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When Will "Trump Fatigue" Set in and Remain, or Will it?

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To Kamala Harris' supporters, Donald Trump's victory in the 2024 election was a shock. In a state won by Harris 54.8% to 43.8% and in Chicago 70.4% to 28.4%, the excessive coverage of Trump has left many wondering when his dominance over politics will end. In other words, how long could it be until Trump fatigue sets in, or will it?

Trump managed to win over the blue wall states and gained unprecedented ground in traditionally safe blue areas. As reported by Block Club Chicago last year, Trump attracted more than 20% of the vote in Chicago in 2024 compared to 16% in the 2020 election and 12% in 2016. Amidst the flurry of executive actions and provocative statements, many Americans are left wondering when Trump's momentum will start to slow down. Will Trump's support erode similarly to other far-right conservatives such as Joseph McCarthy or the Rev. Charles Coughlin?

There is good reason to believe Trump's popularity is on the decline. A recent Economist/YouGov poll conducted after Trump's tariffs were announced on April 2nd found that 51% of Americans disapproved of how his administration handles things, compared to only 43% that approve. This data is corroborated by a poll conducted by Quinnipac University, published April 9th, finding that 53% of Americans believe tariffs will have a damaging effect on the economy in the long term. Despite running on the promise of fixing the economy, data from the University of Michigan's preliminary consumer sentiment index suggests consumer confidence is at a critical low. The index dropped 11 percent from the previous month to 50.8, the lowest level since COVID.

Regarding deportations, while the majority of Americans agree that deportations of illegal immigrants should happen, according to Pew Research, only 32% of Americans say all of them should be deported, compared to 51% who only want some to be deported. This suggests that while immigration might be a strong issue for Trump, his draconian measures to deport innocent immigrants like Merwil Gutierrez are unpopular.

Additionally, Elon Musk's presence in government has proven to be an unwelcome one. As reported by a national survey conducted by Marquette University, disapproval of DOGE has grown to 58% compared to only 41% that approve. For the man himself, Musk's approval fell to a staggering 38% favorability. This unpopularity came to a head in the Wisconsin Supreme Court judge election, where despite Musk

pouring more than \$100m into Republican candidate Brad Schimel, the liberal candidate Susan Crawford came out on top.

Frustrations with the current administration have also culminated in large-scale protests across the nation. Most recently, on April 5th, the "Hands Off" protests took place across the country in what is currently the largest nationwide protest against Trump's second term. Demonstrations across all 50 states demanded an end to the tariff turmoil, as well as protesting rollbacks on LGBTQ+ rights and vital medical research.

Trump's agenda has also faced significant judicial roadblocks. His efforts to challenge the sanctuary city status of Chicago, Illinois, continue to be fiercely fought over in the courts. Illinois has also led a lawsuit with 22 other states to combat the cuts to the Department of Health and Human Services and the NIH, Illinois and a coalition of 10 other states also achieved a major court victory over Musk and DOGE, preventing them from accessing Americans' personal information. This level of legal conflict between the judicial and executive branches has not been seen since the courts ruled against some of Franklin Delano Roosevelt's New Deal policies in the 1940s.

Despite these efforts in the legal and public spheres, it's obvious Trump's support won't collapse overnight. His grip over the Republican party continues to be iron-strong. Any hope for a recent GOP split was squashed with the recent narrow passing of the Budget through the House of Representatives.

It's unclear whether this popularity is due to Americans' frustrations with the sluggish Democratic party response or Trump's unique personality. From T-shirts with his mugshot to the infamous "Make America Great Again" red cap, Trump is arguably a social movement. He successfully tapped frustrations over inflation and housing by appealing to people's emotions. In his State of the Union address, Trump referenced personal stories, such as the murder of Laken Riley and a tribute to a child with brain cancer. These moments cast Trump's actions in a sympathetic light, allowing him to frame the narrative that he is fighting for the common American.

However, this public support is starting to slip. With Republicans refusing to meet with their constituents, a ripe opportunity presents itself for Democrats. The party must work together to speak out and demonstrate their opposition to the Trump administration. As Senator for New Jersey, Cory Booker, said in his record-breaking Senate speech, "Let's get in good trouble."

Democrats cannot afford to make the same mistake after the January 6th Capitol attack by allowing the momentum that had built around them to slip through their fingers. While recent protests and pushback against Trump's policies in Illinois and nationwide could be early signs that Trump fever is breaking, it will ultimately require more substantial, organized and continuing opposition from Democrats to turn fatigue into action and results. There has been success with rallies, court cases, town meetings, demonstrations, candidate recruitment, and more. However, in 2024 the Democrats lost momentum in the last two weeks before the election while Republicans went negative and regained the lead by Election Day. So the question is not only will Trump Fatigue set in, but remain.

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