

# How to Assure President Trump Winning His Second Term

## Mainstream and Organic Views

Dr. Wordman

The beauty of American democracy is that anyone has a chance to become the U.S. President so long as you can raise a billion dollars to run a presidential campaign. If you were a billionaire or supported by a billionaire club, it would be a lot easier. The biggest challenge of being an American President is of course to face the second term re-election which very much depends on his or her performance in the first term. In a two party political system, the opposition party has four years to watch and plot against the incumbent President by obstructing his or her policies and raising a war chest to win the next election.

Trump, against quite big odds, won the Presidency beating many Republican candidates and his Democrat opponent. Trump is a conservative, running on a patriot line, wanting to make the America great again. The American citizens, frustrated with domestic issues and foreign relations, elected for a change and picked Trump for his strong conservative messages such as tax cut, stopping illegal immigrants, tough on drug trafficking, promising to make America great again. The liberal democrats and the media helped Trump's campaign by portraying him as a dark horse and he successfully painted himself as a white knight. He won by 304 electoral votes but only 46% popular votes. Trump's victory surprised many, but through his unique aggressive underdog campaign style with a strong conservative and patriotic message, he had amassed a core group of supporters. This core group though less than half of the voting population remained loyal to Trump, today, because of disappointment in America's failing in economy, lost jobs, and degrading American image. Their blame on Obama Administration resonated with Trump's sharp four 'anti-messages', anti-Obama, anti-Democrat, anti-media and anti-China campaign rhetoric.

Trump has maintained his core group's support largely because he has been delivering his campaign promises as well as keeping up with his four 'anti-messages'. Of course, as Trump Administration began, the first two 'anti' messages lost some punch force while the world is watching his performance. Trump made his tax-cuts to induce American corporations to return home. He reversed course on immigration issue, tough on illegal immigrants and persistent on building a border wall. Trump's foreign policy follows a conservative philosophy but seemingly impulsive after moving into the White House as exhibited by pulling out of the Trans-Pacific Partnership (PTT) and the Paris Climate Change Accord (PCC). Trump does place a high priority on Economy but seemingly focusing on making money for the U.S. Treasury (If America got rich, every problem could be solved) and using the stock market as his success indicator. In principle, the above notion is not wrong but how the Administration enacts policies and executes them are far more sophisticated than real estate investment or development project.

Trump had selected a conservative inner circle, about his age and speaking his language. There

were significant personnel changes in the past three years. But now Trump has three key staff, John R. Bolton, National Security Advisor, Robert E. Lighthizer, U.S. Trade Representative and Peter K. Navarro, Director of Trade and Manufacturing Policies, who seemed to be the team shaping Trump's national economic and security policies with a focus on the U.S. international trade. I wouldn't be surprised that the team (BLN) was responsible for persuading Trump to dump TPP and PCCA, to launch trade wars, starting from steel and aluminum against US trade partners, to renegotiate NAFTA with Mexico and Canada into USMCA and to orchestrate the more than a year long trade war with China with BLN signatures. The confused media seemed to echo the White House official message: The U.S. is winning in her trade wars against Canada, Mexico, China and Europe. As a Republican citizen, I see a different picture; I am worried that Trump's next term is vulnerable because of BLN's harsh policy tying trade and security together without gaining concrete scores.

BLN are regarded as hawks, although all of them are lawyers never fought a war for the country. Bolton did have some years of government experience and served briefly as the US Ambassador to UN. He dodged the draft (for Vietnam War) by serving in the National Guard (in his defense, he claimed that he knew the Vietnam War was already lost hence did not want to serve the war). He was pro Iraq war and an advocate for regime change. At age of nearly 72 (born 11-20-1948), his political career is near the end. Whether or not Trump is getting a second term is probably not as important to him as to make a dent in the American history in his last position as National Security Advisor. But making a dent worries me since his hawkish view is not well grounded which may make Trump lose in 2020.

Robert E. Lighthizer (born 10-11-1947), was also a lawyer and served in the same law firm (1974-1978), Covington and Burlington in DC, with Bolton (1974-1981). Lighthizer served under President Reagan as Deputy Trade Representative (1983-1985) thus carried the halo of Trade Representative. However, the signing of Plaza Accord on 9-22-1985 (allowed currency intervention reducing US dollar value against yen by 51%) or the earlier US Local Content Legislation (about Japanese manufactured cars) did not balance trade deficit with Japan since Japan did not make structural (legislative) changes to favor US imports. The damage to Japan really was the currency effect on Japan's assets, creating an asset bubble later causing deflation and depressed economical growth. (The international financial gurus helped it) Therefore, it is understandable how the US-China trade negotiation under Lighthizer wanted to shift from balancing trade to demanding China to enact laws to make structural change to favor US imports and investment. Why should China accept such demands Japan rejected? The BLN lawyers drove trade war to tie in with national security by applying technology sanction and restricting technology exchange. The BLN team, being non-technologists, do not understand the US-China mutual dependence in technology and its product supply/manufacture chain. The American technology corporations' opposition to this tie-up policy is a clear warning signal: Trump may lose his second term if he did not make a correction.

Peter K. Navarro (born 7-15-1949 and a graduate of Harvard John F Kennedy School) is principally an author more than an economist. He is called a 'heterodox economist' obviously for his outside-of-mainstream economics views. He is a prolific writer with over a dozen books to his name, including *Death by China* (2011) which was made into a movie and *The Coming of China Wars* (2006). However, world has changed rapidly especially in the past decade, China

has been going through rapid transformations faster than any author can keep up. Even Kissinger will agree with me on this statement. Navarro's view on China is outdated and lack of first hand interaction with China prior to his current role as Director of Trade and Manufacturing. At age 70, Navarro's political career is also limited. Perhaps, he will write a new book after his service to the White House. I am worried that Navarro, as a member of BLN team, is more an echoer than a deep thinker to understand the US-China paradigm shift and how it may affect Trump's chance for second term and Trump's legacy.

At seventeen months before the Presidential election, I am worried about the BLN team. I would like to see the Trump Administration taking a serious 'retreat session' reflecting on the current events and the Administration's current policies. Put the BLN team on the podium, drill them these questions: Is China Threat or Death by China a real scenario today? Is pro-war and regime change a feasible or correct policy towards a transforming China? What did we really learn from the Plaza Accord and Louvre Accord? To make America Great Again is a noble objective, but it will take more than one term of Presidency to accomplish something concrete. I see problems with the BLN China policy and why the trade war is at an impasse. I think a revision with the following objectives will help Trump win the next election and a healthy US-China relation: 1. Deal with China realistically to first focus on scoring a win on the North Korea nuclear issue, even possibly a new Iran deal. 2. Settle a trade agreement with China to gain some obvious concessions from China improving the trade imbalance. 3. Plot a long-term plan to work with China on the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), an obvious world accepted project now, to project a win-win outcome for both the U.S. and China.

Any positive sign of the above actions with a stable economy will likely assure a second term for Trump to continue the 'Make America Great Again' objective.