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Buyer's Remorse?

• Voters expecting America-first policies from Trump sorely disappointed

By the Staff of AFP

This newspaper cannot disagree with those who insist President Donald Trump is failing the American people. On a host of issues, the president is violating the campaign promises that got him elected. If he doesn't alter course soon, his administration will be hamstrung before he completes his first full year in office.

Think back to AFP's first issue of 2026 in which we opined on the front page, "The mandate the American people have given the GOP is simple: Put America first or pay a heavy price at the polls in 2026."

And what has happened in that short amount of time? Popular conservative comedian Dave Smith summed it up, stating on his weekly talk show that the Trump administration has been taken over by "reckless stupid war hawks."

One of them is Sen. Lindsey Graham (R-S.C.). He and Trump agree that more death, violence, and destruction in the Middle East is a good thing. Trump even welcomed Chicken Hawk First Class Graham onto Air Force One recently to salute the growing unrest in Iran. Not to be outdone, Trump then threatened that the U.S. military would "hit Iran hard" in the coming days: "We are locked and loaded and ready to go."

But why is Trump involving Amer-



ica in the internal affairs of Iran in the first place? Steve Bannon has it right. On his popular podcast "War Room," the conservative commentator blasted the South Carolina senator:

What a sick individual. We don't care about making Iran great again. The Persians will make it great again themselves. Outside intervention would only prolong the problem.

Trump is also dragging the country into a regime change war in Venezuela.

At a cost of tens of billions of dollars, the U.S. military has been patrolling the Caribbean, boarding and confiscating oil tankers—all illegally, according to many legal experts.

U.S. drone attacks against the crews of alleged drug boats coming from Venezuela continue without solid evidence being presented to the American public.

We've heard the long list of justifications for these actions from the administration, but none of them warrant the many risks and consequences.

The correct America-first policy would be to negotiate trade and oil deals with Venezuela, just as Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro proposed back in October, not to sow more chaos in our own backyard.

Then there are the immigration raids. A majority of the public—even a portion of his loyal base—is souring on the heavyhanded tactics Trump's Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents are employing. Polls are showing that even "Forever Trumpers" think such raids smack of a police state, not a free republic.

The fact is, Americans are repulsed by images of heavily armed, masked federal agents in military fatigues pulling people out of their cars and homes—some American citizens—demanding ID and proof of citizenship in clear violation of the Fourth and Fifth Amendments. It's just a bit too "1984-ish" for many to stomach.

On Jan. 14, conservative commentator Emily Jashinky blasted the Trump administration, saying, "Two things can be true. I vehemently oppose people obstructing ICE. I also vehemently oppose ICE encroaching on American civil liberties."

What happens next is up to the president. He can salvage his presidency by keeping the America-first promises that got him elected, or he can continue down the path of a tin pot, banana republic dictator. ★

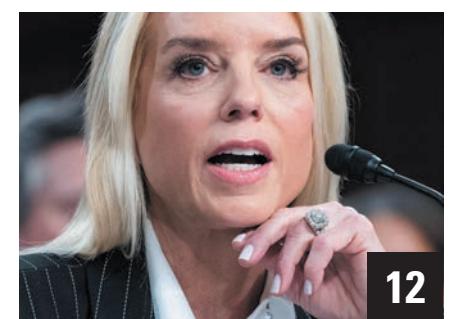
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