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Trump to Dreamers: Get Out

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First: “I don’t think we could have been more prepared than we were today,” Melissa Falkowski, a teacher at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School, said Wednesday on MSNBC. The school had an armed security guard and ran regular lockdown drills.

And yet: “Even with that, we still have 17 casualties,” Falkowski said. “Seventeen people that aren’t going to return to their families.”

Lockdown drills aren’t enough. Armed security guards aren’t enough. There is only one way to prevent mass shootings in schools. And it’s not exactly a secret. It’s the approach used by every other affluent country in the world, none of which suffers from regular mass shootings. The solution is stricter gun laws.

Do we care enough about our children to protect them from being shot? The issue really is that straightforward.

Dreamers. In politics, as in most of life, what people do matters more than what they say.

So forget for a minute about what President Trump keeps saying about the Dreamers — that he cares about them — and focus on his actions: First, he went out of his way to cancel their legal protection from deportation, a cancellation scheduled to take effect in March. Then Trump rejected an emerging bipartisan deal to restore those protections. And this week he announced that he wouldn’t restore the protections unless Congress passed a long list of other fairly radical immigration changes, like a border wall and sharply reduced legal immigration.

The Plum Line’s Greg Sargent has put together a more detailed version of this timeline.

Vox’s Ezra Klein wrote: “Trump doesn’t want a fix for Dreamers but he does want a suite of unpopular changes that he’s holding Dreamers hostage to pass. This is his crisis, and he shouldn’t be allowed to confuse that.”

What can Democrats do? They are the minority party, and they can’t force Trump to change his policy, as I’ve argued before — frustrating as that may be. They also shouldn’t give into his demands for radical immigration changes and encourage more political hostage-taking. (Greisa Martinez Rosas, a prominent advocate for Dreamers, makes the same point in Sargent’s piece.)

In the end, the choice is Trump’s. Democrats and Dreamer advocates can lobby him and other Republicans, hoping to put political pressure on them, as happened on health care last year. But

Trump will ultimately have a decision to make. Sometime in the next few weeks, he will have to decide whether he is really willing to allow federal law enforcement to begin deporting people from the country they call home.

Related: A Cato Institute study finds that eliminating the Dreamers' protections would cost the federal government more than \$9 billion a year in tax revenue. Instead of staying in the United States, working and paying taxes, many people would instead be forced to leave. The end of the protections, the authors wrote, "would represent a significant cost to the United States Treasury and the broader economy."

Bannon and Yellen. The paperback edition of Joshua Green's book about Steve Bannon, "Devil's Bargain" — which just came out — has a fascinating anecdote about Trump's search for a Federal Reserve chair. Bannon supported the reappointment of Janet Yellen, despite their obvious political differences, because he correctly understood that Yellen's policies were good for economic growth.

"If we get behind her, that is the signal of signals — the realignment of American politics," Bannon told Green.

But he ultimately decided not to push the White House to reappoint her. I assume he understood that Trump didn't want to reappoint Yellen mostly because Barack Obama had appointed her.

As has so often been the case with Bannon, he was willing to talk about a Republican Party that put a greater emphasis on middle-class economic interests, but he wasn't willing to do much about it.

Related: Ross Douthat argues that, somewhat accidentally, the Trump administration has recently turned in a more Bannonesque and populist direction.

It's not just airplanes. "Pet owners increasingly treat their animals as full-fledged members of the family and extensions of themselves — and expect everyone else to treat them that way as well," Virginia Postrel writes for Bloomberg View. "The fights over emotional-support animals in the air could be the start of a long and nasty struggle."