PRO/CON: Does Trump get thumbs-up or thumbs-down after first 100 days?

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President Donald Trump, accompanied by first lady Melania Trump, is saluted as they await the arrival of Argentine President Mauricio Macri and his wife Juliana Awada at the White House in Washington, D.C., April 27, 2017, just days before Trump would mark his 100th day in office. AP Photo/Pablo Martinez Monsivais.

PRO: Trump has set the nation back on the right course

President Trump might not be popular with liberals, environmentalists and the mainstream media. Regardless, his first 100 days in office have unquestionably been extremely successful.

Let's start with the economy. Before Trump, we had eight years of slow economic growth, $10 trillion of additional national debt and the imposition of impossible-to-understand regulations. Trump has put in place a series of reforms that have reignited the American economic engine and set the nation back on the right course.

The number of workers employed full-time has risen by 1,300,000 since Trump was elected in November, compared to 958,000 full-time jobs added in the previous five months.
Fewer Immigrants Are Crossing The Border

Other major issues have improved as well. For instance, the number of people crossing illegally into the United States has gone down dramatically. The number of immigrants caught crossing the border illegally in March, about 12,000, was 72 percent lower than the number reported in December, said Homeland Security Secretary John Kelly.

Trump has also called for reduced government spending and has peeled back burdensome regulations. He has proposed cutting spending by at least 20 percent at the departments of Justice, Labor, Agriculture and State. He called for a 31 percent reduction of spending at the Environmental Protection Agency.

His administration has leased federal land for oil drilling and issued new coal licenses. It revived the stalled Keystone XL and Dakota Access pipelines. As a result, the Dakota Access pipeline was swiftly completed, with oil flowing through it today. Work will soon begin on the Keystone XL.

Supporting The Coal Mining Industry

Keeping his promise to miners, Trump's early energy actions have paid off in coal country. Since Trump's election, the coal mining industry has added 35,000 jobs. The two largest coal companies in the United States, which had previously been forced into bankruptcy, are once again showing signs of life. The recovering coal companies were crippled by Obama's climate policies.

Perhaps most importantly, Trump successfully filled the late Justice Antonin Scalia's Supreme Court seat. He nominated one of the most highly qualified, well-respected federal judges considered in recent decades, Justice Neil Gorsuch.

Like any presidential administration, team Trump has faced multiple challenges and setbacks in its first 100 days. Despite these, the beginning of his presidency it has been wildly successful. It is a substantial improvement over the largely ineffective and reckless policies of the Obama administration.

ABOUT THE WRITERS: Justin Haskins and H. Sterling Burnett work at The Heartland Institute, a nonpartisan, nonprofit research center headquartered in Arlington Heights, Ill. Readers may write them at Heartland, 3939 North Wilke Road, Arlington Heights, IL 60004.

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CON: Not surprisingly, Trump has been a disaster from the get-go

There’s an old joke in which a guy complains about a local deli: “The food is awful … and such small portions.”

I think that joke sums up Donald Trump’s first 100 days as president. He’s had very few actual achievements, and what he has pulled off has ranged from the very bad to the truly horrific.

By now, we are all pretty familiar with the failures. Unlike every other modern president after 100 days, he hasn’t signed a single piece of major legislation into law. This failure looks especially bad considering his party controls both houses of Congress.

His first major effort, repealing and replacing the Affordable Care Act, also known as "Obamacare," crashed and burned. The bill he embraced was too extreme for even many Republicans, and it was pulled before Congress could vote on it. It would not have received enough votes.

All Talk And No Action

His Muslim ban was poorly thought out and poorly drafted. It was struck down by several judges, including several Republicans.

He has had trouble appointing executive branch employees, leaving many positions unfilled. Both his proposed budget and his proposal on tax reform appear to have almost no chance of being passed. Still, he called his tax reform plan "tremendous."

The sad thing is that we can actually be grateful that Trump has been so ineffective. If he had succeeded in achieving his goals, we would be in much worse shape.

A great example is health care. During the campaign, he made it clear he wanted to replace "Obamacare," but he never explained what exactly he’d replace it with. All he said was that his plan would be “tremendous” and “really terrific.” It turns out that his "tremendous" plan would have taken away care from 24 million people and allowed insurance companies to stop covering even basic care such as “hospital visits” and “childbirth.” It’s a good thing he failed to get it passed.

Appointing Extremely Unqualified People

If his Muslim ban had succeeded, we would have ended our commitment to helping refugees fleeing horrific violence. And that commitment is already embarrassingly small.

Further, he has appointed remarkably unqualified people to powerful positions. In many cases, his appointments’ only qualifications appear to be that they have been aggressive enemies of the agencies they’re now running. For example, President Trump picked Scott
Pruitt to run the Environmental Protection Agency. His only experience with environmental regulation was his history of suing the EPA. He has spent his career defending the right to pour as much poison into the atmosphere as possible. He now leads the agency charged with protecting the environment.

I could go on and on, but you get the idea.

Unable To Accept Any Kind Of Criticism

Along with his dangerous goals and ineffective leadership, Trump’s first 100 days have been marred most of all by Trump. President Trump turns out to be no different than candidate Trump and Trump the businessman. He is someone who lies about even silly things that are easy to check. He behaves emotionally and seems unwilling or unable to accept any checks on his power. He is temperamentally unfit for the office of the presidency.

He has even managed to pick fights with Mexico, Australia and Germany, nations with whom the U.S. has long been a friendly ally.

In short, Trump’s first 100 days have been a disaster. It is critical Americans of good conscience continue to resist his vision. We must do so in order for our nation to have any chance of surviving the 1,300 days to come.

ABOUT THE WRITER: Daylin Leach, a state senator in Pennsylvania, is national president of Americans for Democratic Action, an independent liberal political organization. Readers may write him at ADA, 1629 K St. NW, suite 300, Washington, D.C. 20006.

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Quiz

1. The author of the PRO article claims Trump’s presidency has had positive effects for workers. Which selection from the article provides the BEST evidence to support this claim?

(A) Trump has put in place a series of reforms that have reignited the American economic engine and set the nation back on the right course.

(B) The number of immigrants caught crossing the border illegally in March, about 12,000, was 72 percent lower than the number reported in December, said Homeland Security Secretary John Kelly.

(C) Keeping his promise to miners, Trump’s early energy actions have paid off in coal country. Since Trump’s election, the coal mining industry has added 35,000 jobs.

(D) The two largest coal companies in the United States, which had previously been forced into bankruptcy, are once again showing signs of life.

2. Read the sentence from the second paragraph of the PRO article.

Trump has put in place a series of reforms that have **reignited** the American economic engine and set the nation back on the right course.

Fill in the blank. The author uses the word "reignited" to mean______.

(A) given new energy

(B) destroyed and recreated

(C) better than ever before

(D) quickly disintegrating

3. Which of the following claims is MOST supported by the author of the CON article?

(A) Trump’s policies are bad, and he has not been able to pass them.

(B) Trump has not been able to complete any policy because he is disorganized.

(C) Trump’s emotional behavior is dangerous and ineffective.

(D) Trump has failed to fill many government positions.
He has spent his career defending the right to pour as much poison into the atmosphere as possible.

How does using the word "poison" affect the TONE of the sentence?

(A) It conveys a sense that the law has been broken.
(B) It conveys a sense that the effects are reversible.
(C) It conveys a sense of immediate danger.
(D) It conveys a sense of deliberate harm.