



ACT FREE TO BE FREE



Looking Ahead to Nov.3rd – Jan. 3rd

THANK YOU TO:

Minnesota Activists for creating the Act Free to be Free memos and Indivisible Nebraska Lincoln for the basis of this presentation.

TO JOIN ELECTION PROTECTION EFFORTS IN CT:

Contact Greater Westville Indivisible
greaterwestvilleindivisible@gmail.com

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WHAT IS DIRECT ACTION?



- **Cutting out the Middleman:** solving problems yourself rather than petitioning the authorities or relying on external institutions.
- **Sidestepping Regulations & Representation to Accomplish Goals Directly:** everything from planting a public garden to blockading airports to helping refugees escape to safety.
- **A Civilian's Guide to Direct Action:** crimethinc.com
- **Actions taken** when the opponent is unwilling to enter into, or remain in, discussion/negotiation.
- **These actions impose a "creative tension"** into the conflict, supplying moral pressure on your opponent to work with you in resolving the injustice.
- **The King Philosophy** – Nonviolence365®
thekingcenter.org

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ELECTION SABOTAGE



- **The current regime** has been preparing to disrupt, sabotage and control the outcome of the 2026 midterm election through things like voter suppression, intimidation, and litigation.
- **Act Free to Be Free** is a memo outlining a pro-democracy, state and local framework for Election Defense in 2026 (created and inspired by Minn activists' lessons from ICE surge).
- **Our job** is to bring order to chaos and prepare.

ELECTION SABOTAGE CHECKLIST

- Restrict Mail Voting
- Troops or law enforcement at the polls
- Seize ballots and voting equipment
- Voter roll purges
- Refuse to seat Dems
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

www.democracymatters.com/analysis/how-could-trump-rig-the-midterms

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DEMOCRACY IS NOT SOMETHING YOU HAVE. IT IS SOMETHING YOU PRACTICE.

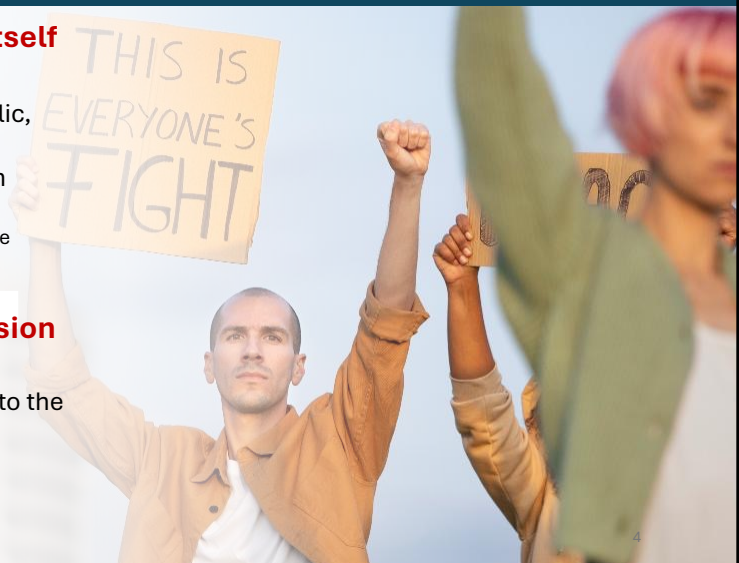


• **The Constitution does not protect itself**

- Civil society protects it
- By acting as if it applies, out loud, in public, under pressure ("Act Free to Be Free")
- American elections are not immune from sabotage.
 - As authoritarian overreach has happened here
 - Election sabotage can happen here too

• **We combat recycled voter suppression tactics**

- Through GOTV and advocacy leading up to the election
- We must prepare for what comes next.



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EVIDENCE OF THEIR STRATEGY

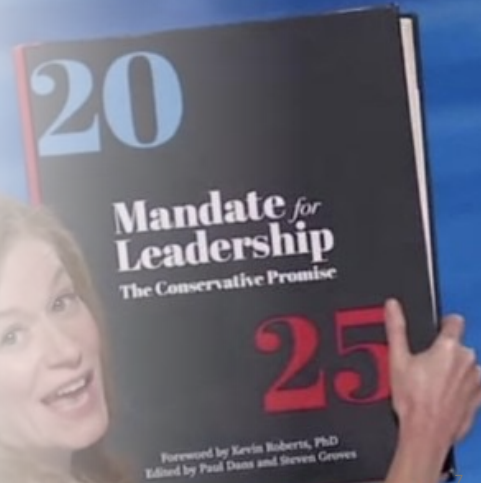


• THE FIRST MISTAKE WE CANNOT AFFORD TO MAKE:

- Treating what the Trump administration is doing as a series of independent provocations.
- It is a coordinated, multi-front campaign.
 - Documented
 - Spoken out loud
 - And partially published, with a single operational logic.

• THE STRATEGY HAS A PATTERN:

- Manufacturing a “pretext” through smears and propaganda,
- Using legal maneuvers to suspend seating an unwanted elected official,
- Grabbing and holding power in the vacuum created by the suspension of certainty.



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THE DOCUMENTED TACTICS AND WHAT THEY'RE ACTUALLY FOR



THE REGIME CANNOT OUTRIGHT FEDERALIZE OR CANCEL ELECTIONS:

- States control elections
- So, they must generate chaos, legal uncertainty, and manufactured doubt in order to suspend certification,
- And in that void, consolidate power around the people already holding it.

COURTS ARE SLOW.

- Appeals take time.
- And while the litigation grinds forward, Congress cannot be seated.
- Certification is blocked.

Project 2025
PRESIDENTIAL TRANSITION PROJECT



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MORE ON THE TACTICS



- **BALLOT SEIZURES:** manufacturing the evidence base
- **VOTER ROLL DEMANDS:** seizing control of who gets to vote
- **LOYALISTS AND DENIERS** installed in key positions
- **ICE AT THE POLLS:** named, planned, and previewed
- **PRE-EMPTIVE FRAUD** narrative



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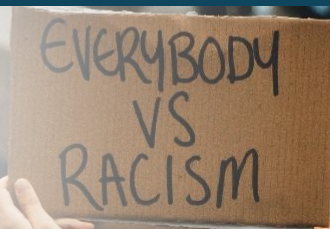
THE RACIAL LOGIC UNDERNEATH THE STRATEGY



- **None of this is race-neutral!**
- **We should stop analyzing it as if it is.**
- **The specific genius of the current play is:**
 - It launders white nationalist voter suppression through the language of “election integrity,”
 - Making it palatable to people who would never sign on to the project if it were named plainly.

Our analysis has to name it plainly.

Our response depends on refusing the racial division their strategy requires.



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ORGANIZING STATES TO MEET THE MOMENT: UNLEASHING A CIVIL SOCIETY STRATEGY



- **WHEN AUTHORITARIAN POWER MOVES TO CONSOLIDATE ITSELF**

- There's a temptation to look upward for salvation
 - To the courts, to lawyers,
 - To elected officials.
 - That instinct is understandable.
 - It is also a deadly mistake.

- **COURTS FUNCTION WHEN THERE IS A PUBLIC DEMANDING THAT THEY FUNCTION.**

- Lawyers have standing when there are people behind them.
- Politicians find their nerve when they feel a floor of organized people beneath their feet.
- Without that foundation, institutions fold.



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ORGANIZING STATES TO MEET THE MOMENT: UNLEASHING A CIVIL SOCIETY STRATEGY



- **CIVIL SOCIETY** is the broad, distributed, multi-sector mobilization
 - of everyday people behaving with agency –
 - as if the Constitution applies to them.
 - And in doing so, making it apply.
- **A CIVIL SOCIETY RESPONSE THAT IS RACIALLY SILOED**, or that treats multi-racial solidarity as an afterthought, will lose.
- **THE ONLY FORMATION THAT CAN WITHSTAND THIS STRATEGY IS ONE WHERE:**
 - Black, brown, white, Indigenous, and immigrant communities are aligned
 - With shared analysis, shared stakes
 - And prepared to explicitly call out, go public and make illegitimate
 - The white nationalist strategy at the heart of the MAGA program.



Act Free to Be Free

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ORGANIZING STATES TO MEET THE MOMENT: UNLEASHING A CIVIL SOCIETY STRATEGY



- **STEP 1:** Know your state
- **STEP 2:** Deterrence, extracting a political cost every time
- **STEP 3:** Build state capacity
- **STEP 4:** Fight back in real time
- **STEP 5:** Mass mobilization and strategic non-compliance when the Rubicon is crossed



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STEP 1: KNOW YOUR STATE



• **MAP STATE-SPECIFIC ELECTION ADMINISTRATION STRUCTURES**

- Identify:
 - County election boards
 - County clerks and auditors
 - sheriffs
 - Legislative committees
 - Certification procedures
 - Local officials viewed as vulnerable to political pressure

PERFORM A "POWER ANALYSIS" BY IDENTIFYING:

- Decision makers
- Allies
- Leverage points
- Anticipated legal challenges

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STEP 2: BUILD DETERRENCE



PROACTIVE PRE-EMPTION

- **Attend** county board meetings.
- **Participate** in legislative hearings.
- **Engage** election officials before disputes arise. *
- **Encourage** public commitments to election integrity.
- **Support** local resolutions affirming vote counting and certification.
- **Publicly** identify perceived attempts to undermine election processes.

* See "Letter to Registrars" @nhindivisibles.org

RAPID RESPONSE INFRASTRUCTURE

- **Legal**
 - Pre-position attorneys
 - Prepare emergency injunctions
- **Political**
 - Coordinate elected officials
- **Media**
 - Prepare spokespersons
 - Frame public messaging in advance
- **Operational**
 - Train election workers on legal rights
 - Develop response protocols
- **Grassroots**
 - Organize volunteers capable of rapid deployment

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STEP 3: BUILD STATE CAPACITY



• CREATE A "STATE DEMOCRACY NERVE CENTER"

- Legal organizations
- Labor unions
- Civic organizations
- Elected officials
- Advocacy groups
- Grassroots leaders

• RESPONSIBILITIES INCLUDE:

- Shared strategic analysis
- Scenario planning
- Assigning responsibilities
- Maintaining communication
- Coordinating responses

To join CT wide effort contact: greaterwestvilleindivisible@gmail.com

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STEP 3: (CONTINUED) BUILD STATE CAPACITY



• **PREPARE GRASSROOTS**

- Political education:
 - Explanation of the document's analysis
 - Discussion of democratic institutions
 - Organizing principles

• **PRACTICAL PREPARATION**

- Scenario-based exercises
- Role-specific responsibilities
- Legal rights
- Reporting procedures
- Communication protocols

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STEP 4: FIGHT BACK IN REAL TIME



• **DURING AN ELECTION-RELATED CRISIS, SIMULTANEOUS ACTIONS ACROSS SEVERAL DOMAINS.**

- Filing emergency legal challenges
- Deploying trained volunteers to polling locations
- Coordinating public statements from elected officials
- Briefing journalists
- Rapidly responding to online narratives
- Supporting election workers who refuse unlawful demands

• **THE GUIDING PRINCIPLE: ACTING PUBLICLY AND COLLECTIVELY TO DEFEND CONSTITUTIONAL PROCESSES.**

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STEP 5: PREPARE FOR MASS MOBILIZATION



- **DURING AN ELECTION-RELATED CRISIS, PREPARE FOR SIMULTANEOUS ACTIONS ACROSS SEVERAL DOMAINS**
- **IF ANTICIPATED WORST-CASE SCENARIOS OCCUR** (refusal to seat elected officials or prolonged suspension of election certification):
 - Prepare for larger-scale, nonviolent civil resistance.
 - Training in nonviolent direct action
 - Sustained public demonstrations
 - Continuous vigils
 - Coordinated economic actions such as general strikes or work stoppages
 - Organized business closures
 - Municipal and state contingency planning
 - Advance coordination among governors, mayors, and local governments

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