

TRUMP MAY ATTEMPT TO DISAVOW PROJECT 2025 — BUT HE'S NOT DISAVOWING VIKTOR ORBÁN

The press has been a bit befuddled by Trump's repeated attempts to disavow Project 2025.



Donald J. Trump
@realDonaldTrump

I know nothing about Project 2025. I have no idea who is behind it. I disagree with some of the things they're saying and some of the things they're saying are absolutely ridiculous and abysmal. Anything they do, I wish them luck, but I have nothing to do with them.

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Donald J. Trump
@realDonaldTrump · 1d

I know nothing about Project 2025. I have not seen it, have no idea who is in charge of it, and, unlike our very well received Republican Platform, had nothing to do with it. The Radical Left Democrats are having a field day, however, trying to hook me into whatever policies are stated or said. It is pure disinformation on their part. By now, after all of these years, everyone knows where I stand on EVERYTHING! DJT

One of the best debunkings of Trump's false disavowal came from CNN, which made a list of the 140 Trump associates involved in Project 2025.

"I have no idea who is behind it," the former president recently claimed on social media.

Many people Trump knows quite well are behind it.

Six of his former Cabinet secretaries helped write or collaborated on the 900-page playbook for a second Trump term published by the Heritage Foundation. Four individuals Trump nominated as ambassadors were also involved, along with several enforcers of his controversial immigration crackdown. And

about 20 pages are credited to his first deputy chief of staff.

In fact, at least 140 people who worked in the Trump administration had a hand in Project 2025, a CNN review found, including more than half of the people listed as authors, editors and contributors to “Mandate for Leadership,” the project’s extensive manifesto for overhauling the executive branch.

Dozens more who staffed Trump’s government hold positions with conservative groups advising Project 2025, including his former chief of staff Mark Meadows and longtime adviser Stephen Miller. These groups also include several lawyers deeply involved in Trump’s attempts to remain in power, such as his impeachment attorney Jay Sekulow and two of the legal architects of his failed bid to overturn the 2020 presidential election, Cleta Mitchell and John Eastman.

To quantify the scope of the involvement from Trump’s orbit, CNN reviewed online biographies, LinkedIn profiles and news clippings for more than 1,000 people listed on published directories for the 110 organizations on Project 2025’s advisory board, as well as the 200-plus names credited with working on “Mandate for Leadership.”

Overall, CNN found nearly 240 people with ties to both Project 2025 and to Trump, covering nearly every aspect of his time in politics and the White House – from day-to-day foot soldiers in Washington to the highest levels of his government. The number is likely higher because many individuals’ online résumés were not available.

Others, like Media Matters, are unpacking video where Trump endorses or is described endorsing the program.

NYT, which led reporting on these plans last year, has abandoned that leadership position to instead both-sides the question. It promised to lay out “a few ways” Project 2025 and Trump’s formal platform differ. Then it offered *one*: Abortion. NYT proceeded to provide Trump’s false spin that a platform that calls for fetal personhood says nothing about abortion.

There are a few ways the two plans differ.

One is on abortion. Project 2025 takes an aggressive approach to curtailing abortion rights, stating that the federal Health and Human Services Department “should return to being known as the Department of Life” (it was never known by that name) and that the next conservative president “has a moral responsibility to lead the nation in restoring a culture of life in America again.” Agenda47, however, does not mention abortion once.

Mr. Trump’s public position on abortion has regularly shifted. When he ran in 2016, he pledged to install justices who would overturn Roe v. Wade. He called the ruling that overturned it “a great thing” at the presidential debate this year. He also said at the debate that abortion rights should be decided on a state-by-state basis.

Worse still, USA Today attempted to fact check a claim that Trump supports Project 2025 and declared it false, relying on nothing more than Trump’s denial.

Trump, however, has sought to publicly distance himself from the effort, as reported by The Washington Post.

"I know nothing about Project 2025," Trump wrote in a July 5 Truth Social post. "I have no idea who is behind it. I disagree with some of the things they're saying and some of the things they're saying are absolutely ridiculous and abysmal. Anything they do, I wish them luck, but I have nothing to do with them."

Trump is lying to hide the true scope of his second term agenda, and too many people claiming to be journalists are buying those lies. Personnel is policy, and for Trump, that personnel has and will be Johnny McEntee, a key player in Project 2025.

But there may be a more useful way of understanding the tie, especially today.



Orbán Viktor
@PM_ViktorOrban

Peace mission 5.0

It was an honour to visit President [@realDonaldTrump](#) at Mar-a-Lago today. We discussed ways to make [#peace](#). The good news of the day: he's going to solve it!



2:17 AM · Jul 12, 2024 · 1M Views

Project 2025 is the American instantiation of a authoritarianism adopted from Viktor Orbán, right along with his apology for Russia.

As Casey Michel laid out in the New Republic in March, Orbán has been using the Heritage Foundation as a beachhead to sustain Hungary's influence operations during the Biden Administration.

Enter the Heritage Foundation. While Heritage grew to prominence in the 1980s as a font of Reaganite policy, in recent years the organization has undergone a monumental shift in terms of both policy and priorities. Rather than persist in its stolid dedication to conservative values, Heritage has swung in a far more reactionary—and far more authoritarian—direction in recent years. Across the policy landscape, Heritage has become little more than an intellectual breeding ground for Trumpist ideas.

While much attention has understandably focused on Heritage's so-called "Project 2025," which provides a roadmap for Trump to seize as much power as he can, such a shift has extended to foreign policy. This has been seen most especially in Heritage leading the effort to **gut funding for Ukraine**. But it's also evident in the way Heritage has endeavored to anchor its relations with Orbán, making Budapest once more America's preferred partner in Europe—regardless of the cost.

Much of that shift is downstream from Heritage's leadership, overseen by Kevin Roberts. Appointed as Heritage's president in 2021, Roberts **immediately began remaking** Heritage's priorities with a distinctly pro-Orbán bent—and began opening up Heritage as a vehicle for Hungarian influence in the U.S.

Part of that involved things like last week's confab, one of many meetings between Roberts and Orbán. (After one 2022 sit-down, Roberts—who, among other things, **has said** he doesn't think Joe Biden won the 2020 election—**posted** that it was an "honor" to meet with Orbán, praising his "movement that fights for Truth, for tradition, for families.")

But the relationship is structural as well: Heritage finalized what they refer to as a ‘landmark’ cooperation agreement with the Danube Institute, a Hungarian think tank that appears to exist only to praise Orbán’s government.*

The Budapest-based Danube Institute is largely unknown in the U.S., but it has transformed in recent years into one of the premier mouthpieces for propagating Orbánist policies. While it is technically independent, it is, as Jacob Heilbrunn notes in his new book on the American right’s infatuation with dictators, located “next to the prime minister’s building and funded by Orbán’s Fidesz party.” Indeed, the Hungarian think tank is overseen by a foundation directly bankrolled by the Hungarian state—meaning that the Danube Institute is, for all intents and purposes, a state-funded front for pushing pro-Orbán rhetoric.

[snip]

Most important, however, is the man currently running the Danube Institute: John O’Sullivan, a British conservative who once served as the director of studies at—you guessed it—the Heritage Foundation. “With his extensive connections in the conservative universe, [O’Sullivan] became Orbán’s conduit to the American Right,” Heilbrunn noted.

Unsurprisingly, the key to O’Sullivan’s and the Danube Institute’s outreach to American conservatives has been the Heritage Foundation. A post in early 2023 from the Hungarian Conservative noted that the Danube Institute and the Heritage Foundation had “signed a landmark cooperation agreement, deepening Hungary’s

transatlantic relations.”

Trump may be disavowing Project 2025 – or attempting to. But he’s not disavowing Orbán.

On the contrary, he and Orbán seem intent to run, hand in hand, to clothe a Transatlantic authoritarianism in the face of Christian nationalism.