

TRUMP STORMS BACK

HE DEFEATS HARRIS AND CAPS HIS RESURGENCE FROM OUTCAST TO FELON TO PRESIDENT-ELECT



DOUG MILLS/THE NEW YORK TIMES

Donald J. Trump and Melania Trump on election night in West Palm Beach, Fla. Impeached twice and convicted on 34 felony counts, Mr. Trump, the 45th president, is now poised to become the 47th.

COURT CASES

Legal Strategy: Delay, Deflect, Win the Office

This article is by Devlin Barrett, Alan Feuer and Charlie Savage.

For all that Donald J. Trump's election to a second term was a remarkable political comeback, it was also the culmination of an audacious and stunningly successful legal strategy that could allow him to evade accountability for the array of charges against him.

The string of accusations lodged during the two years of Mr. Trump's candidacy, seemingly enough to end the career of almost any politician, became in his hands a fund-raising bonanza and a rallying cry, a deep pool of fuel for his rage and a call to demand retribution. The intensity of his campaign fed off the recognition that his personal freedom could be on the line.

He was indicted not just once but twice for plotting to overturn the 2020 election. He was accused of mishandling national security secrets and obstruction. He was found liable for sexual abuse and defamation, and for inflating his net worth. And he was found guilty of criminal charges stemming from a hush money payment to a porn star.

Throughout it all, however, starting with his first indictment in the hush money case, legal proceedings that were meant to hold

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NEWS ANALYSIS

A Comeback That Tells Us Who We Are

By PETER BAKER

In her closing rally on the Ellipse last week, Kamala Harris scorned Donald J. Trump as an outlier who did not represent America. "That is not who we are," she declared.

In fact, it turns out, that may be exactly who we are. At least most of us.

The assumption that Mr. Trump represented an anomaly who would at last be consigned to the ash heap of history was washed away on Tuesday night by a red current that swept through battleground states — and swept away the understanding of America long nurtured by its ruling elite of both parties.

No longer can the political establishment write off Mr. Trump as a temporary break from the long march of progress, a fluke who somehow sneaked into the White House in a quirky, one-off Electoral College win eight years ago. With his comeback victory to reclaim the presidency, Mr. Trump has now established himself as a transformational force reshaping the United States in his own image.

Populist disenchantment with the nation's direction and resentment against elites proved to be deeper and more profound than

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WHAT MATTERED

Democracy Fears Lost Out to Everyday Worries

By SHAWN HUBLER

Her campaign pitch was moving, even high-minded. If Vice President Kamala Harris were elected to the White House, she would safeguard the ideals of a good nation. Voters had a choice, she said: democracy, constitutional rights and bedrock freedoms — or Donald J. Trump's "chaos and division."

On Tuesday, the nation replied. The answer from more than half of voters seemed to dismiss warn-

Pitch by Harris Didn't Land With Voters

ings that Mr. Trump was a threat to principles on which the country had been founded. Abstract truths mattered less, voters said, than tangible issues, like the ability to pay rent or concerns over border crossings. In a time of widespread distrust in institutions, Ms. Harris's call to protect the nation's

norms rang hollow for many Americans.

In more than 200 interviews across the country in the four days preceding the election, voters, especially in swing states, spoke not of endangered democracy or institutions but of diminished prospects. Their words echoed repeated pre-election polling that showed that majorities of Americans believed the nation was headed in the wrong direction, even as the pandemic had ebbed,

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RETURN TO POWER

A Path Seemed Unimaginable. Now It's Paved.

This article is by Matt Flegenheimer, Maggie Haberman and Jonathan Swan.

By late January 2021, just days into Donald J. Trump's unhappy new life as a former president, his world had shrunk to a size he could not abide.

Self-exiled in Florida as a twice-impeached semi-pariah, he golfed and glowered, boiling over his 2020 defeat and still refusing to acknowledge its legitimacy. His social media bullhorns had been silenced after Jan. 6, with Twitter citing "the risk of further incitement of violence." His circle had dwindled to a smattering of junior aides, straining to keep him on the fairways and away from the television.

"Get the pool," Mr. Trump instructed at one point, referring to the hive of reporters who had trailed him daily as president. "I want to make a statement." He was told that he did not have one anymore.

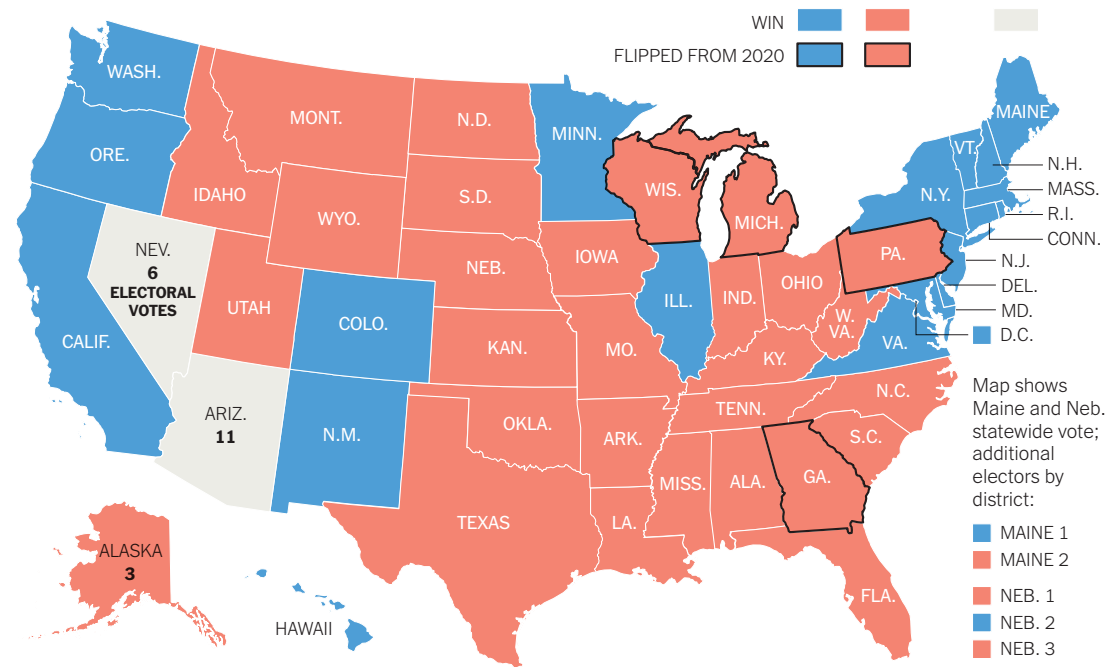
By late February, Mr. Trump had waited long enough. In his first public appearance as a newly private citizen, he accepted an invitation to Orlando for a conference of right-wing activists.

"Do you miss me yet?" he asked, his arms splayed wide, as if waiting to be hugged.

It had been five weeks. Outside of that room, most Americans did not seem to miss him much at all. Now, less than four years later, Mr. Trump's arc back to power is complete — an extraordinary reversal carried off by a man who

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Who Won Each State As of Wednesday at 6 p.m. Eastern.



Bar chart showing Electoral Vote counts: Trump 295, Harris 226, Not called 17.

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Pressure on Tiny Homes

Hong Kong plans to impose minimum standards on the city's smallest apartments, potentially causing problems for tens of thousands of renters. PAGE A4

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Science Behind Baseball Mud

Researchers have uncovered what they consider to be remarkable properties of the muck applied to all factory-fresh balls in the major leagues. PAGE B6

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He's Both Artist and Collector

Some collectors treat artworks like poker chips, flipping work by artists. Not Brian Donnelly (or KAWS), whose finds are the basis of a new show. PAGE C1

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Empowering, and Sexy, Music

A host of seductive songs that deal with the pursuit of female pleasure have made the dancehall artist Shenseea the new face of girl power. PAGE D7

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Michelle Goldberg

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