

Presidential Transitions in the USA: Trump's "First 100 Days"

After an election, the outgoing or “lame duck” president 即将离任的总统 is expected to help the president-elect make a smooth transition into the White House. The process involves choosing Cabinet 内阁 members to lead the bureaucracy in the Executive Branch of government. Many incoming administrations are assembled to be “a team of rivals”政敌团队 who offer the new president opposing counsel, often from different ideological positions. For example, a State Department to handle foreign affairs usually consists of both hawks and doves, while the Cabinet as a whole may contain one or two members of the opposition party in high positions.

Trump's transition will be unique because, unlike every previous president, he does not have a network of colleagues in Washington D.C. He ran his campaign as an “outsider” candidate, so it may prove difficult to staff the government with people who are both competent and trusted. His transition team 过渡小组 so far includes family members, and he seems reluctant 不情愿的 to let Republican Party establishment into his inner circle 核心集团 of advisers.

This transition is also unique because many continue to oppose the president-elect, despite a relatively clear and scandal-free election win. Calls to abolish the Electoral College are especially loud when the winner of the election loses the popular vote (Clinton may have 1-2 *million* more votes than Trump by the time all ballots are counted), while a petition to Electoral College delegates to choose Clinton over Trump, claiming his “unfitness” for office, has millions of signatures. Urban protests are also drawing tens of thousands of Americans into the streets to express their discontentment with the election results.

Presidents-elect generally claim a “mandate”命令 from the people to enact their most important policy proposals in “the first 100 days” of their presidency. It is thought that after 100 days, the new administration will have had time to start governing, and the public will have “given it a chance” to succeed. In the minds of Americans, winning an election means that the new president will have “popular will”普遍意愿 or “the will of the people”人民的意志 behind his/her agenda 议事日程. Congress is supposed to unite behind new presidents for the good of the country, but in recent decades, strengthened partisanship has made the two parties largely uncooperative with one another. What are Trump's priorities?

Many things Trump wants to do include reform of Washington D.C., to “drain the swamp”排去沼泽的水 of self-interested politicians and bureaucrats who are not accountable to the public.

A president's last months, weeks, and days in office are marked by a tradition of giving presidential pardons 总统赦免 to political allies and others seen to be prosecuted and punished unfairly. Trump is said to be considering the prosecution of his Democratic rival, Hillary Clinton, but a pardon from Obama before Trump assumes office would effectively absolve her of any crimes related to her tenure as Secretary of State.

Other Vocabulary: ·hand-off political power to one's successor ·inaugurate/swear in a new president ·interim ·peaceful transition of power ·step down (from one's position) ·turnover (i.e. from Democrats to Republicans in a position)