In today's #vatniksoup, I'll introduce an American conservative think tank, The Heritage Foundation (@Heritage). Heritage is best-known for opposing military aid to Ukraine and for their political initiative called Project 2025, a potential blueprint for a Trump presidency.

1/23



Post)

Before we begin, I want to justify this soup that focuses heavily on US domestic politics. As a strong supporter of Ukraine, I see Donald Trump as a threat to Ukraine's existence, and the reasoning for that can be found in this previous soup:



Heritage was founded in 1973, but it took a leading role in conservative politics during the Reagan presidency, whose policies were mostly taken from the foundation's book series called Mandate for Leadership. Project 2025 is the ninth iteration of this series.

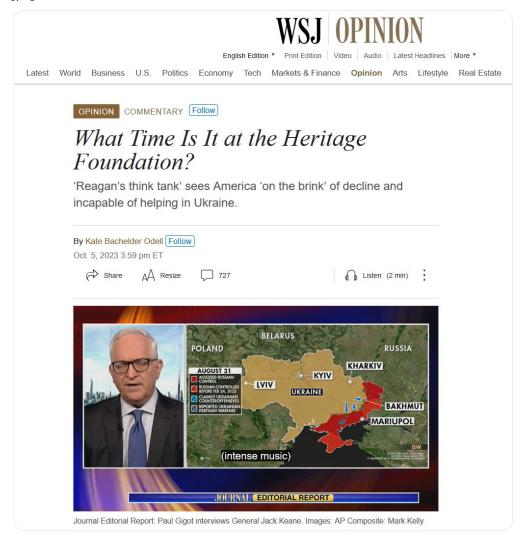


The influence of the Heritage Foundation on US public policy shouldn't be underestimated - it's been often ranked as one of the most influential think tanks in the US. They were a central organization in developing the Reagan Doctrine, which provided military and other...

4/23



...support to anti-communist resistance movements in Afghanistan, Cambodia and other countries. Historically, Heritage has been hawkish, supporting US-led wars like the Gulf War and the invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq during the "war on terror".



In 2015, after Trump announced his candidacy for the 2016 US presidential elections, Heritage were highly skeptical of him. The leader of Heritage's advocacy group even stated that "Donald Trump's a clown. He needs to be out of the race."

6/23

"Donald Trump's a clown," said Heritage Action leader **Michael Needham**, adding very arguably that Trump was riding the same wave of establishment disaffection that was floating Democratic challenger Bernie Sanders' campaign. "He needs to be out of the race. But someone else who's serious needs to step up and start channeling the voice of very frustrated American political voters. (Needham, one of the architects of the 2013 government shutdown, is referring to Senator **Ted Cruz (**R-TX) here.)

After Trump won, the foundation started lobbying their own candidates for his cabinet. Hundreds of people from their database received jobs in government agencies, and in 2018 Heritage claimed that Trump had embraced 64% of proposed policies in the foundation's agenda.

POLITICO

PRESIDENTIAL TRANSITION

Trump's shadow transition team



Heritage is "absolutely the fulcrum, and essential to staffing the administration with people who reflect Trump's commitments across the board," said one conservative activist. | Getty

By KATIE GLUECK 11/22/2016 05:01 AM EST









A year ago, the political arm of the conservative Heritage Foundation dismissed Donald Trump as a big-government enthusiast and left-wing sympathizer.

Now, the Heritage Foundation has emerged as one of the most influential forces shaping President-elect Donald Trump's transition team, embedding the veteran Washington group into the operation of a candidate who ran loudly against the Beltway.





After Trump lost the re-election in 2020, Heritage hired a bunch of former Trump administration officials, including Mike Pence, and in 2021 they hired Kevin Roberts as the president. Roberts claimed that he considered the role of Heritage as "institutionalizing Trumpism."



The Heritage Foundation









'Highly misleading at best': Dale reacts to Pence's op-ed





Watch Biden's full speech on immigration at the border



Washington (CNN) — In an opinion article published on Wednesday, former Vice President Mike Pence did something he used to do in office: echo a lie from former President Donald Trump in a slightly more sophisticated way.



Just like Viktor Orban of Hungary (who they later invited to visit the US), the Heritage Foundation began embracing national conservatism as its main ideology around 2022. They've even established a co-operational friendship with the Hungarian-state funded Danube Institute.

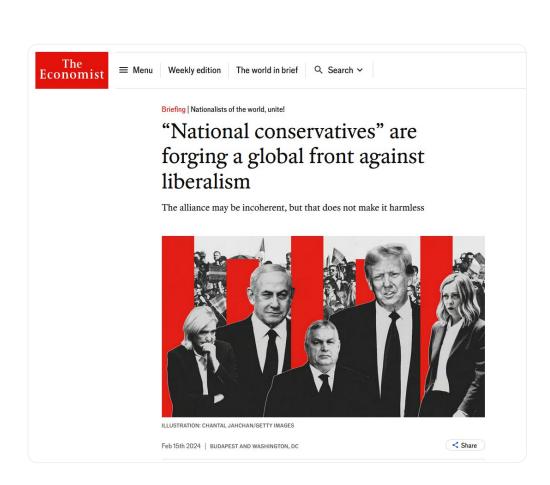
9/23



THENEW REPUBLIC

By Casey Michel, Director Combatting Kleptocracy Program

Last week, Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán made waves by flying to the United States to meet with Donald Trump—but not with sitting president Joe Biden. It was, at a minimum, a severe breach of diplomatic protocol, and one that threatens to unravel Budapest's strained relations with Washington even further. Even Biden himself commented on the meeting, saying that Orbán—an authoritarian who has effectively unwound Hungarian democracy—was "looking for dictatorship."



Hungarian Conservative



CURRENT

Heritage Foundation and Danube Institute Sign Landmark Cooperation Agreement



James Carafano, Vice President of The Kathryn and Shelby Cullom Davis Institute for National Security and Foreign Policy at the Heritage Foundation, with Centre for Fundamental Rights analyst Zoltán Koskovics, French-British journalist Anne-Elisabeth Moutet and President of the Counterpoint Institute Shea Bradley-Farrell at CPAC Hungary in May 2022

Tibor Illyés/MTI

As part of the new cooperation agreement between the two institutions, each year four researchers from the Heritage Foundation will visit Budapest and work with the Danube Institute as visiting researchers.

Lili Zemplényi - 16.03.2023

After Roberts took over the foundation, it has completely reversed its position on sending military aid to Ukraine. This came to many as a surprise, as in Feb 2022, one Heritage paper stated that "Without question, supporting Ukraine is in U.S. and European interests."

The New Hork Times

Photos

Maps: State of the War Ukraine's Donbas Strategy How Russians Serve the State A Rus

Why the Once-Hawkish Heritage Foundation Opposed Aid to Ukraine

The conservative think tank has shifted on foreign policy along with the Republican grass-roots, and it is taking a more skeptical view of U.S. involvement in the world.









Kevin Roberts, the president of the Heritage Foundation, pushed back against the \$40 billion military and humanitarian aid bill for Ukraine. T.J. Kirkpatrick for The New York Times



By Catie Edmondson

May 27, 2022

On the day Russia invaded Ukraine in February 2022, Heritage Foundation President Kevin Roberts had the blue-and-yellow Ukrainian flag raised above the think tank's Washington headquarters. Over the next several months, Heritage researchers and experts pumped out reports and essays backing U.S. assistance to Ukraine. "Without question, supporting Ukraine is in U.S. and European interests," argued one paper. Another urged "an enduring and systematic approach to providing weapons, training, and medical care to Ukrainians."

Eighteen months later, two of the experts who wrote those reports had left Heritage — and Roberts declared in a <u>column</u> that Americans were "fed up" with the "expensive, far-off war effort." "It's time to turn off the tap," he wrote. "People are tired of Washington's shady backroom deals cut with their money. Until Biden presents a direct and immediate path to end the conflict in Ukraine, and Congress comes up with a way to ensure that our aid is responsibly distributed, the Heritage Foundation will stand firm and demand that not another cent is spent fighting this war."

WASHINGTON — Hours before the House voted this month to approve \$40 billion in military and humanitarian aid for Ukraine, lobbyists affiliated with the Heritage Foundation, the prominent conservative think tank, were privately pressing Republicans to oppose the measure.

In a move that seized the attention of conservatives across Washington, Jessica Anderson, the executive director of Heritage's lobbying operation, released a searing statement — its headline blaring "<u>Ukraine Aid Package Puts America Last</u>" — that framed the measure as reckless and ill-considered.

"America is struggling with record-setting inflation, debt, a porous border, crime and energy depletion," Ms. Anderson said, "yet progressives in Washington are prioritizing a \$40 billion aid package to Ukraine." In the months leading up to the vote on the Ukraine aid bill, Heritage's policy experts argued in favor of an aggressive American role in the conflict, including huge amounts of aid. One report said that the United States "must ensure that its massive humanitarian aid response helps the Ukrainian people to survive Russia's war of aggression."

<u>Another report</u>, published in April, declared: "A sovereign Ukraine is necessary for overall European stability, which is in U.S. and NATO interests. In many ways, the long-term stability of the trans-Atlantic community will be decided in Ukraine. The U.S. must act accordingly."

James Wallner, a senior fellow at the R Street Institute who previously led policy research at Heritage, said the discrepancy between the tone of the reports and the group's opposition to the aid bill reflected a situation at the think tank "where the tail starts to wag the dog" and politics, not policy principle, begins to drive decisions.

Many prominent anti-Ukraine and pro-Kremlin figures have been associated with the think tank, including conspiracy theorist Tucker Carlson and Soros-funded conspiracy theorist Vivek Ramaswamy:

11/23



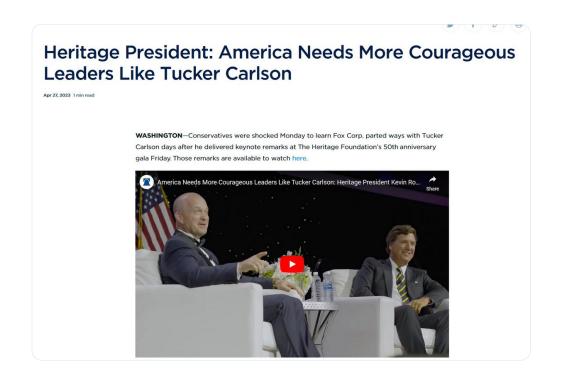
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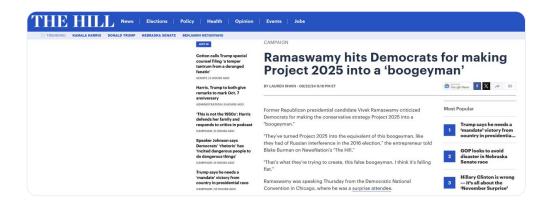
In today's #vatniksoup, I'll introduce an American businessman and politician, Vivek Ramaswamy (@VivekGRamaswamy).

He's best-known for his stock promotion schemes, for his staunch support of Donald Trump, and for his hot takes on the Russo-Ukrainian War.

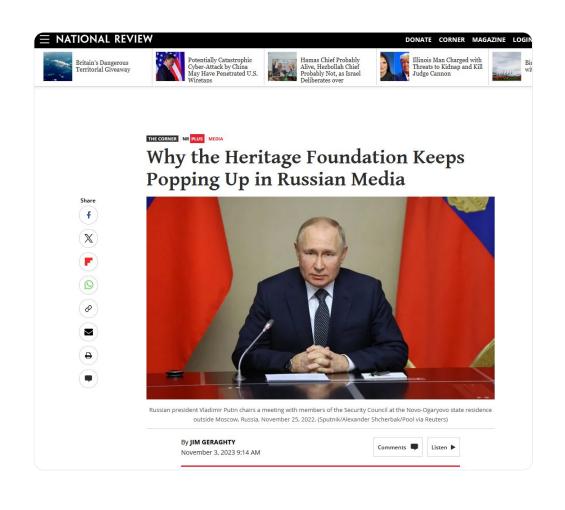
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Today, Heritage Foundation is also the most quoted think tank in the Russian media. Russian Foreign Minister Lavrov has parroted Heritage rhetoric, and Zvezda, the news site of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation shows clips from "The Kevin Roberts Show".





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Lavrov named the total amount of Western funds allocated to Ukraine since the beginning of the NWO

iii 00:00 19.08.2023 ·



Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov told the International Affairs magazine in an interview that since the start of the NWO, Ukraine has received \$160 billion in aid from foreign countries.

"In value terms, the total foreign aid to the Zelensky regime for the year since the beginning of the Cold War has exceeded \$160 billion, including military aid of \$75 billion. By the way, according to calculations by the Washington NGO "The Heritage Foundation", the United States has already allocated about \$113 billion to Ukraine, that is, \$900 from each household plus another \$300 in interest to service the corresponding debt obligations. Huge amounts, especially considering the difficult situation in the global economy.

At the same time, Western leaders repeat like a mantra that they will help Kyiv as long as it takes. Of course, fighting to the last Ukrainian is their choice, as well as the decision of V. Zelensky's clique. However, historically, the United States does not have the best track record in supporting its allies. It is enough to keep in mind the episodes of the abrupt cessation of American military aid to South Vietnam in 1973 and the A. Ghani regime in Afghanistan in 2021 and the fact that this led to the immediate fall of the authorities loyal to Washington. But today's Ukraine is almost completely dependent on Western financial injections and arms supplies," said the head of Russian diplomacy.

Publish:



Popular



07.10.2024
Baerbock does not rule out
that Ukraine will soon be
allowed to strike deep into.



Borrell: Ukraine conflict would have ended in 15



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Magazine





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19 August 2023, 00:03, Updated 19 August 2023, 00:15 Military operation in Ukraine

Lavrov said that the total foreign aid to Kiev for the year SVO exceeded \$ 160 billion

According to the Minister of foreign Affairs of Russia, military support amounted to \$ 75 billion

MOSCOW, August 19. /TASS/. Total assistance of Western countries to the regime of the President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelensky for the year of the special military operation (SVO) exceeded \$ 160 billion. This was stated by the Minister of foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation Sergey Lavrov in an interview with the magazine "International life".

Read also

Military operation in Ukraine. Chronicle of events August 19, 2023

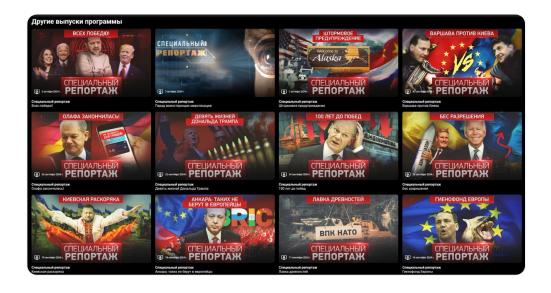


"In value terms, general foreign assistance to the Zelensky regime for the year since the beginning of the SVO has exceeded \$ 160 billion, including military - \$ 75 billion," the minister said. - By the way, according to the calculations of the Washington NGO The Heritage Foundation, the United States has already allocated Ukraine about \$ 113 billion, that is, \$ 900 per household plus another \$ 300 in the form of interest to service the

relevant debt obligations. "A huge sums, especially given the difficult situation in the global economy," the Russian Foreign Minister said.

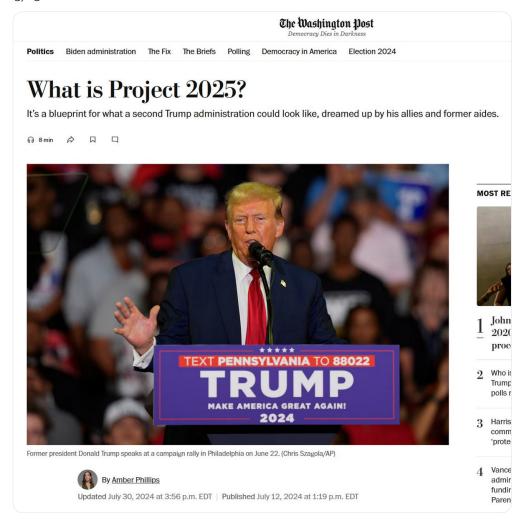
About 50 countries that are part of the "remstein coalition" on military support for Ukraine, according to the minister, "actually involved in an armed conflict on the side of the Kiev regime, which does not acne and terrorist methods of warfare." "Shuts are being delivered to Ukraine by large-scale deliveries of Western weapons, including cluster and long-range," he said. - NATO instructors participate in the planning of operations of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, NATO intelligence is used. "

Lavrov noted that at the same time, Western leaders as a mantra repeat that they will help Kiev as much as necessary. "Of course, to fight to the last Ukrainian is their choice, as well as the decision of the Zelensky ceremony," he continued. "However, historically, the United States has no better record of supporting its allies." So, he recalled the episodes of the sharp cessation of American military assistance to South Vietnam in 1973 and the Ashraf Ghani regime in Afghanistan in 2021 and the fact that this led to an immediate fall in the authorities loyal to Washington. "And now today's Ukraine is almost completely dependent on Western financial injections and arms supplies," the head of Russian diplomacy said.



In Apr 2023, Heritage also published their latest entry to the Mandate for Leadership series, Project 2025. The foundation has called the series its "policy bible", and many have suggested that Project 2025 would be a blueprint for a potential Trump presidency.

13/23



Project 2025 would give Trump control over the Justice Department, giving him the right to cut entire federal agencies. It would also integrate Christian Nationalism to level of government policy, and calls for ban on pornography and further limitations on abortions.

It's a blueprint for a second Trump administration

The centerpiece is a 900-page plan that calls for extreme policies on nearly every aspect of Americans' lives, from mass deportations, to politicizing the federal government in a way that would give Trump control over the Justice Department, to cutting entire federal agencies, to infusing Christian nationalism into every facet of government policy by calling for a ban on pornography and promoting policies that encourage "marriage, work, motherhood, fatherhood, and nuclear families."

This isn't coming directly from the Trump campaign. But it should be taken seriously because of the people who wrote it, analysts say. The main organization behind the plan, the Heritage Foundation, is a revolving door for Trump officials (and Heritage is a sponsor of the Republican National Convention, which will hand him the nomination next week).

Another interesting aspect of the proposal is the recommendation for the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency to stop its "efforts to curtail online propaganda campaigns", stating that the federal government shouldn't make judgment on what's true and what isn't. 15/23



The project suggests that nonpartisan civil servants should be replaced with Trump loyalists, education budgets should be slashed, and that the president should be in control of the FBI and would have power to investigate his political opponents.

Project 2025 calls for abortion limits, slashing climate change and LGBTQ health care funding, and much more

A few of the highlights:

Remake the federal workforce to be political: Instead of nonpartisan civil servants implementing policies on everything from health to education and climate, the executive branch would be filled with Trump loyalists. "It is necessary to ensure that departments and agencies have robust cadres of political staff," the plan says. That means nearly every decision federal agencies make could advance a political agenda — as in whether to spend money on constituencies that lean Democratic. The project calls for cutting LGBTQ health programs, for example.

Cut the Education Department: Project 2025 would make extensive changes to public schooling, cutting longtime low-income and early education federal programs like Head Start, for example, and even the entire Education Department. "Federal education policy should be limited and, ultimately, the federal Department of Education should be eliminated," the plan reads.

Give Trump power to investigate his opponents: Project 2025 would move the Justice Department, and all of its law enforcement arms like the FBI, directly under presidential control. It calls for a "top-to-bottom overhaul" of the FBI and for the administration to go over its investigations with a fine-toothed comb to nix any the president doesn't like. This would dramatically weaken the independence of federal law enforcement agencies. "There's going to be an all-out assault on the Department of Justice and the FBI," said Galston, of Brookings. "It will mean tight White House control of the DOJ and FBI."

When it came out in 2023, Project 2025 went mostly unnoticed. But in 2024, the Democrats started warning the public of the project's extreme and potentially dangerous agenda. Soon after this, a NBC poll results stated that just 4 percent viewed Project 2025 favorably,...



...while 57 percent held a negative view. Perhaps due to this, Trump completely distanced himself from the project, stating that some of the proposals were "absolutely ridiculous and abysmal", even though some of the most controversial ideas in it were his.

18/23

The sweeping policy document lays out how the next president could concentrate power in the executive branch and remove civil service protections for legions of federal workers to replace them with loyalists. It provides detailed plans for executing some of Trump's most controversial ideas, such as eliminating the Education Department; moving the Justice Department under presidential control; shuttering the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, which forecasts weather and tracks climate change, and rolling back other environmental protections; and launching mass deportations, including of immigrants who came to the United States as children, often known as "dreamers."

Trump even claimed to "Have no idea who is in charge of it," even though he took a private flight with its leader in 2022 to a Heritage conference, where he stated that "They're going to lay the groundwork and detail plans for exactly what our movement will do."

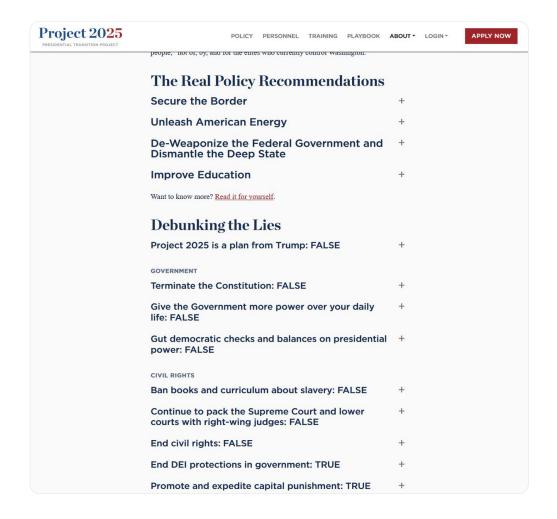
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After the controversy, the foundation had to add a disclaimer to their website stating that Project 2025 is not Trump's plan, also creating a web page "to counter the left's worst lies about Project 2025." Washington Post called it a "huge blunder from Trump's allies".

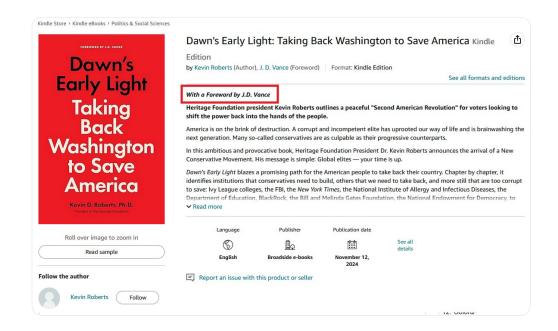
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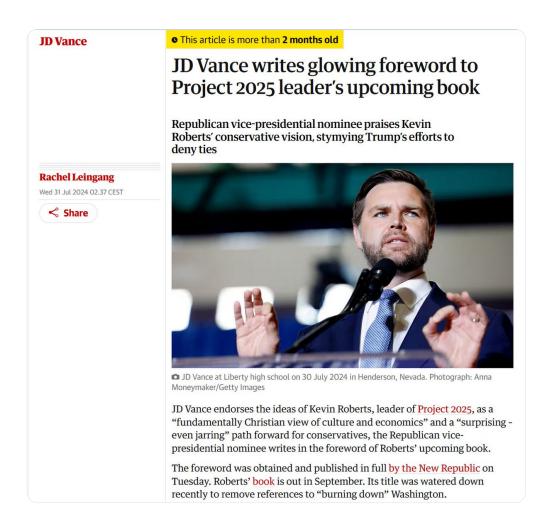






Interestingly, the foreword for the Heritage president Kevin Roberts' book was written by the VP candidate JD Vance. In it, JD praises Roberts' "conservative vision." For some reason, the book's publishing date was pushed for after the Nov 2024 elections.





Vance has previously said Roberts "is somebody I rely on a lot who has very good advice, very good political instincts", he told news outlet Notus in January. He said that Heritage, under Roberts, went from a "relatively vanilla" thinktank to one willing to participate in the fights and debates on the right about where the party should head.

On two subjects in particular, Vance praises the way Roberts lays out the stakes and his goals: reining in large tech companies and focusing on a Christian view of the family.

AUGUST 7, 2024

Heritage Foundation President's Book Delayed

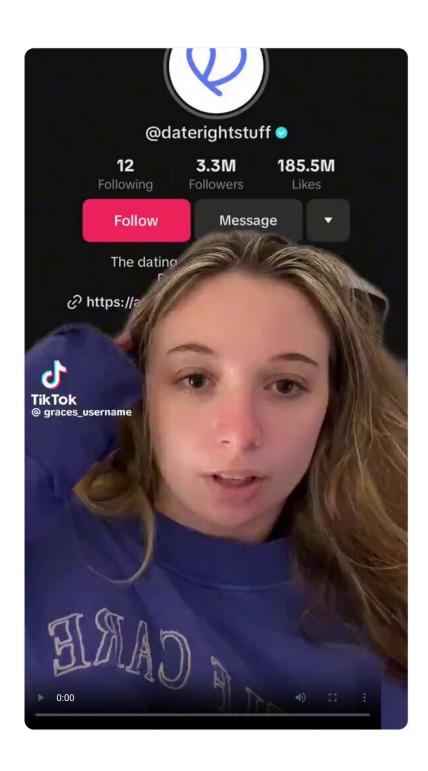
By Katy Hershberger

DAWN'S EARLY LIGHT by Heritage Foundation president Kevin Roberts, with a foreword by JD Vance-the book associated with the conservative organization's Project 2025 policy agenda-has been moved to a publication date after the election. The book was slated to come out from Broadside on September 24; Edelweiss and major bookselling websites now list the pub date as November 12. Roberts told Real Clear Politics in a statement that he decided to move the book. "There's a time for writing, reading, and book tours – and a time to put down the books and go fight like hell to take back our [...]

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But, there's more! In 2024, multiple reports accused Trump loyalist and Project 2025 operative John McEntee for sending sexually explicit messages to girls as young as 18. Incidentally, McEntee has said that he supports a total ban on pornography.

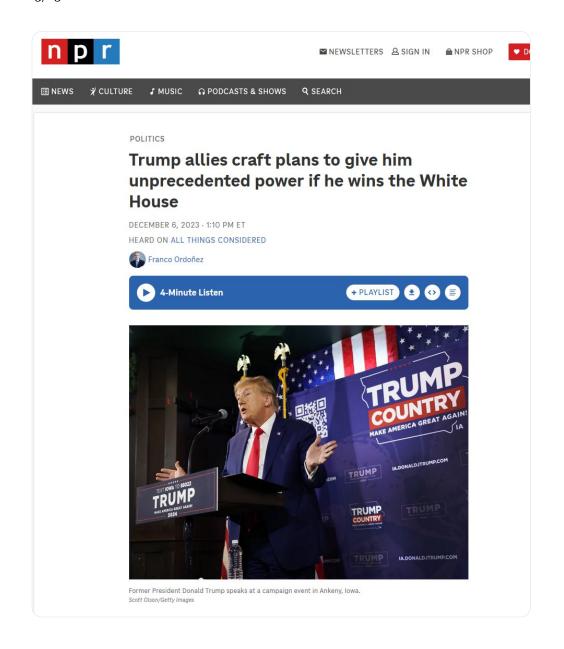
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What worries me about Project 2025 is that an organization that has so much power over US foreign policy seems to be siding with authoritarian regimes like Orban's Hungary, and is turning the US into one at the same time. I personally see it as an attack against democracy.



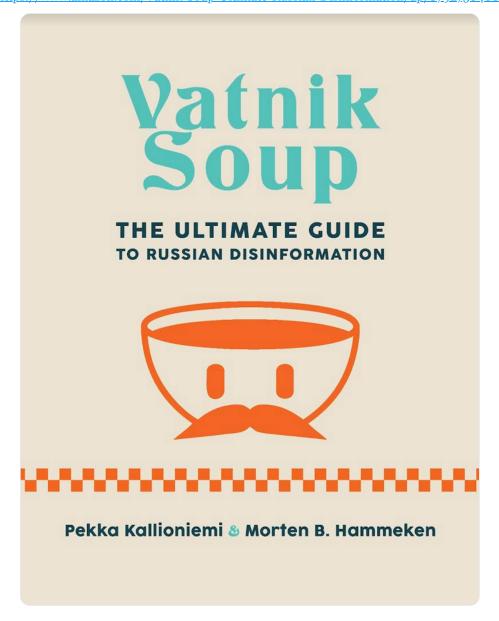


Among its numerous recommendations, it calls for the following (in no particular order):

- Changing how the FBI operates. According to the plan, the agency is "completely
 out of control," and the next conservative administration should restore its reputation
 by stopping investigations that are supposedly "unlawful or contrary to the national
 interest." Also, the document calls for legislation that would eliminate term limits for
 the FBI's director and require that person to answer to the president.
- Eliminating the Department of Education. The plan explicitly proposes, "Federal
 education policy should be limited and, ultimately, the federal Department of
 Education should be eliminated." The report also calls for bans on so-called "critical
 race theory" (CRT) and "gender ideology" lessons in public schools, asking for
 legislation that would require educators who share such material to register as sex
 offenders and be imprisoned.
- Defunding the Department of Justice. Additionally, the document proposes
 prosecuting federal election-related charges as criminal, not civil, cases. Otherwise,
 the document says, "[Voter] registration fraud and unlawful ballot correction will
 remain federal election offenses that are never appropriately investigated and
 prosecuted."
- Reversing Biden-era policies attempting to reduce climate change. The
 document's authors call for increasing the country's reliance on fossil fuels and
 withdrawing from efforts to address the climate crisis such as "offices, programs,
 and directives designed to advance the <u>Paris Climate Agreement</u>."
- Stopping cybersecurity efforts to combat mis- and disinformation. The
 document recommends the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency to stop
 its efforts to curtail online propaganda campaigns, arguing the federal government
 should not make judgment calls on what's true and what isn't.
- Changing immigration policies. Authors want the federal government to deprioritize DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals), the program that temporarily delays the deportation of immigrants without documentation who came to the U.S. as children; phase out temporary work-visa programs that allow seasonal employers to hire foreign workers; impose financial <u>punishments</u> on so-called "sanctuary cities" that do not follow federal immigration laws, and divert tax dollars toward security at America's border with Mexico. (While the Biden campaign claimed Project 2025 calls for "ripping mothers away from their children" at the border, there's no explicit mention of separating families. Rather, it calls for stronger enforcement of laws governing the <u>detainment</u> of immigrants with criminal records and restricting an existing program that tracks people in deportation proceedings instead of incarcerating them. In some cases, those changes could possibly play a role in border control agents detaining a parent while their child continues with immigration proceedings.)

My book titled "Vatnik Soup - The Ultimate Guide to Russian Disinformation" has been published, you can order it here:

https://www.amazon.com/Vatnik-Soup-Ultimate-Russian-Disinformation/dp/8792750400



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