



Written by [R. Cort Kirkwood](#) on July 3, 2024

## Axios: “Imperial” Presidency Ahead If Trump Wins

If former President Donald Trump returns to the White House, which polls suggest is increasingly likely, Americans should be prepared for an “imperial presidency” and hate-Trump Democrats had better watch out.

The Axios website sounded the alarm because of the U.S. Supreme Court’s ruling on Monday that the president is immune from prosecution for putative crimes committed when he is acting in his official capacity.

As well, the administration, notably the Cabinet and Justice Department, will be packed with loyalists.

And, indeed, the very real possibility that Trump will be the next president makes removing President Joe Biden as the Democrats’ nominee even more urgent.

Still, the Axios warning that Emperor Trump is just waiting to get his hands on the scepter of power is a little overwrought. Presidents have been “imperial” for well more than a century.



AP Images

Trump, if re-elected, promises an unabashedly imperial presidency.

Think of it as a better prepared, much better organized, much more powerful version of Trump 2017 — minus Republican brakes and any mystery about immunity. <https://t.co/oAeCwl5qdp>

— Axios (@axios) [July 2, 2024](#)

### Centralized Power

The [court’s immunity ruling](#) is a “big reason many Democrats worry President Biden is making one of the biggest gambles in U.S. history by staying in the race amid acute concerns about his age,” the [website reported](#).

Trump would “stretch the powers” of his office beyond anything we’ve “seen in our lifetime,” Axios said. “He says this consistently and clearly — so it’s not conjecture.”

The website warned that six initiatives are nearly guaranteed in early 2025 should Trump prevail as predicted:

- He will set up camps to corral and deport the millions of illegal aliens that Biden loosed upon the American people. And he “could invoke the Insurrection Act and use troops to lock down the southern border.”
- He will fire “tens of thousands” of federal bureaucrats and hire “pre-vetted loyalists.”



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- He will use Justice, led by a “trusted loyalist” as attorney general, “to target and even imprison critics” and would order the department to drop any cases against him.
- He will pardon the Americans convicted and imprisoned for participating in the mostly peaceful protest at the U.S. Capitol on January 6, 2021. “Investigations of the Bidens would begin.”
- He will slap a 10-percent tariff on foreign goods.
- And lastly, “conversation would intensify about when Justices Clarence Thomas, 76, and Sam Alito, 74, would retire.”

The [website reported](#) that “lists of potential successors are already drawn up,” and “if Trump were to win and the two oldest justices retired, five of the nine justices would have been handpicked by Trump,” the website reported.

### **More Allies in Congress**

Perhaps most frightening for Democrats is that a Trump victory might well give the GOP control of the the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives, the website reported.

That doesn’t bode well for the party of abortion, “transgenders,” and open borders.

“Most of Trump’s most prominent critics — Mitt Romney, Liz Cheney, et al. — will be gone,” the website continued:

Even the few who remain, including Sen. Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.), will be substantially less powerful.

Trump would be backed by an overwhelmingly Trump-friendly Senate and House — loaded with loyalists, top to bottom. Many were elected since his 2016 win, and many thanks to his endorsement.

Senator J.D. Vance of Ohio, a strong Trump supporter, said the divided party of 2017 no longer exists.

“I think now it recognizes that Trump is effectively the leader of the party,” [he told](#) the website. “And you’ll see that in governing style and certainly in agenda,” he said, and gone will be rancorous “infighting between Republicans, which will make us much more effective as a governing coalition.”

While Trump was a political tyro in 2017, Vance continued, now he knows how to wield power “because he’s coming at this as a subject matter expert.”

And, the website predicted, the leftist mainstream media can’t and won’t do a thing about it:

The media would investigate, report, and illuminate all of it — but probably with less impact. A second Trump term would start with TV ratings in the tank, mainstream media shrinking, and public attention shattering into dozens of information ecosystems, many built around popular and often partisan celebrities.

So the ability to do more with fewer real restraints is real — and hard to change.

The bottom line: Think of Trump 2025 as a better prepared, much better organized, much more powerful version of Trump 2017 — minus Republican brakes and any mystery about immunity.



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## **Presidency Already Imperial**

Even should Axios' predictions come to pass, though, Trump really wouldn't do anything that presidents before him haven't done.

The presidency has been an "imperial" office at least since the time of Abraham Lincoln. Having suspended habeas corpus, [he locked up Maryland legislators](#) because he thought the state would secede and join the Confederacy. He also arrested Baltimore's mayor, police marshal, and city council.

In his book [The Imperial Presidency](#), published in 1973 after President Richard Nixon resigned, historian [Arthur Schlesinger](#) explained that Nixon's actions were the result of more than a century of presidents who gradually expanded their powers as congressional powers and prerogatives waned.

And as [Charles Cooke observed](#) in *National Review*, some of what Axios describes as possible actions are not "imperial." Appointing loyalists is a president's prerogative. As well, he swears an oath to uphold the law. That is what Trump will do if [he keeps his promise](#) and undertakes the "largest domestic deportation operation" in history. Indeed, the *law requires* illegals to be detained and deported, a reason the [U.S. House impeached](#) Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas.

**H/T:** [Ace of Spades](#)



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