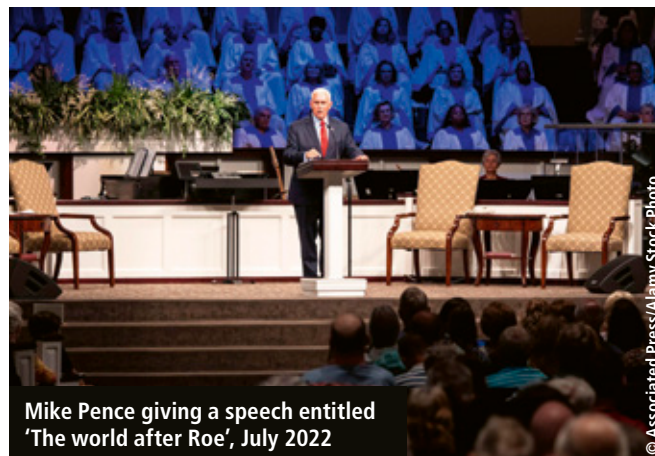


# Republican Party factions

The Republican Party is a 'big tent', with multiple factions existing under the same roof. This has become more evident since the rise of Donald Trump, with a variety of contrasting views fighting to become the most prominent within the party. Some of the key factions are discussed here.

## Box 1 Social conservatives

Most prominently represented by former vice president Mike Pence, this group is characterised by its conservative Christian beliefs, seeking to use the Christian faith as a basis for governance. This includes being pro-life, anti-LGBTQ+ and pro-gun rights. The group has had a boost recently with the *Dobbs* decision in 2022, which reverted the power over abortion to individual states, therefore allowing states to introduce extreme anti-abortion laws. As of April 2023, 13 states had issued complete bans on abortions. These policies are starkly in contrast to those of the moderates, and are causing rifts in the party.



Mike Pence giving a speech entitled 'The world after Roe', July 2022

## Box 2 Moderates

The moderates are a faction that might seem to be on the verge of extinction in these hyper-partisan times, but they do exist in the form of senators Lisa Murkowski and Susan Collins. Known more generally as 'fiscal conservatives, social liberals', the moderates have a history of voting in favour of pro-LGBTQ+ legislation, or blocking legislation which would limit the rights of LGBTQ+ members. Murkowski and Collins were 2 of the 3 voters who stopped Trump from repealing parts of Obamacare in 2017, demonstrating their commitment to a more moderate Republican Party.

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## Box 3 Trumpists

The members of the Trumpists are well known, due to the media attention they gain. Marjorie Taylor Greene, Lauren Boebert and Matt Gaetz are no longer rookies in the House of Representatives and are a vocal part of the modern Republican Party, making up the public face of the Trumpists. Their vehement defence of all things Trump is the centrepiece of their faction, using the disproved theory that the 2020 election was 'stolen' to forward their agenda. Their agenda, however, is not completely clear: they do not have a manifesto that lays out what they wish to achieve, but it is clear that they want Trump back in the White House.



Marjorie Taylor Greene at a campaign rally, March 2023

## Box 4 Never Trumpers

Dubbed the 'Never Trumpers', this group represents the Republicans who were vocal against the former president both while in their seats in Congress and while campaigning for re-election. The most well known of the Never Trumpers is former presidential candidate Mitt Romney. He was the only Republican senator to vote both times to convict Trump following his impeachment in 2019 and 2021, and Romney admitted to not voting for Trump in the 2016 or 2020 presidential elections.

Another high-profile Never Trumper is Liz Cheney. As a long-serving member of the House of Representatives, Cheney spoke out frequently and loudly against Trump. She even went as far as supporting a Democratic candidate to avoid supporting a pro-Trump one. This ended badly for Cheney as she lost her primary in the 2022 elections and faced a huge backlash from the Republican Party.



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Kevin McCarthy finally receives the votes he needs to become Speaker of the House, 7 January 2023

## ACTIVITIES

### Class discussion

1 Are the factions in the Republican Party making it impossible for them to win back the Senate in 2024?

### Research

2 Research the drama surrounding the speaker contest for Kevin McCarthy in early 2023. How did the factions in the Republican Party play into the trouble he faced in getting elected?

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