

President-Elect Spun His Own Grievances Into Political Gold

Seeing Up Close
Why Trump
‘Gets Us’

By SHAWN MCCREESH
WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. — The forces that propelled President-elect Donald J. Trump to victory will be endlessly analyzed. Many Americans woke up on Wednesday morning shocked that he could win again. But there is no doubt about one thing: Mr. Trump was a ferociously effective campaigner.

To watch him up close on this third run for president was to see him blend comedy, fury, optimism, darkness and cynicism like never before. He was an expert communicator, able to transmute legal and mortal peril to build upon his self mythology. He won new supporters and kept old ones in thrall.

At dozens of events, I watched as he connected with all sorts of people in all sorts of places. Suburban mothers in Washington, D.C. Military personnel in Detroit. Evangelicals in South Florida. Bitcoiners in Nashville. College football fans in Alabama. Firemen in Lower Manhattan.

At rallies in Charlotte and Atlanta and Bozeman and Virginia Beach and the Bronx and beyond, I had countless conversations with people who were quick to dismiss or rationalize whatever controversy happened to be swirling around him at any moment. People saw in him whatever they wanted to see. And they believed that, after so many years, they knew him, and that he knew them, too.

“He gets us,” a hay and beef cattle farmer told me one afternoon in September in Smithton, Pa. It seemed a head-spinning assessment, but one I heard constantly and in the most unlikely of places. How could the man with the silver spoon and the golden triplex above Fifth Avenue understand anything about this woman’s life? “He just knows where we’re coming from,” she shrugged.

We were standing inside a barn when she said this. Mr. Trump was a few yards away, sitting at a big wooden table. Behind him were stacked bales of hay and a John Deere tractor. He led a discussion about seed cost and fertilizer and shale and animal feed. Farmers nodded along as he reminded them how expensive everything had become because of inflation. “I feel very comfortable with the farmers,” he said. And they felt very comfortable with him.

The bond with Mr. Trump deepened for many people after the assassination attempt in Butler, Pa., in July. Mark Zuckerberg, a co-founder of Facebook, said that the way Mr. Trump had popped back up and yelled “Fight!” was “one of the most badass things” he had ever seen — and many people seemed to agree.

It was an interesting inversion: Before that point, Mr. Trump had only ever played a tough guy on television, palling

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TAXES Advisers are looking at ways to scale back Trump’s more costly ideas. PAGE B1

ARAB VOTE Dearborn, Mich., delivered a win for Trump, who promised Mideast peace. PAGE A10



A Donald J. Trump rally in September. His aides mobilized men and cut into Democratic advantages among Black and Latino voters.



Notes on the “Subway Therapy” wall in Manhattan on Wednesday shortly after Vice President Kamala Harris conceded the race.

For Black Women, Harris Loss
Only Affirms Their Worst Fears

By ERICA L. GREEN and MAYA KING

WASHINGTON — From the moment Kamala Harris entered the presidential race, Black women could see the mountain-top.

NEWS ANALYSIS Across the country, they led an outpouring of Democratic elation when the vice president took over the top of the presidential ticket. But underneath their hope and determination was a persistent worry: Was America ready, they asked, to elect a Black woman?

The painful answer arrived this week. It affirmed the worst of what

many Black women believed about their country: that it would rather choose a man who was convicted of 34 felonies, has spewed lies and falsehoods, disparaged women and people of color, and pledged to use the powers of the federal government to punish his political opponents than send a woman of color to the White House.

Many Democrats saw the brutal political environment for the party, peppered with anger about President Biden’s leadership, as more to blame for Ms. Harris’s crushing loss than the

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Defeated, Deflated and Raw,
And Wondering: What Now?

By PATRICIA MAZZEI and JENNA RUSSELL

MIAMI — Cynthia Shaw worked at a polling place in the Detroit suburbs on Election Day and went to bed “still hopeful” that Vice President Kamala Harris could win, she said. By Wednesday morning, she was bereft, her head pounding.

“It feels so much more definitive this time,” Ms. Shaw, 65, said of Donald J. Trump’s victory.

After Mr. Trump won the presidency in 2016, many Americans who had opposed him became dedicated activists. They used Facebook to organize marches, joined protests against his policies and formed new orga-

nizations to recruit liberal candidates for office.

Now that Mr. Trump is president-elect once more, preparing to lead a still-divided country that voted more decisively in his favor this time, many of those same people are wondering if they can summon the strength to do it all — or even some of it — over again.

“So many of us are so exhausted,” said Ms. Shaw, a Democrat who has volunteered in every presidential election since 1992. “I don’t mean to be so bleak, but that’s how it feels today.”

In Arvada, Colo., Liz Folkestad,

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Russian Drones, ‘Like Bees Swarming,’ Terrorize Ukraine Nightly

By MARC SANTORA

KYIV, Ukraine — As Russian troops march relentlessly forward with fierce assaults in Ukraine’s east, Moscow is unleashing a different form of terror on civilians in towns and cities: a wave of long-range drone strikes that has little precedent in the 32-month-old war.

Over the past two months, there was only a single night when Russia did not launch swarms of drones packed with explosives at targets far from the front, including near-nightly attacks aimed at

Kyiv, the capital.

In October, the Ukrainian military said it tracked a record 2,023 unmanned aircraft against civilian and military targets, with the vast majority shot down or disabled by electronic warfare systems.

Night after night, the explosions echo across Kyiv, with tracer fire lighting up the sky as spotlights search for the triangular drones flying over residential neighborhoods.

Shots rang out once again before dawn on Thursday as air-defense teams armed with heavy machine guns opened fire on

Kyiv Air-Defense Teams
Are Left Confused
and Exhausted

drones flying over the heart of the capital. Debris rained down over businesses and apartment buildings, sparking several fires.

Though air-defense teams have limited the casualties in Kyiv — one 14-year-old girl was killed in October and more than 20 people injured, officials said — the Russians continue to unleash punish-

ing bombardments with drones, bombs and missiles on other towns and cities across Ukraine.

“The constant terrorist attacks on Ukrainian cities prove that the pressure on Russia and its accomplices is insufficient,” President Volodymyr Zelensky of Ukraine said on Sunday, reiterating his pleas to the Biden administration to loosen restrictions on the use of Western weapons to hit targets deep inside Russia. He also called for tougher sanctions that would prevent Russia from importing critical components for its drone and missile production.

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A residential building in Kyiv hit by debris from one of over 70 drones that were said to have attacked Ukraine on Saturday.

