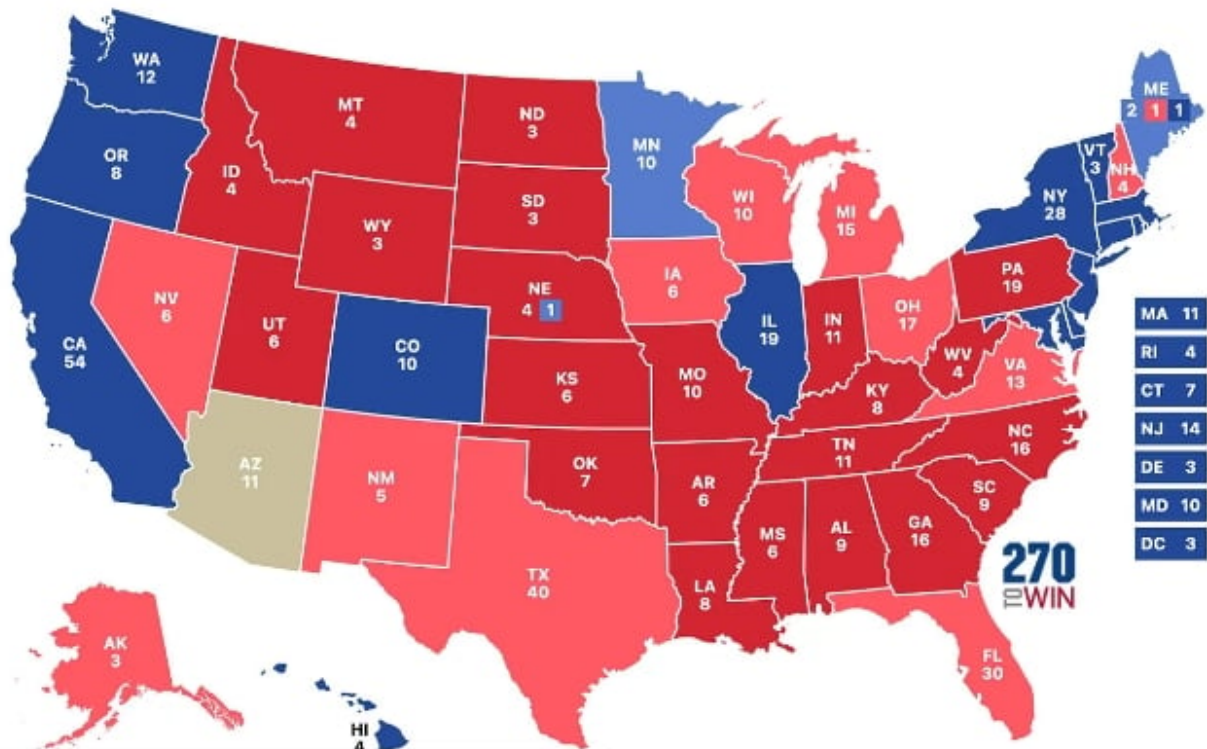


Thoughts on the Post Election

By Glenn Harlan Reynolds

So Trump can win on Tuesday, or he can lose. Let's spend a little time on what happens either way.



(One possible, somewhat aggressively pro-Trump electoral map.)

First, a Trump win. Trump will face two problems. The first is actually getting into office if there's a win. If it's close, he can expect all sorts of lawfare and parliamentary tricks to try to keep him out. (He may even get those if he's not close.) Last time he wasn't ready. This time he probably will be, with lawyers of his own who are prepared, not playing catch-up.

But honestly, if things go too far he may want to consider a "people power" approach such as has been used in other countries where the *apparat* tried to ignore an election. If

Trump says the word, he can flood Washington, and other places, with supporters. The sheer terror and overreaction that the pathetic January 6 “insurrection” provoked tells you how frightened the establishment is of such things. A weak effort is worse than none, but a powerful one will almost certainly succeed. I said a couple of times in Trump’s first term that Democrats were angling to give him his Yeltsin-on-a-tank moment, and it might still happen. The establishment media and the DC crowd will almost certainly join any effort to block Trump’s accession, however flimsy the pretext. It’s doubtful that most Americans will go along.

But that unlikely, though no longer unthinkable, scenario aside – some Democrats have been talking about [just this](#), and even seem eager for some sort of civil war – then assuming that Trump is sworn in, what next? Last time around, Trump squandered his momentum. He passed the tax bill that the establishment GOP wanted, after which they didn’t need anything from him and turned to obstructing him. Here’s [something](#) I wrote in 2017:

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WELL, IT *SHOULD* WORRY THEM. THE GOP CONGRESS’S RECORD TO DATE IS PATHETIC. [Dem lead in generic ballot polls worries GOP](#). They should have had bills delivering on campaign promises lined up like airplanes on a runway. Instead they haven’t even delivered an ObamaCare repeal. The tax bill will be a nice start, but the election was over a year ago.

Like airplanes on a runway. Trump’s approach this time around should be what he should have done last time: Shock and awe. Shut down departments, fire bureaucrats, exercise emergency powers, all so fast that the establishment’s responses are saturated. Javier Milei’s whirlwind assault in Argentina should be the model, sometimes in specifics but also in general approach. Bureaucrats move slowly; Trump should move fast.

Elon Musk says he can cut \$2 trillion easily; do it. Also, set bureaucrats competing with each other for what funds remain. Divide and conquer.

The FBI's files on its policing of domestic dissent should be opened up, as should the details of the NSA's illegal domestic spying. Trump should have outsiders investigate possible (likely) prosecutorial misconduct in the January 6 prosecutions – something judges have already raised – and fire those responsible, as well as subjecting them to what other legal consequences may apply. The lesson that the deep state can't intervene in domestic politics needs to be driven home, and the only way to do that is to ruin a lot of lives on the part of people who deserve to have their lives ruined, from the top of the Justice Department and the intelligence agencies to the bottom. Likewise those involved in social media censorship programs, "Operation Chokepoint" style economic warfare, and the like. Abuse of government power against the citizenry should be treated as a criminal matter, because it is.

Trump should also announce that the federal government is waiving qualified immunity on the part of such officials.

There are lots more ideas – you can submit your own in the comments below, and the much-maligned [Project 2025](#), though not actually a Trump initiative, contains some – and Bloomberg is already warning that if elected Trump will [dismantle](#) the White House's gun control ministry. Oh no!

The specifics aren't really the point here, though I should probably post another essay just about those. But the point here is rapid action across a wide variety of fronts. Trump should take advantage of the precedents that Biden has set for far-reaching executive action, though you can bet that when he does the press will pretend this is the first time anything like that has ever been done.

On the legislative side, it depends. Assuming functional majorities in both houses, he should strike hard. He should do what Reagan promised and abolish the Department of Education. The Department of Justice should be drastically

shrunk and it, along with the IRS, should be moved out of the capital to rural parts of blue states. (Blue states so as not to change the political balance as might happen if you sent a bunch of federal workers to a red state). Think what an economic boon the new FBI headquarters would be to Plattsburgh, NY if it were built there!

Federal spending on education, which has produced little in the way of tangible benefits, and nontrivial amounts of harm, should be slashed or eliminated. Campaign finance laws, which are just a tool for lawfare now, should be repealed. Etc., etc.

Again, rapid action is the key. Saturate the media's targeting systems so that it can't focus on one thing long enough to make a difference. And any bills that might appeal to the GOPe should be held back, as hostages, until Trump's priorities get through. No giving away the store up front, leaving them free to undercut you once they have what they want, as was done last time.

If Trump lacks control of both houses, then it's a guerrilla legislative battle, with his supporters putting up popular bills – no tax on tips! – and making Democrats vote them down.

If Trump loses, then it's a four-year effort to frustrate Democratic agendas while grooming some strong 2028 candidates – they'll need to do this even if Trump wins, in fact. J.D. Vance, who has overperformed even my fairly high expectations, is likely to be the frontrunner, but this cycle has lifted up several other potential stars, including Vivek Ramaswamy. And Ron DeSantis, if he can get some charisma lessons, could still be strong. When his term is up as governor, Trump should give him a high-visibility appointment somewhere where his strong executive/administrative skills will take hold.

Well, we'll know soon enough – I hope – which outcomes are happening. Stay tuned.

And pray that it isn't too close. And that idiots – or worse – like Rep. Jamin Raskin don't deliberately [court Civil War](#) by trying some sort of parliamentary jiggery-pokery to disqualify Trump on January 6, 2025, as Raskin has threatened.

Though does even Raskin really want a two-term-eligible President J.D. Vance?

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