

If the Regime Fits: Source-Annotated Reference

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Method note

This document is the source reference for the essay “If the Regime Fits.” It is organized by the essay’s features rather than by paragraph number so that it survives revision. Each entry states the claim as made in the essay, the source relied on, what the source confirms, and, where applicable, a verification flag.

Every source listed was retrieved from the linked original. Where a claim rests on a secondary characterization rather than a primary document, or on the compiler’s memory rather than a retrieved source, the entry says so. Items marked VERIFY have not been checked against a primary document and should be before the essay is relied on for them. As of this version, no entry carries the flag.

Verification pass of August 22, 2026: the Eleventh Circuit caption and docket, the Russian 2001 statute, the Italian decisions and referring courts, the Brazilian rulings, the six-lawmakers grand jury refusal, the Stars and Stripes independence framework, the war powers “first” claim, and the *Newsom v. Trump* citation were checked against primary or contemporaneous sources and are cleared below. The July 13 order (DE 106) was retrieved and read; the two items that depended on it are cleared in section 2. The Hungarian public-media item is cleared in section 4, which also records the April 2026 election and the June 2026 media law; the essay was revised to treat Hungary as an electoral reversal case.

The author used AI assistance in preparing this work and is responsible for its content.

1. The IRS settlement and the immunity addendum

Claim. Acting Attorney General Todd Blanche signed a one-page waiver on May 19, 2026 containing “forever barred and precluded” language barring IRS claims against the president, his family, and businesses on returns filed before the effective date; the waiver was released behind a hyperlink in a DOJ press release the day after the lawsuit was dismissed; the president filed a \$10 billion suit in January over the leak by contractor Charles Littlejohn, who is serving five years; Blanche previously served as the president’s personal lawyer.

1. Tessa Diestel, “New settlement term bars IRS from investigating Trump, his family for past tax issues,” CNN, May 19, 2026.

- <https://www.cnn.com/2026/05/19/politics/irs-barred-investigating-trump-new-settlement-term>. Confirms language, Blanche signature, hyperlink-only release.
2. Axios, "Trump DOJ settlement prevents pending tax investigations of president, family," May 19, 2026. <https://www.axios.com/2026/05/19/trump-tax-settlement-irs-anti-weaponization-fund-doj>. Confirms one-page document; scope covering returns filed before the effective date; Blanche's prior role as personal lawyer; DOJ statement that waivers are "customary."
 3. Carrie Johnson, "Judge dismisses Trump's IRS lawsuit, paving the way for a settlement," NPR, May 18, 2026. <https://www.npr.org/2026/05/18/g-s1-119783/trump-irs-lawsuit-settlement>. Confirms \$10 billion demand and January filing.
 4. CNBC, "U.S. creates \$1.8B 'lawfare' fund in exchange for Trump dropping \$10B IRS suit," May 18, 2026. <https://www.cnbc.com/2026/05/18/trump-dismiss-irs-lawsuit.html>. Confirms Littlejohn and five-year sentence.
 5. Settlement Agreement, *Trump v. IRS* (S.D. Fla.), posted by DOJ. <https://www.justice.gov/opa/media/1441201/dl?inline=>. Primary document. Note: "FOREVER BARRED and PRECLUDED" appears in the agreement's release clause; the May 19 addendum is the instrument that runs in the other direction.
 6. Lawfare, "The President Who Sued Himself," May 20, 2026. <https://www.lawfaremedia.org/article/the-president-who-sued-himself>. Background primer on the settlement, the fund, and Blanche's order.
 7. Thomson Reuters Tax, "DOJ Settlement 'Forever' Bars IRS Trump Audits, Sparks Backlash," May 21, 2026. <https://tax.thomsonreuters.com/news/doj-settlement-forever-bars-irs-trump-audits-sparks-backlash/>. Confirms the voluntary dismissal was self-executing and did not require court approval; Wyden statement; Tax Law Center analysis.

2. The settlement litigation, June through August 2026

Claim. Judge Williams voided the agreement on July 13, finding no adverseness, no case or controversy, and an improper purpose; sanctioned counsel; referred a Trump attorney to the Florida Bar and directed her order into existing disciplinary proceedings against Blanche and Associate Attorney General Woodward; the order bars the parties from using or referring to the settlement in any proceeding; thirty-five former federal judges intervened as amici; the president, his sons, the Trump Organization, two lawyers, and the Justice Department appealed to the Eleventh Circuit on July 31; the case is captioned *Trump v. Thirty-Five Former Federal Judges*, No. 26-12692; the president has asked the Eleventh Circuit to stay enforcement; the underlying agreement has not been voided or released; Blanche remains the nominee for attorney general.

1. Forbes, "Judge Smacks Down Trump's IRS Settlement And Orders Sanctions," July 13, 2026. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/alisdurkee/2026/07/13/judge-smacks-down-trumps-irs-settlement-and-orders-sanctions/>. Confirms nullification, bar on referring to the settlement, monetary and non-monetary sanctions, Florida Bar referral of Alejandro Brito, direction of order to proceedings against Blanche and Woodward.

2. CBS News, “Judge rebukes Trump and DOJ over IRS lawsuit, refers lawyer for disciplinary proceedings,” July 14, 2026. <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/judge-trump-justice-department-irs-lawsuit-anti-weaponization-fund-settlement/>. Confirms “never adverseness ... never a case or controversy ... never a question as to who would prevail”; bad-faith finding; “improper purpose” language; bar on using settlement provisions in judicial, administrative, regulatory, or other proceedings.
3. Democracy Forward, “Federal Court Finds Trump v IRS Lawsuit Plaintiffs ‘Acted In Bad Faith,’” July 13, 2026. <https://democracyforward.org/news/press-releases/federal-court-finds-trump-v-irs-lawsuit-plaintiffs-acted-in-bad-faith/>. Amicus organization’s summary; note advocacy source.
4. Democracy Defenders Fund, “Trump’s IRS Settlement: One Month Later,” July 21, 2026. <https://www.democracydefendersfund.org/resource/trumps-irs-settlement-one-month-later/>. Confirms June 12 plaintiffs’ brief on jurisdiction; Brinkema injunction June 12. Advocacy source. Correction: the 23 state attorneys general moved for leave to file as amici on June 23 (DE 101); the court denied leave on June 25 (DE 103), finding the case sufficiently briefed. Their brief is not part of the record relied on in the order.
5. CNBC, “Trump appeals order that slammed his IRS lawsuit and referred his lawyer to bar,” July 31, 2026. <https://www.cnbc.com/2026/07/31/trump-appeals-irs-lawsuit-blanche-fund.html>. Confirms July 31 notice of appeal by Trump, two sons, Trump Organization, and two attorneys.
6. The Hill, “Trump appeals ruling finding he colluded with DOJ in \$10B IRS suit,” July 31, 2026. <https://thehill.com/homenews/administration/6003015-trump-appeals-irs-lawsuit-ruling/>. Confirms DOJ filed its own notice of appeal; Blanche confirmation held by two GOP senators seeking written pledge on the fund.
7. Bloomberg Tax, “Trump Seeks Immediate Halt to Judge’s Penalties in IRS Case,” August 2026. <https://news.bloombergtax.com/daily-tax-report/trump-seeks-immediate-halt-to-judges-penalties-in-irs-case>. Confirms stay request pending at Eleventh Circuit; Trump’s continued expressions of support for the fund after Blanche walked it back. 7a. Eleventh Circuit, No. 26-12692-CC, Document 10, filed August 12, 2026 (government’s filing signed by Acting Deputy Attorney General R. Trent McCotter), via CourtListener RECAP. https://storage.courtlistener.com/recap/gov.uscourts.ca11.97154/gov.uscourts.ca11.97154.10.0_2.pdf. Primary. Caption reads “President Donald J. Trump, et al. v. Thirty-Five Former Federal Judges, No. 26-12692.” The certificate of interested persons lists retired judges J. Michael Luttig and Nancy Gertner among appellees and 93 members of the U.S. House as district-court amici. CLEARED. 7b. Law360, “Trump Tells 11th Circ. Sanctions In IRS Case Must Be Paused,” August 2026. <https://www.law360.com/tax-authority/federal/articles/2512547/trump-tells-11th-circ-sanctions-in-irs-case-must-be-paused>. Confirms docket 26-12692, filed August 3, 2026; motion and reply for stay of sanctions order.

8. Law&Crime, “Trump asks 11th Circuit to halt ‘gag order’ in IRS lawsuit,” August 2026. <https://lawandcrime.com/high-profile/trump-lawyers-seek-immediate-halt-to-judges-gag-order-that-wrongly-silences-the-sitting-president-without-any-proof-of-collusion/>. Confirms amici included 35 former federal judges and former IRS and Treasury officials; Williams denied stay pending appeal.
9. Tax Law Center at NYU Law, “Our resources on how to unwind the Trump v. IRS deal.” <https://taxlawcenter.org/blog/our-resources-on-the-trump-irs-lawsuit-and-settlement-agreement>. Confirms August 2, 2026 DOJ document rescinding the fund order; that the rescission does not alter the settlement agreement and is not signed by the Trump plaintiffs; Blanche’s concession at confirmation hearing that plaintiffs could sue to enforce. The claim that the underlying agreement survives rests on this analysis; most press coverage describes the fund as “abandoned.” CLEARED against the order text: see 2.10.
10. Order, *Trump v. Internal Revenue Service*, No. 1:26-cv-20609-KMW, DE 106 (S.D. Fla. July 13, 2026), 56 pp. Posted by Democracy Forward: <https://democracyforward.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/07/Trump-v-IRS-106-Order-on-Sanctions.pdf>. Also on CourtListener docket 72207870. Primary. Pincites (CM/ECF pagination): April 24 jurisdiction order and April 29 appointment of amici, pp. 6; neither party responded, p. 6; Blanche “there is no judge” testimony May 19, pp. 7-8 and n.38; Release Order signed by Blanche alone, p. 8; Blanche nominated AG six days after June 2 testimony, p. 9; no attorney appeared for Defendants, p. 23; Release Order contravenes 26 U.S.C. 7217, p. 34; “I’m suing myself,” p. 43 n.61; “\$1.776 billion speaks of a branding effort,” p. 50 n.64; sanctions list including the bar on use “as evidence of a ‘settlement’ reached in this matter,” pp. 46-47; footnote 63 stating validity and enforceability of the private agreement “is not before this Court,” p. 47; court-appointed amici named and declined fees, pp. 52-53; initial amici and 35 former judges invited to seek reimbursement, p. 53; Rule 60(d)(3) fraud-on-the-court question expressly left open, p. 38 n.59. CLEARED: the essay’s statements on scope of the bar and survival of the agreement track the order.
11. CourtListener docket, *Trump v. Internal Revenue Service*, 1:26-cv-20609, printed August 22, 2026. Confirms DE 43 (April 29 appointment of amici), DE 52 (May 18 voluntary dismissal), DE 63 (May 27 motion by Thirty-Five Former Federal Judges), DE 113 (July 31 notice of appeal by plaintiffs and counsel), DE 115 (August 1 order noting Defendants do not intend to appear or respond to the stay motion), DE 118 (Eleventh Circuit No. 26-12692-C acknowledged August 3), DE 120 (August 5 order), DE 128 (August 21 reply).

3. The anti-weaponization fund

Claim. The May 18 announcement created a \$1.776 billion fund; expected beneficiaries included January 6 defendants and political allies; Republican senators objected; Judge Brinkema enjoined it June 12; Blanche told a June 2 hearing it would not move forward; DOJ rescinded the order August 2; the settlement obligation survives; the president continues to support the fund.

1. NBC News, “DOJ sets up \$1.8B ‘anti-weaponization’ fund after Trump drops IRS lawsuit,” May 18, 2026. <https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/donald-trump/trump-voluntarily-drops-10-billion-lawsuit-irs-leaked-tax-records-rcna345193>. Confirms amount and expected beneficiaries.
2. The Hill, “Treasury lawyer Brian Morrissey resigns as Donald Trump, IRS settlement announced,” May 19, 2026. <https://thehill.com/homenews/administration/5884833-morrissey-departure-treasury-doj/>. Confirms Treasury general counsel resignation.
3. Reason, “Trump’s corrupt ‘settlement’ with the IRS hits two judicial roadblocks,” June 2026. <https://reason.com/2026/06/01/trumps-corrupt-settlement-with-the-irs-hits-two-judicial-roadblocks/>. Confirms Brinkema TRO on the fund and Williams’s order for briefing on collusion; notes the government never responded to Trump’s claims and that IRS’s own April memorandum had raised defenses not used.
4. Sources 2.4, 2.6, 2.7, and 2.9 above for the injunction, Blanche’s statements, the rescission, and the surviving obligation.

4. Hungary

Claim. Orbán came to power in 2010 with a two-thirds majority; rewrote the constitution; restructured the Constitutional Court, judiciary, and electoral system; channeled EU funds and contracts to allies; used tax and media licensing against opposition business; consolidated public broadcasting into MTVA in 2011 with 1,600 dismissals under a Media Council wholly nominated by the governing party; brought universities under state control; Hungary was classified as no longer democratic; Fidesz lost the April 12, 2026 election to Tisza, which won a two-thirds majority on 53 percent of the vote at record turnout; the new parliament’s June 2026 media law dissolved MTVA.

1. V-Dem Institute, Democracy Report 2024. <https://www.v-dem.net/publications/democracy-reports/>. Classifies Hungary as an electoral autocracy.
2. Kim Lane Scheppele, “The Rule of Law and the Frankenstate,” *Governance* 26 (2013), and subsequent work on Hungarian constitutional restructuring.
3. European Commission, Annual Rule of Law Reports on Hungary, 2020 to 2025. https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/upholding-rule-law/rule-law/rule-law-mechanism/rule-law-reports_en. The 2020 report found the Media Council’s independence and effectiveness at risk because the governing party nominated all five members (as summarized by ECPMF, <https://www.ecpmf.eu/country-factsheet-hungary/>); the 2021 country chapter, SWD(2021) 714, repeats the finding (EUR-Lex, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52021SC0714>).
4. Freedom House, Nations in Transit, Hungary. <https://freedomhouse.org/country/hungary/nations-transit>.
5. Reporters Without Borders, “Pressure on Public Media: A decisive test for European democracies,” July 2025. <https://rsf.org/sites/default/files/medias/file/2025/07/RAPPORT%20M%C3%89>

DIAS%20PUBLICS%20-%20EN_1.pdf. Confirms the December 22, 2010 law replacing public broadcasting structures with MTVA and the dismissal of 1,600 journalists and media professionals. Also Human Rights Watch, “Hungary: Media Curbs Harm Rule of Law,” February 13, 2024, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2024/02/13/hungary-media-curbs-harm-rule-law> (same figure; Media Council oversight of MTVA). CLEARED.

6. House of Commons Library, “Hungary: Developments under Viktor Orbán and the 2026 parliamentary election,” CBP-10612, July 8, 2026. <https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/cbp-10612/>. Confirms April 12, 2026 defeat; Tisza 141 of 199 seats on 53.2 percent of the list vote; Magyar government from May.
7. University of Cambridge, “Hungarian election 2026: Cambridge researchers give their reactions.” <https://www.cam.ac.uk/stories/hungarian-election-2026>. Confirms nearly 80 percent turnout, the largest mandate in post-socialist Hungary, and that Fidesz’s 38 percent yielded roughly a quarter of seats while the opposition’s 53.63 percent yielded over two-thirds.
8. Hungarian Conservative, “Parliament Approves Major Public Media Overhaul and Independent News Agency,” June 23, 2026. <https://www.hungarianconservative.com/articles/current/hungary-public-media-reform-mti-independence-approved/>. Confirms the 145 to 39 vote merging MTVA into a successor broadcaster, restoring MTI independence, and terminating the Media Council and MTVA leadership mandates. Replace with Hungarian government gazette or MTI report before publication if an editor asks; this is a single secondary source on the statute.

5. Turkey

Claim. Ankara administrative court suspended construction of the presidential complex in 2014; Council of State upheld; Erdoğan’s defiance quote; construction continued; 1,100-plus rooms and at least \$615 million; post-2016 purge figures; 2017 referendum; Istanbul mayor prosecuted and removed.

1. “Presidential Complex (Turkey),” Wikipedia. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Presidential_Complex_\(Turkey\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Presidential_Complex_(Turkey)). Confirms court dates, affirmation, quote, rooms, cost, protected-site status. Secondary; replace with the underlying Turkish court records or contemporaneous reporting if an editor asks.
2. Peter Kenyon, “Turkey’s President And His 1,100-Room ‘White Palace,’” NPR, December 24, 2014. <https://www.npr.org/sections/parallels/2014/12/24/370931835/turkeys-president-and-his-1-100-room-white-palace>. Confirms quote, rooms, cost.
3. “Purges in Turkey following the 2016 Turkish coup attempt,” Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Purges_in_Turkey_following_the_2016_Turkish_coup_attempt. Confirms dismissal figures.
4. Turkish Minute, “Turkey has arrested over 113,000 since 2016 coup attempt,” July 14, 2025. <https://turkishminute.com/2025/07/14/turkey-has-arrested->

over-113000-since-2016-coup-attempt-as-crackdown-on-gulen-movement-continues/. Confirms arrest figure and breakdown.

5. Ishaan Tharoor, "Before Trump gutted the White House, Erdogan built his 'White Palace,'" Washington Post via Pacific Daily News, October 27, 2025. https://www.postguam.com/news/nation/before-trump-gutted-the-white-house-erdogan-built-his-white-palace/article_c99d1d95-2b6c-4d80-b929-bea1de44f4ca.html. Confirms Istanbul mayor prosecution.

6. Russia

Claim. Putin became acting president December 31, 1999; Decree No. 1763 granted Yeltsin lifetime immunity; decree language as quoted; the decree was replaced by federal statute within fourteen months; Khodorkovsky and Navalny as canonical cases; 2020 legislation extended immunity to Putin and family and allowed him to remain through 2036.

1. Presidential Library of the Russian Federation, Decree No. 1763 of December 31, 1999. <https://www.prilib.ru/en/node/352157>. Primary.
2. CBS News, "Details of Yeltsin's Departure," December 31, 1999. <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/details-of-yeltsins-departure/>. Source of the quotation.
3. Al Jazeera, "Russia's Putin signs bill giving presidents lifetime immunity," December 22, 2020. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/12/22/russias-putin-signs-bill-giving-presidents-lifetime-immunity>. Confirms 2020 legislation.
4. Presidential Library of the Russian Federation, Federal Law No. 12-FZ of February 12, 2001, "On guarantees to the President of the Russian Federation, who has ceased to exercise his powers, and members of his family," adopted by the State Duma January 25, 2001, approved by the Federation Council January 31, 2001. <https://www.prilib.ru/en/node/352158>. Primary. Decree December 31, 1999 to statute February 12, 2001 is thirteen and a half months; the essay's "fourteen months" rounds up. CLEARED.

7. The ballroom, helipad, Kennedy Center, and Smithsonian

Claim. East Wing demolished October 2025; 90,000 square feet; cost growth \$200M to \$400M; \$1 billion security appropriation; donor list; tariff cut two days after steel donation; taxpayer exposure of at least \$300M; helipad paid for by Sikorsky/Lockheed; Kennedy Center takeover February 2025; Smithsonian EO 14253 and August 2025 letter.

1. Fortune, "A \$400 million ballroom was just the beginning," April 6, 2026. <https://fortune.com/2026/04/06/trump-white-house-ballroom-spending-more-renovation-2026/>.
2. NBC News, "Republicans propose \$1 billion in taxpayer dollars to secure Trump ballroom." <https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/white-house/republicans-propose-1-billion-taxpayer-dollars-secure-trump-ballroom-rcna343637>.
3. Fortune, "Meet all 37 White House ballroom donors." <https://fortune.com/article/who-has-donated-trump-white-house-ballroom/>.

4. "White House State Ballroom," Wikipedia.
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/White_House_State_Ballroom. Confirms ArcelorMittal donation and tariff timing. Secondary; replace with underlying reporting if asked.
5. NPR, "Supreme Court allows Trump's ballroom construction to continue for now," August 21, 2026. <https://www.npr.org/2026/08/21/nx-s1-5935417/supreme-court-allows-trumps-ballroom-construction-to-continue-for-now>. Confirms "at least \$300 million" taxpayer estimate; bunker, hospital, drone port claims.
6. ABC News, "Trump building granite helipad on White House South Lawn," July 6, 2026. <https://abcnews.com/Politics/trump-sikorsky-pay-helicopter-landing-pad-white-house/story?id=134524263>. Confirms Sikorsky paying \$5 to \$6 million; Lockheed's \$1.24 billion Marine One contract.
7. Time, "Trump's New White House Helipad Project Labeled a 'Joke,'" July 7, 2026. <https://time.com/article/2026/07/07/trumps-white-house-renovation-project-multimillion-dollar-helipad-backlash/>. Lockheed statement that the contribution went to the National Park Service.
8. Kennedy Center press release, February 12, 2025. <https://www.kennedy-center.org/news-room/press-release-landing-page/kennedy-center-board-elects-president-donald-j.-trump-as-board-chair/>. Primary.
9. Britannica, "Why did Donald Trump take over the Kennedy Center?" <https://www.britannica.com/question/Why-did-Donald-Trump-take-over-the-Kennedy-Center>.
10. "Executive Order 14253," Wikipedia.
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Executive_Order_14253.
11. Congressional Research Service, IF12975, "Smithsonian Institution: Potential Effects of Executive Order 14253." <https://www.congress.gov/crs-product/IF12975>. Primary on the trust-instrumentality structure.
12. CNN, "White House orders review of Smithsonian exhibits," August 12, 2025. <https://www.cnn.com/2025/08/12/politics/smithsonian-exhibits-white-house-review>.

8. The ballroom litigation through August 21, 2026

Claim. Judge Leon enjoined above-ground construction in March pending congressional authorization; construction continued on appeal with a 250-person crew on 20-hour days; D.C. Circuit affirmed 2 to 1 on August 7; Solicitor General applied to the Supreme Court August 14 describing an integrated military complex; 65 percent complete; National Trust argued the administration sought to outrun review; Chief Justice Roberts issued an administrative stay August 21.

1. NPR, "Judge rules White House ballroom construction must halt until Congress OKs it," March 31, 2026. <https://npr.org/2026/03/31/nx-s1-5768446/judge-rules-white-house-ballroom-construction-must-halt-until-congress-oks-it>.
2. CNBC, "Trump asks Supreme Court to let White House ballroom construction continue," August 14, 2026. <https://www.cnbc.com/2026/08/14/trump-ballroom->

supreme-court-white-house.html. Confirms August 7 D.C. Circuit ruling and SG's "integrated military complex" language.

3. NBC News, "Trump asks Supreme Court to allow White House ballroom construction to continue," August 14, 2026. <https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/supreme-court/trump-appeals-supreme-court-white-house-ballroom-rcna266912>.
4. The Hill, "Trump asks Supreme Court to allow White House ballroom construction," August 2026. <https://thehill.com/regulation/court-battles/6029544-supreme-court-white-house-ballroom-construction/>. Confirms 2 to 1 panel vote.
5. CNN, "Supreme Court temporarily allows construction of White House ballroom to continue," August 21, 2026. <https://www.cnn.com/2026/08/21/politics/supreme-court-rules-on-trump-ballroom>. Confirms 250-person crew, 20-hour days, 7 days per week, per administration filing.
6. SCOTUSblog, "Supreme Court allows White House ballroom construction to continue for now," August 21, 2026. <https://www.scotusblog.com/2026/08/supreme-court-allows-white-house-ballroom-construction-to-continue-for-now/>. Confirms "outrun judicial review" argument and posture.
7. CBS News, "Supreme Court temporarily allows White House ballroom construction to continue," August 21, 2026. <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/supreme-court-white-house-ballroom-john-roberts/>.
8. NBC News, "Supreme Court temporarily allows Trump ballroom construction to continue," August 21, 2026. <https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/supreme-court/supreme-court-trump-white-house-ballroom-rcna592899>. Confirms 65 percent figure as of August 14.

9. Kennedy Center, second round

Claim. Judge Cooper ruled in May that the renaming was unlawful and only Congress can rename; letters removed in June; board voted August 13 to add an inscription crediting the president, a plaza in his name, and a conditional second inscription; Beatty filed an emergency motion August 20.

1. Time, "Kennedy Center Board Votes to Put Trump's Name Back on the Building, Testing Judge's Order," August 13, 2026. <https://time.com/article/2026/08/13/kennedy-center-trump-name-board-vote-judge-order/>.
2. Axios, "Kennedy Center board restores Trump's name, testing judge," August 13, 2026. <https://www.axios.com/2026/08/13/trump-kennedy-center-name-board-court-order>. Confirms inscription wording and the statute on additional memorials.
3. NPR, "In new filings, Kennedy Center says it won't try to put Trump's name on facade until Sept. 8," August 19, 2026. <https://www.npr.org/2026/08/19/nx-s1-5937912/kennedy-center-president-trump-name>. Confirms plaza name and \$100 million condition.

4. AP via U.S. News, "Federal Court Is Asked to Block Kennedy Center From Returning Trump's Name to Building," August 20, 2026.
<https://www.usnews.com/news/entertainment/articles/2026-08-20/federal-court-is-asked-to-block-kennedy-center-from-returning-trumps-name-to-building>.
5. NPR, "Beatty files emergency request to stop Trump's name from returning to Kennedy Center," August 21, 2026. <https://www.npr.org/2026/08/21/nx-s1-5940799/kennedy-center-president-trump-filing>.

10. Comey, James, Bolton, and the six lawmakers

Claim. As stated in the essay. Bolton pleaded guilty June 26, 2026 to one count; sentencing October 28; plea caps government's recommendation at 60 months; forfeiture about \$2.2 million. A grand jury declined to indict six Democratic lawmakers.

1. "Prosecution of James Comey," Wikipedia.
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prosecution_of_James_Comey. Secondary.
2. NPR, "Grand jury indicts former FBI director James Comey for a second time," April 28, 2026. <https://www.npr.org/2026/04/28/nx-s1-5803167/james-comey-indictment>.
3. ABC News, "James Comey indicted again, this time over seashell Instagram post," April 28, 2026. <https://abcnews.com/US/grand-jury-indicts-former-fbi-director-james-comey/story?id=132425678>.
4. NBC News, "Judge dismisses cases against James Comey and Letitia James," November 25, 2025.
<https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/justice-department/judge-dismisses-cases-james-comey-letitia-james-finding-prosecutor-was-rcna244775>.
5. Fox News, "New York Attorney General Letitia James enters plea in federal mortgage fraud case," October 24, 2025. <https://www.foxnews.com/politics/new-york-attorney-general-letitia-james-enters-plea-federal-mortgage-fraud-case.print>.
6. NPR, "Grand jury rejects new mortgage fraud indictment against New York Attorney General Letitia James," December 4, 2025. <https://www.npr.org/2025/12/04/nx-s1-5634017/grand-jury-rejects-new-mortgage-fraud-indictment-against-new-york-attorney-general-letitia-james>.
7. CNN, "The Justice Department can keep trying to reindict Letitia James," December 12, 2025. <https://www.cnn.com/2025/12/12/politics/justice-department-can-keep-trying-reindict-letitia-james-risks>.
8. Axios, "FBI raids former National Security Adviser John Bolton's home," August 22, 2025. <https://www.axios.com/2025/08/22/john-bolton-national-security-adviser-trump-raid-fbi>.
9. DOJ Office of Public Affairs, "Former U.S. National Security Advisor John R. Bolton, II Pleads Guilty to Violating the Espionage Act," June 26, 2026.
<https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/former-us-national-security-advisor-john-r-bolton-ii-pleads-guilty-violating-espionage-act>. Primary. Confirms single count and October 28 sentencing.

10. ABC News, "John Bolton pleads guilty to 1 count of mishandling classified information," June 26, 2026. <https://abcnews.com/US/john-bolton-expected-plead-guilty-mishandling-classified-information/story?id=134224305>. Confirms 60-month cap, forfeiture, "only successfully prosecuted case" characterization.
11. CBS News, "Grand jury declines criminal charges against 6 Democrats who urged military to reject illegal orders," February 11, 2026. <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/grand-jury-declines-charges-against-6-democrats/>. Confirms a D.C. grand jury declined to indict Sens. Slotkin and Kelly and Reps. Crow, Houlahan, Deluzio, and Goodlander; charge sought under 18 U.S.C. 2387; the president had called the video seditious and punishable by death.
12. CNN, "Grand jury declines to indict Democratic lawmakers who urged service members to disobey illegal Trump orders," February 10, 2026. <https://www.cnn.com/2026/02/10/politics/jury-declines-to-indict-lawmakers-illegal-orders-video>.
13. NBC News, "Jeanine Pirro's office shelves pursuit of Democrats over social video," February 23, 2026. <https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/justice-department/jeanine-pirros-office-shelves-pursuit-democrats-social-video-sources-s-rcna259783>. Confirms the grand jury vote was unanimous and the office ended the effort. CLEARED.

11. The Reflecting Pool prosecution

Claim. The president announced a renovation in April at \$1.5 to \$2 million; cost reached at least \$14 to \$16 million; paint peeled within days of refilling; the president blamed vandals; a 67-year-old former Olympic canoeist was arrested after touching a loose chunk; DOJ dropped the case; DOJ's filing disclosed a June 11 NPS engineer email attributing damage to contractor overspray that Interior held for nearly a month; the president publicly disagreed with U.S. Attorney Pirro.

1. NBC News, "Timeline: Trump's 2026 Reflecting Pool renovation project," June 25, 2026. <https://www.nbcnews.com/data-graphics/dc-reflecting-pool-renovation-timeline-2026-rcna351410>. Confirms cost figures and timeline.
2. PBS/AP, "Trump tries to blame Reflecting Pool woes on vandalism, without offering substantiation," June 20, 2026. <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/politics/trump-tries-to-blame-reflecting-pool-woes-on-vandalism-without-offering-substantiation>. Confirms arrest of David Hearn, 67, and his account.
3. CNN, "Trump's Reflecting Pool debacle takes a predictably scandalous turn," August 1, 2026. <https://www.cnn.com/2026/08/01/politics/the-trump-teams-embarrassing-comments-about-reflecting-pool-vandalism>. Confirms case dropped, June 11 email, Interior's possession of the information, and the president's "disagree 100%" statement.
4. Forbes, "Trump Blames 'Vandals' For Damaging Lawn At National Mall Site Where He Held July 4 Rally," August 17, 2026. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/siladityaray/2026/08/17/trump-blames-vandals-for-damaging-lawn-at-national-mall-site-where-he-held-july-4-rally/>. Confirms charges dropped against three others and continued vandalism claims.

5. PolitiFact, “Fact-checking Trump on Reflecting Pool renovation timeline, cost, contractor relationship,” May 28, 2026.
<https://politifact.com/article/2026/may/28/trump-reflecting-pool-renovations-swimming-blue/>. Confirms no-bid contract under urgency exemption per NYT.

12. Stars and Stripes

Claim. January 2026 Pentagon announcement refocusing the paper away from “woke distractions” and ending AP reprints; March memo requiring content consistent with good order and discipline and barring cartoons and wire stories; ombudsman fired; active-duty Navy captain installed as deputy publisher without the publisher’s knowledge; August 21 firings of editor-in-chief Erik Slavin, publisher Max Lederer, and reporter Lara Korte for insubordination; Slavin’s stated offense; firings followed the paper’s reporting on the USS Abraham Lincoln.

1. Fox News, “Pentagon vows to reform military newspaper Stars and Stripes, remove ‘woke distractions,’” January 15, 2026.
<https://www.foxnews.com/media/pentagon-vows-reform-military-newspaper-stars-stripes-remove-woke-distractions.print>. Confirms Parnell announcement.
2. The Hill, “Stars and Stripes publisher announces retirement,” August 19, 2026.
<https://thehill.com/policy/defense/6038882-pentagon-stars-stripes-editorial-shift/>. Confirms March memo contents.
3. Washington Times/AP, “Longtime publisher of Stars and Stripes to retire,” August 19, 2026. <https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2026/aug/19/longtime-publisher-stars-stripes-retire-citing-differences-pentagon/>. Confirms ombudsman firing and USS Lincoln reporting.
4. Press Democrat/AP, “Stars and Stripes editor says he has been fired for insubordination after doing interview,” August 21, 2026.
<https://www.pressdemocrat.com/2026/08/21/stars-and-stripes-editor-fired/>. Confirms Navy Capt. William Urban installed without publisher’s prior knowledge; senators’ letter.
5. Stars and Stripes, “Pentagon fires Stars and Stripes editor, publisher and reporter,” August 21, 2026. <https://www.stripes.com/theaters/us/2026-08-21/stars-and-stripes-publisher-editor-reporter-separated-22620671.html>. Source of Slavin’s “required by law and by the department’s own policies” statement.
6. UPI, “Pentagon fires Stars and Stripes editor-in-chief, publisher, reporter,” August 21, 2026. https://www.upi.com/Top_News/US/2026/08/21/Pentagon-fires-Stars-Stripes-editor-in-chief-publisher-reporter/1571787353309/.
7. Japan Times/AFP, “Pentagon fires Stars and Stripes leaders after they criticize interference,” August 22, 2026.
<https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2026/08/22/world/politics/pentagon-fires-stars-and-stripes-leaders/>.
8. The independence framework, cleared: DoD Directive 5122.11 (October 1993, revised 1996) and 32 CFR 246.4(b), which provided for “a free flow of news and information to its readership without news management or censorship” (<https://www.law.cornell.edu/cfr/text/32/246.4>); the ombudsman position

created by Congress in the FY1991 National Defense Authorization Act, reporting to Congress (Raskin letter to Hegseth, April 15, 2026, <https://raskin.house.gov/2026/4/raskin-colleagues-to-hegseth-keep-stars-and-stripes-pentagon-press-corps-free-and-independent>). The Pentagon withdrew the CFR language in January 2026 without notice and comment, which is the basis of *Dardarian and Church v. DoD* (Stars and Stripes, June 3, 2026, <https://www.stripes.com/theaters/us/2026-06-03/lawsuit-pentagon-independence-stripes-21862545.html>). The essay attributes “required by law” to Slavin rather than asserting it; the precise statement is that independence rested on a DoD directive and a federal regulation, with a statutory ombudsman. S. 4614, the Stars and Stripes Editorial Independence Act of 2026, would codify it. CLEARED.

13. Alien Enemies Act removals

1. ACLU, *J.G.G. v. Trump* case page. <https://www.aclu.org/cases/jgg-v-trump>. Documents March 15, 2025 invocation, Boasberg TRO, continued removals, contempt proceedings. Additional documentation in *Abrego Garcia v. Noem*.

14. Impoundment

Claim. GAO has found multiple ICA violations; the August 28, 2025 special message proposed \$4.9 billion in rescissions with fewer than 45 days left in the fiscal year; GAO’s 2018 opinion holds pocket rescissions unlawful; the Supreme Court on September 26, 2025 allowed the withholding, finding the ICA likely precludes private suits; GAO’s general counsel said the office had not decided whether to sue.

1. Government Executive, “Trump moves to unilaterally withhold funds, drawing bipartisan calls of illegality,” August 29, 2025. <https://www.govexec.com/management/2025/08/trump-moves-unilaterally-withhold-funds-drawing-bipartisan-calls-illegality/407793/>. Confirms prior GAO violation findings at Energy, HHS, Transportation; 2018 opinion language.
2. Government Executive, “Agency layoffs do not constitute illegal impoundments, GAO rules,” July 31, 2025. <https://www.govexec.com/oversight/2025/07/agency-layoffs-do-not-constitute-illegal-impoundments-gao-rules/407147/>. Confirms DOE Renew America’s Schools violation finding.
3. GAO, B-337805, “Impoundment Control Act of 1974: Review of the President’s Special Message of August 28, 2025.” <https://www.gao.gov/products/b-337805>. Primary. Confirms 15 accounts expiring end of FY2025; 45-day window running to October 23; restatement of B-330330.
4. GAO, Impoundment Control Act resource page. <https://www.gao.gov/legal/appropriations-law/impoundment-control-act>.
5. Supreme Court, *Department of State v. AIDS Vaccine Advocacy Coalition*, No. 25A269, order of September 26, 2025. https://www.supremecourt.gov/opinions/24pdf/25a269_bp7c.pdf. Primary.
6. CBS News, “Supreme Court lets Trump withhold \$4 billion in foreign aid approved by Congress,” September 26, 2025. <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/supreme-court-trump-foreign-aid-funding/>.

7. Public Citizen, fact sheet on the September 26 decision, September 29, 2025. <https://www.citizen.org/article/fact-sheet-the-supreme-courts-decision-in-aids-vaccine-advocacy-coalition-v-department-of-state-and-global-health-council-v-trump/>. Advocacy source.
8. ProPublica, “Trump Is Defying Congress on Foreign Aid,” June 22, 2026. <https://www.propublica.org/article/trump-defying-congress-foreign-aid-usaid-vought-rubio-constitutional-crisis>. Confirms roughly \$13 billion clawed back in 2025 and GAO general counsel’s statement that no decision to sue has been made.

15. Iran war powers

Claim. Hostilities began February 28, 2026; no authorization sought; May 1 letter asserted the April 7 ceasefire terminated hostilities; House passed a concurrent resolution June 3, 215 to 208; Senate June 23, 50 to 48; first time both chambers have directed withdrawal under the War Powers Resolution; House passed a second resolution July 23, 214 to 208; Senate version failed 47 to 49; no cost disclosure or supplemental request.

1. Brookings, “The Iran War and the War Powers Resolution,” July 14, 2026. <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/the-iran-war-and-the-war-powers-resolution/>. Confirms dates and the administration’s ceasefire argument.
2. Just Security, “Ongoing Iran War Reveals Necessary War Powers Reforms,” May 5, 2026. <https://www.justsecurity.org/137977/iran-hostilities-war-powers-restart-clock/>. Confirms May 1 letter.
3. NPR, “House passes war powers resolution directing Trump to end hostilities with Iran,” June 3, 2026. <https://www.npr.org/2026/06/03/nx-s1-5845102/house-iran-war-powers-vote>.
4. NPR, “In symbolic vote, Congress directs Trump to remove forces from Iran war,” June 23, 2026. <https://www.npr.org/2026/06/23/nx-s1-5868599/senate-iran-war-powers-resolution>.
5. ASIL, “Congress Passes Resolution to End the United States Involvement in Iran,” July 1, 2026. <https://asil.org/ilib/congress-passes-resolution-to-end-the-united-states-involvement-in-iran/>.
6. The “first” claim, cleared and narrowed: prior war powers measures that cleared both chambers (Yemen 2019, Iran 2020) were joint resolutions and were vetoed. H.Con.Res. 86 is the first concurrent resolution under section 5(c) to pass both chambers. Antiwar.com, “In Historic First, Congress Passes Concurrent War Powers Resolution To End Iran War,” June 23, 2026, <https://news.antiwar.com/2026/06/23/in-historic-first-congress-passes-concurrent-war-powers-resolution-to-end-iran-war/>; Lawfare, “What Congressional Resolutions Mean for the War in Iran,” June 8, 2026, <https://www.lawfaremedia.org/article/what-congressional-resolutions-mean-for-the-war-in-iran> (on the legal status of concurrent resolutions); Congress.gov, H.Con.Res. 86, <https://www.congress.gov/bill/119th-congress/house-concurrent-resolution/86>. The essay was revised to state the narrower claim. No CRS product stating the “first” was located; the claim rests on the legislative record and contemporaneous analysis.

7. NPR, "For a 2nd time, House approves resolution to end the war in Iran," July 23, 2026. <https://www.npr.org/2026/07/23/nx-s1-5904515/congress-iran-war-powers-vote>.
8. CNN, "The law sets a 60-day limit on unauthorized wars. The US is blowing past it in Iran," April 25, 2026. <https://www.cnn.com/2026/04/25/politics/war-powers-act-trump-iran-war-congress-analysis>. Confirms absence of cost disclosure or supplemental request.

16. National Guard

Claim. California Guard federalized for Los Angeles June 2025 over the governor's objection; Portland and Chicago deployments in fall 2025; four lower-court judges found facts did not justify the Chicago deployment; Supreme Court 6 to 3 on December 23, 2025 left the block in place; the president withdrew from Chicago, Los Angeles, and Portland; D.C. deployment extended through 2029 at an estimated additional \$1.4 billion; roughly 2,600 troops.

1. *Newsom v. Trump*, No. 3:25-cv-04870-CRB (N.D. Cal., filed June 9, 2025) (Breyer, J.); *Newsom v. Trump*, 141 F.4th 1032 (9th Cir. 2025) (stay of TRO, June 19, 2025, <https://cdn.ca9.uscourts.gov/datastore/opinions/2025/06/19/25-3727.pdf>). Breyer ordered control returned to the governor in December 2025, 2025 WL 3533818; the government abandoned its appeal after *Trump v. Illinois* and the Ninth Circuit ended the federalization December 31, 2025 (Civil Rights Litigation Clearinghouse, <https://clearinghouse.net/case/46678/>; Governor's office, December 31, 2025). CLEARED.
2. WBEZ, "U.S. Supreme Court sides against Trump, won't lift block on National Guard deployment in Illinois," December 23, 2025. <https://www.wbez.org/donald-trump/2025/12/23/supreme-court-trump-national-guard-illinois>. Confirms four lower-court judges and first-ruling status.
3. SCOTUSblog, "Supreme Court rejects Trump's effort to deploy National Guard in Illinois," December 23, 2025. <https://www.scotusblog.com/2025/12/supreme-court-rejects-trumps-effort-to-deploy-national-guard-in-illinois/>.
4. Supreme Court, *Trump v. Illinois*, No. 25A443, December 23, 2025. https://www.supremecourt.gov/opinions/25pdf/25a443_new_b07d.pdf. Primary.
5. Just Security, "Trump v. Illinois: A Narrow Supreme Court Decision with Broad Implications," January 9, 2026. <https://www.justsecurity.org/128371/trump-v-illinois-supreme-court/>. Confirms withdrawal from the three cities and "stronger form" statement.
6. AP via Yahoo, "National Guard troops to stay on Washington, DC, streets through 2026," January 2026. <https://www.yahoo.com/news/articles/national-guard-troops-stay-washington-211934903.html>. Confirms D.C. federal-district status allows sidestepping state challenges; troop counts.
7. The Week, "How has a year of National Guard deployment affected Washington, DC?" August 2026. <https://theweek.com/politics/one-year-national-guard-washington-dc>. Confirms extension through 2029 and \$1.4 billion estimate.

8. PBS News, “Washington grapples with a \$1.4 billion National Guard deployment extension until 2029,” August 2026.
<https://www.pbs.org/newshour/nation/washington-grapples-with-a-1-4-billion-national-guard-deployment-extension-until-2029>.
9. Senate HSGAC Minority, National Guard report executive summary.
<https://www.hsgac.senate.gov/wp-content/uploads/NationalGuardReportExecutiveSummary.pdf>. Primary; \$332 million through February 2026.

17. Italy

Claim. Lodo Schifani (2003) struck down January 2004, Sentenza 24/2004; Lodo Alfano (2008) struck down October 7, 2009, Sentenza 262/2009; grounds included Article 3 equality and Article 138 amendment procedure; questions reached the Court by incidental referral from the Milan trial courts hearing Berlusconi’s cases.

1. Pasquale Pasquino, “Immunity, the Italian Way,” *Constellations* 17 (2010). Standard citation.
2. Corte Costituzionale, Sentenza n. 262/2009, deposited October 19, 2009 (decision announced October 7). <https://www.cortecostituzionale.it/stampa-pdf-pronuncia/2009/262>. Primary. Questions raised by the Tribunale di Milano by orders of September 26 and October 4, 2008 in a criminal proceeding in which Berlusconi was a defendant, and by the Rome GIP; struck on Articles 3 and 138 in relation to Articles 68, 90, and 96. Camera dei Deputati summary: <https://leg16.camera.it/561?appro=677>.
3. Corte Costituzionale, Sentenza n. 24/2004, January 20, 2004, on the Lodo Schifani (Law 140/2003): referral from the Tribunale di Milano in Berlusconi’s proceeding; struck on Articles 3 and 24, without reliance on Article 138 (Cicconetti, Consulta Online, <https://giurcost.org/studi/cicconetti.htm>; it.wikipedia summary with citations). The essay’s Italy paragraph attributes the constitutional-amendment ground to the Court’s reasoning generally; strictly it belongs to 262/2009. CLEARED with that note. Editors’ note stands: the 2010 legitimate-impediment law was itself cut back in 2011 (Sentenza 23/2011).

18. Brazil

Claim. The Tribunal Superior Eleitoral declared Bolsonaro ineligible for eight years in June 2023; the Supremo Tribunal Federal convicted him in September 2025 of plotting to retain power.

1. Brasil de Fato, “Brazil’s Supreme Court orders Bolsonaro and other coup plotters to start serving prison sentence,” November 25, 2025.
<https://www.brasildefato.com.br/2025/11/25/brazils-supreme-court-orders-bolsonaro-and-other-coup-plotters-to-start-serving-prison-sentence/>. Confirms TSE ineligibility June 30, 2023 for eight years; STF First Panel conviction September 2025, 4 to 1, 27 years 3 months; final judgment certified November 25, 2025.

2. NPR, "Brazil's ex-President Bolsonaro sentenced to 27 years for coup plot," September 11, 2025.
<https://www.npr.org/2025/09/11/nx-s1-5535658/bolsonaro-brazil-coup-trial>.
3. Journal of Democracy, "How to Bring Authoritarians to Justice," February 2026.
<https://www.journalofdemocracy.org/articles/how-to-bring-authoritarians-to-justice/>. Scholarly account of the TSE and STF sequence. CLEARED.

19. Comparative democracy indices

1. V-Dem Institute. <https://www.v-dem.net/>.
2. Freedom House. <https://freedomhouse.org/>.

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