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THE ROLE OF MINORITY VOTERS IN THE 2016 ELECTION

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P R O C E E D I N G S

MR. HARRIS: Good afternoon everyone. I am Fred Harris, and I'm a Non-Resident Senior Fellow here at the Brookings Institution. I'm also a Director of the Center for the Study of African American Politics in Society, at Columbia University. And welcome to the panel on the Role of Minority Voters in the 2016 Presidential Election.

So, this is a very interesting year, to say the least. 2016 has already been dubbed one of the most important elections in our lifetime. Issues of immigration, criminal justice reform and growing racial and class divides have been front and center in this election cycle.

One candidate has gained political traction by attacking Muslims, Mexicans and immigrants, while the other, most recently, has labeled her opponent's supports as "baskets of deplorables." A quote, that's what she said.

This is the political world that we are currently living in. Who would know, right, in 2008, given the euphoria over the election of President Barack Obama, where the nation would claim a new pulse-racial era. And so this is where we are at this historical juncture.

So, here are some of the questions that we would like to tackle. What do the shifting demographics of the United States tell us? What role will Black, Latino and Asian American voters play in deciding the outcomes in key states during this election? How will candidates' positions on criminal justice, immigration and the persistence of racial bias affect the vote in minority communities?

Now, to get us started on this discussion, I hope we have a rigorous discussion -- I think we will given the talented people we have on this panel -- we would first like to get some background information. There has been a great deal of conjecture, speculation about, sort of, what the future demographic changes in this country will mean, which we are going to talk about in a moment. But what exactly, what do those changes exactly look like?

So, to get us started, we have Bill Frey, William Frey, who is a Senior Fellow here at the Brookings Institution, in the Metropolitan Policy Program. Bill is an internationally-regarded Demographer known for his research on urban populations, migration, immigration, race, aging, political demographics, and his expertise on the U.S. census. His latest book is, appropriate for this panel, is Diversity Explosion: How New Racial Demographics Are Remaking America. Bill? (Applause)

MR. FREY: Thanks very much, Fred. I'm always surprised when a lively discussion about a current topic begins with a demographer. I don't know. But I think demographics is really important, especially important in this season, because the change in demographics of this country, especially with respect to race and ethnicity, is going to be central, not only to this election, but to the elections that come along.

Of course, if you look at the population, growth from the past, 1970 up to 2050, in each of those years the bars show the size of the White population, the gray bar shows the size of the combined minority population, Blacks, Hispanics, Asians, Native Americans, Native Alaskans, and so forth, put together, we've been mostly a White society.

And when we get to 2040, 2044 the Census Bureau says we are going to be majority-minority, if you like that term. There may be another term when we get to that score. But things are moving a lot more quickly before 2044, and we are going to be seeing that in this election.

One of the issues though, and that's going to be discussed here, is what might be thought of as a representation gap. What does the racial profile of the population look like compared to the racial profile of the people who show on Election Day? I think that's an important disparity.

Now, one of the reasons there is that gap is because a lot of the fast-growing minorities in the country are younger, more of them are under age 18, not able to vote, and among legal citizens, or legal residents of the U.S., many have not become

naturalized to become citizens.

So in the 2012 election, you know, among the White population about 8 in 10 Whites are eligible voters, or the most of the rest of them were under 18; about 7 in 10 Blacks are eligible voters, but among the Hispanic population only 44 percent of the Hispanic population were eligible voters, not only because a lot of them are under 18, but also a fair number of them, while legal in the U.S., are not naturalized citizens. Similarly, among the Asian population, only 52 percent are eligible voters.

Now as we move ahead of course, every year it's been estimated that about a million Hispanic young people are going to turn age 18, because they were born in the U.S., they'll be citizens, they'll be able to vote, and hopefully with more efforts there will be more naturalization occurring those legal residence in the U.S. will make that a little bit different.

But there's another part of this. And that's probably going to be the major part of this discussion today, and that's registration and turnout of those people who are eligible voters.

So I have another chart here which shows sort of three sets of bar charts, the left three are for the elections of 2004, 2008 and 2012 showing the total population of racial composition. The orange part of the bar is the White population, the other part are the different minority groups. The middle three are for eligible voters, and the right three -- or the left three are the voting population.

You can see as you get to the voting population, it's a lot wider than it is of the eligible voter population or the total voter population. In 2012, 74 percent of voters were White according to the Census Bureau's current population surveys; 74 percent White voters compared with only 71 percent White eligible voters, and only 63 percent White in the total population.

Those shifts have a lot to do with this representation gap, and a key part of this gap of course is between the eligible voters and the actual people who turn out, 8

percent of voters on Election Day in 2012 were Hispanics, but 11 percent of eligible voters were Hispanics; and 17 percent of the population was Hispanic.

Nonetheless, Barack Obama won, and I think -- You know, I've written about it, and I've talked about it, I think the minority population that can be calculated is responsible for his win, both of his wins, 2008 and then 2012. And the reason is, even though we have this kind of representation gap, there's been huge turnout among the minority population, in 2008 and 2012.

Here is a chart that shows the turnout rates in each of the last three elections for Whites, for Blacks, for Hispanics, and for Asians. In 2012 for the very first time there was a higher turnout for Blacks among eligible voters than among Whites. And this had a lot with the results of the election. It's true that Hispanics and Asians have turn-out rates in general, only about half of them turn out, it means there's a much higher ceiling to reach but, still, for the last two presidential elections, they had higher turnout than most of the previous elections prior to that.

So that inflated the size of the voter population beyond what the demographics were compared to previous elections. Of course the other part of it is who do they vote for, and as in many past elections, the White population in general voted Republican, very heavily Republican as a matter of fact, but we had a very strong Democratic vote among Blacks, Blacks have voted Democratic since 1936, and in big numbers until the Johnson administration in 1964, but also bigger votes for Democrats than in the past for Hispanics and for Asians.

And so it's the demography, but also the turnout and also the voting that helped Barack Obama win the presidency, you know, he won by about 5 million votes, and of those 5 million votes the net gain given to him by a minority population was 23 million, the net number of votes given to Romney by the White population was 18 million, so that's 23 million from minorities for Obama, 18 million for Whites for Romney, he won by 5 million votes.

That's a huge amount of votes, and I think, you know, going forward in history, the change in demography and what can be done about turnout and registration is going to be important. I'm going to say a little bit about the Electoral College before the panel comes on. That top map there shades states by the percentage of eligible voters, who are minorities, and those dark-blue states more than 35 percent of the eligible voters in 2012 were minorities, and that includes Nevada and Arizona and Texas and New Mexico, and so forth, as well as Georgia.

So, you know, to get a sense of this, the State of Nevada in 2004, 80 percent of voters were White, but we get to 2012, only 67 percent of voters were White. That includes the change in demography and the change in turnout of especially the Latino population, but also the other racial groups.

This is what's going on. It's occurring because there is a dispersion of Hispanics and Asians and other groups away from these kind of coastal areas to the middle part of the country, but also a huge migration over the last 25 years of African-Americans from other parts of the country back to the South.

Between 2004 and 2012 half of -- Between 2004 and 2012 half of Georgia's gain in eligible voters is because of African-Americans, due to the migration to the State of Georgia. Not surprisingly that Georgia may be in play this time, when you look at some of these surveys, assuming the turnout is right.

I just want to -- let's skip over this -- look at the last three elections, this is the red and blue America, the top map is 2004 results, the middle map is 2008 results, the bottom map is 2012 results. Of course the last two are when Barack Obama won.

But back in 2004, that's a typical Republican win up until that time. Republicans took the solid South, they took the Great Plains, they took a lot of the Mountain West. The Democrats were kind of stuck in the coasts and in the industrial Midwest and some of the farming country in the Midwest.

Back then it looked like Republicans were getting the growing part of the

country, but as minorities started to disperse to the middle parts of the country, and as Blacks continued to move back to the South, and of course, we have Barack Obama as the candidate, we see in 2008 those states like Virginia, North Carolina, Florida, Colorado, Nevada, and so forth, moving into the Democratic column.

And the reason I say minorities are so important is because when you look at those states, you see some of them are dark-blue, and some of them are light-blue. The dark-blue states were won by Obama, both because Whites voted for him, and minorities voted for him. The light-blue states are the ones won by Obama because minorities voted for him, but Whites voted for his opponent. So you can definitely say all of those light-blue states, many of them important swing states in the South and in the West have moved toward Obama because of the vote, because of the turnout, because of the change in demography of those minority votes.

And by the way, another set of light-blue states in 2012 are Midwest and Roosevelt States, like Ohio or Pennsylvania, or Wisconsin, Michigan, chose the high turnout of the much smaller minority population in those states as being important to counter the White vote for Republicans in those states.

So, I guess I have say, as the panel comes up here, as the demography moves further, and there's a further dispersion of minorities to other parts of the country, as they become a bigger part of the electorate, probably around 40 percent when we get to 2028. It's very important to makes sure that that representation gap gets closed, and increasingly that representation gap will be part of the turnout and registration gap that we have seen up till now.

And that's why this discussion is so important. I think democracy depends on this representation being evened out, and I think demography is a large of that demographic shift. So thanks a lot. And I'll invite the panel to come up here.

(Applause)

MR. HARRIS: Thanks again, Bill, for that great presentation. It really is

going to help us through some of the discussions that we are going to have this afternoon.

I'd like to introduce the panelists. To my extreme left, is Michael Fauntroy who is an Associate Professor of Political Science, and Associate Chair and Graduate Program Director at Howard University, where he teaches courses in African-American political behavior, American political parties, interest groups and national government. He is the author of *Republicans and the Black Vote*, a book that analyses the historical relationship between African-Americans and the GOP.

Next to Michael, is Maria Teresa Kumar who President and CEO of Voto Latino, which is headquartered here in Washington, D.C. The organization deploys marketing strategies, campaigns that leverage new media and technology to encourage Latinos, which as you see one of the fastest-growing demographics in the U.S. It encourages them to get involved in the political process. She started her career as a legislative aide for then, Democratic Caucus Chair, Vic Fazio, and is a graduate of Harvard's Kennedy School.

Dead center is Ron Christie, who is Founder and CEO of Christie Strategies, a political consultant group, I hope you don't mind being in dead center, Ron.

MR. CHRISTIE: That's okay, I'm looking forward --

MR. HARRIS: Okay. From 2002 and 2004, he was Acting Director of USA Freedom Corps, and Special Assistant to President George W. Bush. He began service at the White House in 2001 as Deputy Assistant Vice President Cheney for Domestic Policy; advising the Vice President on policy initiatives, on health care, budget, and tax and other policy areas. He is the author of *Black in the White House*, which was published in 2006.

And to my immediate left is Deepa Iyer, who is a Senior Fellow at Center for Social Inclusion, and Activist-in-Resident in the Asian American Studies Program at the University of Maryland, at the Center for Social Inclusion. Deepa provides analysis,

commentary and scholarship on the ways to build racial equity and solidarity in the life of rapid demographic transformation on American society.

Deepa is the author of the Book, *We Too Sing America*; Langston Hughes-esque title; *South Asian, Arab, Muslim and Sikh Immigrants Shape Our Multiracial Future*. Let me say that again, *We Too Sing America: South Asian, Arab, Muslim and Sikh Immigrants Shape Our Multiracial Future*. The book was published in 2014.

With that, as you see we have a very esteemed panel here, and we are going to start. Let me give you a few minutes to provide the introduction to what's at stake here in this election. Particularly given the various constituencies that you represent, and to get us started on what we should be thinking about, what are the major issues. And so Michael, won't you get us started.

MR. FAUNTROY: Sure. Thank you. Good afternoon everyone. So, as you know there's an election. You may have heard about it, and one of the key questions that I get a lot is: So, what are Blacks going to do? And while I always say, I don't know, I say I don't know in part because there is a sense of ambivalence and agitation in many parts of the Black community around the country, and I'll talk about that in a second.

But in terms of contextualizing all of this, any prognostication about where we are in terms of this election has to begin with the obvious fact, which is Barack Obama is not on the ballot. Now, I teach 18 to 22 year olds in undergraduate courses at Howard, and one of the things that I've had to come to terms with is that many of them were in middle school when Barack Obama was elected.

Now, think about that for a second. For many millennials around the country right now, college age, they don't really know much about the United States with Barack Obama as President, and so while it's obvious that he's not on the ballot, what's less obvious and less well known to many of those folks is that in 2000 Al Gore got 91 percent of the Black vote, and the question then becomes, there is a unique and huge

opportunity to reshape American politics for Black voters if, as Bill pointed out in his great remarks, if the turnout and enthusiasm gap, if you will, is closed.

But how do you do that when a large segment of the Black population is somewhat ambivalent about the nominee for which most Black folks, for the party -- for the nominee of the party for which most African-Americans have voted over the course of the last 50-plus years?

It's possible that Secretary Clinton could get a similar slice as Al Gore of the 2016 pie, but the pie may well be smaller than it was in 2008 or 2012. And ironically it's possible at the same time that the Black vote, as a proportion of the actual national vote, could be a small slice of a bigger pie because we don't necessarily know if African-Americans are going to feel enthusiastic about showing up to vote.

Now, why might they feel less enthused? Well, you know, all segments of the American populace have what, depending on the issues that mean most to them, because they have very long memories. And there are some African-Americans who are still angry with Secretary Clinton over the 2008 campaign. There are still African-Americans who are upset with President Clinton over welfare reform, or the crime bill, or a variety of other concerns.

And so, for those voters there is some ambivalence about Secretary Clinton. Well, conversely, you've got to vote for somebody, and if you are not going to vote for Secretary Clinton, the next largest likely alternative is Donald Trump. And -- stop giggling -- And the reality is that Donald Trump is going to have historically low support among African-American voters. Some of you may recall 1964 and the Barry Goldwater campaign in which he got 6 percent of the vote, and Donald Trump is currently polling at about 2 percent among African-Americans.

Of course, these numbers don't always pan out on Election Day, but think about that for a second. If it comes out at about 2 or 3 percent that's, you know, a third to a half of what Barry Goldwater got in 1964. I think that speaks to just how deep a

hole he has created for himself in the upcoming election.

So, one more context, there have been 22 presidential elections since 1936 when we had even rudimentary polling information, and only once in those 22 elections has the Republican nominee receive 40 percent or more, and that was in 1944 when Tom Dewey ran. Only three, Wendell Willkie, Dwight Eisenhower and Richard Nixon got between 30 and 39 percent of the Black vote.

And more recent Republican nominees have been significantly worse off and generally running in the 10 to 15 percent space, setting aside for a second the historic headwinds that John McCain and Mitt Romney ran in 2008 and 2012 respectively. And Donald Trump right now is polling at about 2 percent.

That's the bad news. The good news of course is that he has room to grow. So, as we -- So to look forward to November, I think that the key point that we need to also factor in, and I'm quite sure how we do that here, but that this campaign at some level, as it pertains to African-American voters, is being conducted in a context of backlash, racial backlash, in which many African-American voters feel that the successes of health care and the presence of an African-American President have driven some people to distraction in such a way that someone like Donald Trump could emerge. In some respects I think Donald Trump is sort of a vessel for a larger concern.

So, I just wanted to put that on the table, in terms of what's at stake. Well, you know, Donald Trump asked the question: What do you have to lose? African-American, health care, insurance coverage is down -- has been expanded, that could potentially be something you lose. And whether it's unemployment or educational access, or a variety of other real policy concerns, it's possible that African-Americans, in fact, have quite a bit to lose depending on the outcome of this election. And I'll stop there.

MS. KUMAR: Thank you, Michael. And thank you so much, to Brookings for having such a timely conversation. I think that when you asked, Fred, what

is at stake, it's not a direct business-as-usual election this time. I think that this is very much an asymmetrical political environment where we try to start talking about issues but we aren't actually addressing the mass demographic changes that our country is undergoing as Bill explained in his presentation.

I don't think Donald Trump phenomena happened overnight. I think that we have increased bifurcation in our media where for the last 15 years a news outlet has been pumping the problems of America squarely on the shoulders of people of color. And I think we saw the beginning and ways of that the Vice Presidential candidate of Sarah Palin, and Donald Trump as a continued vessel for that, in many respects.

For the Latino community I would say that everything is at stake, and what I mean by that is for the very first time at Voto Latino we have parents sending us emails and providing us information on how, for the very first time, their children are coming home crying because their classmates are telling them that they are going to get deported when Trump becomes President.

The problem with that is that 99 percent of these kids are American-born. So, after this election whoever wins we still have to figure out how the communities heal. And I have not seen leadership from either party to actually talk about the broader conversation that we need to have with the Browning of American. And people take exception with the Browning of America but, Bill, as you explained, it's the browning of America.

And the millennial generation is the most diverse generation. For the very first time this year, generation Z is going to be eligible voters, they are more diverse and bigger than the millennials, who are bigger than the baby boomers. Can you hear me? Is that better? Thank you.

For the very first time generation Z is going to be the -- it's going to be larger than the millennial generation and more diverse. It's also going to be the last White majority generation. So, if you were to ask me what is at stake, is that for the next

-- this election is also going to decide, potentially the next 25 years of policy.

And what I mean by that is that we are not talking about just traditional types of legislation, but we are also talking about what's at stake when it comes to Supreme Court. The Supreme Court right now is actively looking Voting Rights Act, to keep revisiting it, or threatening to revisit, which I hope they do soon, they are looking at health care for women, they are looking at and revisiting immigration policy, environment, and more recently affirmative action.

And those are all issues that are going to impact, again, not now, but for the next 25 years when we are talking about, how do we grapple with a massive demographic shift. We also have to -- we also are dealing with something very different that we've never had, where for the very -- well, in a long time, and at least for the very first time in my experience, where we've had political candidates when they start losing start claiming that the system is rigged. And as a result it does an incredible disservice to our democratic process, it does an incredible disservice for folks that are, for the very first time, being primed to start participating in the political process, and makes our work so much harder.

If you are a first-time voter, and you are already not educated on the system, as many of the voters that we go after in Voto Latino, try to surpass that has become hard, harder than usual. And to appreciate it you have roughly 4 million Latino youth that have turned 18 since the last election. Those are 4 million people that more than likely have not received any type of civic education.

I've been recently shocked when I found out that only eight states require civic education in order to graduate from high school. When you have 51 percent of your kindergarten class that are people of color, more than likely are children of immigrants. Where are they getting their education from? Most likely online, most likely are getting primed right now in political campaigns, and so our work is -- we definitely have it cut out for us, but I also think that there is incumbent on the American Latino and our allies, to

make this a landslide election, so that we can make sure that we can start focusing on the issues.

I can tell you that, if you were to raise your hands, 99 percent of you, if I were to ask you: what are the policies of both candidates when it comes to pay equity, when it comes to environmental policy, you probably don't know. But you all know immigration policy from one candidate very clearly. So it is actually a disservice to political discourse and electoral politics because we actually don't know what the issues are, because they've been all concentrated on this issue of a racial divide.

I think that it's fair to have a conversation on increased discomfort, because communities are changing rapidly. I always point out to candidate -- Edwards, he always talked about his coal mine town in North Carolina, that coal mine town today is over 53 percent Latino. So, it's happening fast, but if you don't have leadership explaining why that's changing, and how it's changing, I can understand the discomfort, and it's okay to voice that discomfort, and not be pegged as the R-word I call it, as racist, but it is not okay to basically not give voice in a way that is structured, as is happening right now in our political discourse.

I do think though that millennial generation, it can be incredibly impactful if they act. I know that's a lot of burden to share, but what I mean by that, is we don't appreciate that in the last 10 years, we've had -- and it kicked off with immigration, the immigration movement, but we've had millennials lead the Immigrant Rights Movement, where they walked out of their homes, marched and organized via cell phone and MySpace. You guys remember MySpace? Clearly.

But then shortly -- And they were the largest culmination of civil rights marches in our nation's history that no one knows about; that was our Arab Spring that happened a good five years before the Arab Spring.

Then we've had marches on the environment, Occupy Wall Street, a choice how should we (inaudible) boys who are 15, and more recently, Black Lives

Matter, it's one movement, largely led by millennials who have the power for the very first time, to outvote the baby boomers. We are in danger, and not to give slight to the baby boomers, but if there's not participation in the millennial generation, we are going to have something that's very akin and similar to what's happening in the U.K. when it comes to Brexit.

Where, again, you have a generation that is voting for their own self-interest, but not looking for the future and building that future dialog. And I say this in closing, I think that my concern is not whether or not you are going to have a group of Latinos that are going to vote for Trump and make the difference, the electoral map makes that virtually impossible. He needs at least 40 percent of the Latino vote to do that.

Mitt Romney with his self-deportation policy received 27 percent. My concern though is that they are not turned on to participate. Unlike the African-American vote, this is going to be very much generational, you have older Latinos who remember their prosperous years under the Clinton administration in the 1990s, it was one of the highest attainments for them for home ownership, you name it. The millennials don't remember that, generation Z definitely doesn't remember that. So, that's one concern.

The other concern is that this is can be the very first presidential election without the Voting Rights Act. And Shelby County v. Eric Holder that gutted the Voting Rights Act was done in 2013. It was the fifth largest county of Latino vote, and by fifth largest I'm talking about over 200 percent. Every single state that followed has 100 percent growth in Latino populations in the last census. It is not by accident, I think it's more scaling back the future, of trying to figure out: What do we do with this new electorate?

The fact that you have a presidential candidate that is now saying that, again, the system is rigged, and so that he's right now, and willing volunteers to go man-polling is, to me, something that should be of concern of every single American, because

there should not be thugs that basically prevent participation.

Then the last thing for us, I do also think that this a moment -- and it's my last point -- but I do think we are living a moment that could be very similar to what's happening in California, during Proposition 187. Proposition 187 basically was -- I would consider the first racial profiling law under the guise of immigration reform, under Governor Pete Wilson in 1993.

On a personal note, I'm completely political, my family is apolitical, and they don't know where I came from. I remember coming home from college and having this conversation with my family; and for the very first my grandmother, my four aunts and my uncle were considering becoming U.S. citizens; that had never happened. Those are the conversations that are happening right now in household across America. And if it happens there's a reason that political opportunity where, I was California, it was no longer a swing state, but it became progressing, it was because of the participation of the American Latino.

It is also now, why 25 years later you have two senatorial candidates that are Democrats. I'm not advocating for one party or the other, but this is what happens if we are able to build the infrastructure of actually creating a voice among a population that underperforms, that that is increasingly growing incredibly quickly. And what I mean by that, it's expected that by -- So, today we have 27 million Latinos that are eligible to vote in the 2016 election.

It's expected by 2032, we are going to have 17 million more. The majority of Latinos, while the average is a 27-year-old, the majority of Latinos right now cluster around 14, so we haven't even picked the weight of that boom. And, thank you so much.

MR. HARRIS: Okay. Ron?

MR. CHRISTIE: Let's see if I can get this thing to work. Good afternoon, everybody. They are so quiet. I think this is a missed opportunity election for the

Republican Party. If you look at the last election cycle, the 2012 presidential election cycle, you had African-American voting by a percentage of the population of any other demographic. And then our friends at the Republican National Committee came out with their post-mortem analysis.

What did Mitt do and what can we as a party do right to sort of right ship. They spent several million dollars on that and, of course, we really don't have much to show for it. I could have really done this for about 50-cents, rather than several million. How do you make meaningful inroads in communities of color?

When President Bush was first elected he got 9 percent of the Black vote, subsequently reelected with 11 percent, and frankly the only reason that he won reelection in 2004 was he got over 40 percent of the Latino vote. So, clearly there was a gulf that we have gone into as a party, and how did we get here. And more importantly to his election, what are the stakes? The stakes are Donald Trump, and I, as a Conservative Republican, look at this nominee and think: my goodness, we had 17 people when this started, and now the music stopped and the chairs are all filled with Trump and Pence.

How did we get here? And how can we rebuild our party? How can we retake the party of Lincoln from the party of Trump? And I wrote an op-ed which is not going to get me on the trump Christmas card list this year, in the New York Times and it was entitled, Talking to Black Americans. And I was stunned with the Trump campaign.

So, for the last more than a year, Trump has been going around the country, saying what he's been saying, doing what he's been doing, but not making inroads in communities of color. Then he said, ah-ah, there's an election coming up in 60-some-odd days, let's go to Detroit, go to a Black church and bring along Ben Carson. That's it, that's Black outreach. And I really went to town on him in this op-ed saying, that's not Black outreach, that's not making significant inroads in communities of color, to show up to a church, because the last I checked, not all Black folks go to church. Not all

Black folks show up in Detroit.

So, how do you do it? What's the proper way forward, and I spent eight years of my career on Capitol Hill, working for then House Budget Committee Chairman, John Kasich, and when Kasich was reelected as Governor of Ohio, couple years ago, he got 27 percent of the Black vote. People were like, oh, my, gosh, John Kasich got 27 percent of the Black vote. How did he do that?

And my answer to that is always simple. John Kasich doesn't talk to Black like they are Black people. As in, you don't show to a church. You don't say, oh, let's see, the outreach to African-Americans, let's talk about crime, welfare, let's talk about job training because, you know, all Blacks are poor, all Blacks live in crime-infested neighborhood and, you know, the really don't care much about education.

And it's the soft bigotry of low expectations that President Bush famously talked about, that John Kasich has done so well in, and I think the reason why he has gotten 27 percent of the African-American vote, is that, let's talk about the kitchen-table issues that matter. Parents want their kids to go to a safe school. Parents want their kids to be in an environment where their kids can thrive in school, and more importantly, once they graduate to find a well-paying job. How can the government help in this regard?

Rather than saying, government is always the problem, or the government is always the solution. How can the government be a partner to help families succeed and to attain the American dream? There go 27 percent of the Black vote. And so I look at my friends at the corner of First and C Streets, Southeast, otherwise known as the Headquarters of the Republican National Committee, if you are watching there.

Get with the program; recognize that there is no such monolithic entity as the African-American community. We are all individuals. Yes, we might be people of color, and yes there might be certain kitchen-table issues that appeal to more folks based on their ethnicity, but it's *E pluribus unum* time folks, I mean out of many one, that's what the United States is, we are from many different backgrounds, many different races,

different ages, but we are one.

And I just flew in from the Kennedy School this morning and sat down with a group of African-Americans at Harvard, and your point is absolutely right. If Republicans want to win, you'd better get to the millennials because they are going to be the force to be reckoned with in the next election cycle, and you don't get done by talking about all the things you are going to do to divide America, you are going to do it by talking about all the ways you are going to bring America together as a country.

And that, as a party, is a vision that I want to try to fight for, of restoring the grand old party, to being the grand old party, and not in the divisive state that we find ourselves today. We've got long ways to go, but I'm confident, after this election, we can start rebuilding the party and having more of an appeal to people with color and millennials. Thank you very much.

MR. HARRIS: Deepa?

MR. IYER: So, thank you again to the Brookings Institute for convening this important discussion and for inviting me. So, not being a data person, whenever I hear presentations like Dr. Frey's on the racial demographics, I get really optimistic and really excited. But then reality kind of, you know, sets in. And as many people have said, demographics are not our destiny, and the numbers are not going to translate into economic and cultural and political power for people of color in this country.

Our changed or lived experiences, unless we get to the root of what the disparity is all about. So, for voters of color including Asian-American voters, whom I'm going to be focused on, the questions that come up in this election are: What are the policies that will substantively these systemic disparities facing people of color, indigenous communities and immigrants? And what are the ways that candidates at the top and the bottom of the ballot, are actually addressing our national climate today?

And it's a national climate that, as others have spoken about, is rife with racial anxiety, with anti-Muslim sentiment, and xenophobia. And so just a little bit of

context for Asian-American voters in this kind of broader climate. We are in the midst of range of transformative phenomena happening in this country, one is obviously the racial landscape and its shift.

Asian-Americans are actually the fastest-growing racial group in the United States, and so for us, the racial anxiety that is occurring, as a result of this transformation, ends up affecting us as well. And it affects us in a range of ways, whether it's push backs to voting rights or the rights of hate group, for example.

A second phenomenon that Asian-Americans are affected by, is the war on terror. The domestic war on terror, in particular, that respond after the attacks of September 11, 2001. So in the past 15 years, we have seen, for example, higher rates of employment discrimination, hate violence at the most safe spaces, places of worship, for example, profiling and surveillance, in short, Islamophobia that is affecting Muslims, South Asians, Arab and Sikh communities.

And then thirdly we are seeing anti-immigrant and anti-refugee sentiment. If you think of the xenophobic response by many American governors to Syrian refugees, the taker's rhetoric that is reserved for documented immigrants, or the impact of anti-immigrant harsh enforcement policies. Given that 75 percent of Asian-Americans are actually still born outside of the United States, immigration policy and the ways that we treat immigrants affects us deeply.

And lastly, we are seeing the systemic impact of decades of policies that have deliberately neglected, in particular, African-Americans and indigenous communities, but also Asian-Americans and Latinos. And there are overlays with class and immigration status as well.

So how are Cambodians and Bangladeshis who are living in higher rates of poverty going to have access to education and jobs? How are Nepali nail salon workers, Filipino domestic workers, Indian H1B workers going to have access to workplace rights?

This is the context, both from a policy and a rhetorical standpoint, that political parties and candidates actually need to pay attention to if they want to be responsive to voters of color including Asian-Americans.

So a couple of quick observations to draw about the Asian-Americans electorate, the first is, that it is no longer possible to treat us as an afterthought. For decades that's what we have been. We are not usually counted in exit polls, political parties don't make any investments in terms of outreach to us, but the seas have changed because we are flexing our political muscle.

Eighteen million Asian-Americans as I mentioned, in the United States today, and our share of the voting electorate has grown in tandem from 2 million Asian-American voters in 2000, to 3.7 million in 2012, and exit polls are showing that high numbers of first-time voters, recently naturalized are coming out to vote.

We also know that Asian-American voters can be particularly influential in certain states. So in six states, California, Hawaii, Nevada, New York, New Jersey and Washington State, Asian-Americans make up 5 percent or more of the citizen voting age population. So it's no surprise then that recently the Clinton campaign announced that it would buttressing its outreach efforts to Asian-American voters in Nevada, Virginia and Pennsylvania.

Second, important to connect to our issues and to the impact of the national climate. A couple of examples for that: A May 2016 poll conducted by API data, Asian-American Justice Center, and API vote, found that Asian-Americans are increasingly averse to the use of anti-immigrant, and anti-Muslim views and stances in political discourse. Think extreme vetting, Muslim ban, that does not play well in our community.

Secondly, Asian-Americans are really concerned about issues like immigration, education, health access, the economy, national security issues that all Americans are concerned about, but we also want to know how policy positions are going

to affect our lives in particular. So when it comes to education, how will the government invest in supporting English Language Learners, given that growing segments of Asian-Americans are not proficient in English yet?

Or, when it comes to National Security, how is the government going to deal with the impact of state surveillance that is devastating, Muslim, Arab and South Asian communities? Specificity and not a broad brush, is important when it come to our policy positions about Asian-Americans.

And lastly, knock on our doors. Asian-American voter outreach is not something that has actually been invested in as I mentioned. And we know, we do know over the last two elections, and particular that Asian-Americans have tended to vote Democrat, 2014, an overwhelming 73 percent of Asian-Americans, the largest racial block, actually voted to reelect President Obama, and it looks like, again, surveys are showing that the Asian-American community is aligned with Hillary Clinton, but this does mean that the Democratic Party should take the community for granted. In 1992 the numbers were quite opposite, with more Asian-American voters preferring George Bush to Bill Clinton.

So, to maintain the edge, parties need to make inroads with their voters through, I think, media, through in-language outreach, and to put Asian-American faces out in our neighborhoods doing outreach for our communities.

So, in conclusion, someone spoke on this panel about the enthusiasm gap. Asian-Americans know that this election is critical to play a role in, and there is really no enthusiasm gap. The May 2016 survey I referred to, found that those polls were significantly more enthusiastic about casting a vote in this election than in previous ones, 51 percent in this election, as compared to 28 percent in 2014.

That is because the stakes are high and we know it. For Asian-Americans and many voters of color, this election is much larger than who occupies the White House. In this moment in our nation's history, it's also about who is American, and

who is not. Who belongs, and who is an outsider. It is fundamentally a struggle about justice, equity and belonging. Thanks.

MR. HARRIS: Thank you so much, Deepa. And I'm so glad you mentioned that the Asian-American vote should not be deemed to be the purview of one political party, because we know that when political parties compete for your vote, or your groups' vote, all kind of policy, promises or positions are made, and in many ways, particularly when we look at the African-American vote, and particular the Latino vote, we seem to be -- will be a captured, and in the case of Latinos a captured constituency, where, in the future perhaps, the Republican Party may just sort of write off the Latino vote as it has done for African-Americans.

We can talk about that, because I want to makes sure we have enough time for the audience. So put that aside for a moment, because I actually have another question.

MS. KUMAR: That was a big question.

MR. HARRIS: I will give you another question. Maria, you mentioned the browning of America, right? Michael you talked about the racial backlash, that's occurring now, and I think in terms of the great Howard University Historian, Rayford W. Logan, when he talked about the nadir, sort of the lowest period in the civil rights of African-American since emancipation between 1877 and the founding of the NAACP, when you have the erosion of African-American rights, there were African-American in Congress. And you had the increase of the Ku Klux Klan, White racist violence, and many people are claiming that we are in sort of this second redemption period, or second nadir, in response to the presidency of Barack Obama.

So racial backlash, the browning of America; Deepa, you talked about xenophobia, is this an election of fear where people are motivated more by fear, the important substantive policy positions, and I think that -- I know I asked a big question before, but I think this is just as an important position. Why aren't -- it seems that people

are more focused on beating the other candidate based on what may happen, than from particularly when it comes to minority groups, a position of empowerment. So, someone want to --

MR. FAUNTROY: Okay. Well, I want to deal with the end of your question first. And that is, you know, why do we campaign on fear, because it's easier for me to get you to not want to vote for the opponent necessarily, than it is to get you to vote on a particular range of issues that might be more substantive and relevant to your existence. I just think that is a tried and true political tactic that occurs at all levels of electoral politics.

So part of this is sort of natural progression of the way campaigns are run. The other is a bum, she's untrustworthy, vote for me, is part of it. Now, in terms of my comment earlier with regard to this racial backlash, I see the racial backlash as part of it, and a sort of byproduct of, as I mentioned earlier, the very existence of a Black President in this case, Barack Obama.

And we see it in a few examples, some of you may remember the name David Duke, who had been largely silent and marginalized over the space of the last few years, and who a few months ago, went on his radio show, podcast, or whatever, and started talking very enthusiastically about Donald Trump, and that got a lot of attention, and Donald Trump then says, well, you know, I don't even know who this guy is, and it turns out of course he knew who he was. But following that, you begin -- around the same time, you begin to see greater appeals to sort of the White Nationalist wing of the American populace.

And that Nationalist wing, whether it is -- That Nationalist wing, is driven by both fear and anger. Fear about its place in the new America that we know is coming. And anger about the likely diminution as it sees it, of its previous position. And want to push the brakes and make sure the America that they were raised on will continue to exist perhaps even in perpetuity.

So when you add it all up, I think that the fear and the anger and the loathing that has emerged from some segments of the population in support of Donald Trump, is a natural outgrowth of generations of racial priming and other tactics have been used to create real uncertainty and discord in the American populace.

MR. HARRIS: Maria, do you want to talk about fear?

MS. KUMAR: So I actually -- I would actually disagree slightly, in the sense that I also think that when Trump says, make America great again, he is trying to push back the future, but I also think that he has -- he is touching on a chord of blue-collar workers that feel that they just can't make it.

For as much economic prosperity that we are claiming, and granted this is taking into consideration, yesterday, the news report that came out, that the middle-class income has actually grown for the first time this year. Just put that aside, a lot of folks have never recuperated from losing their home, their life savings. There are record numbers of people that are now living in apartments, multi-families, and this is not people of color, these are poor Whites.

When you have, and for the very first time among millennials, you had a large percentage of young White men that voted for Mitt Romney, and it's because they were not feeling, and they are not living that dream that was promised to them, because they are straddled with student debt, they are now, all of a sudden, not starting their life, so to speak, because they find themselves living at home with their parents.

So he is tapping into something that is very real, that we have not had an opportunity to speak about, in this election because he has turned, for the very first time, in my recent history, Americans against each other. To actually give voice to the struggles that African-American, Latinos, Asians, and yes, White Americans are facing, and how do you talk about this idea of a shared promise, if the majority of the population that is either millennial or at once a blue-collar job was still considered stable middleclass, no longer is.

MR. HARRIS: Ron?

MR. CHRSTIE: I, of course, take it from a different from a different perspective than my colleagues, particularly thus far, and I do think this is a fear election, and it's not just Donald Trump who is fueling the flames of fear. If you look at Secretary of State Clinton said last week, the basket of deplorables, that over half of Trump of supporters are racists, that they are homophobic, that there is Islamophobic, that tells you something about a candidate who is trying to get her base to come out based on fear, and her folks to come out and say, if you vote for the racist, Republican bigot, well, you know you are going to get.

Now I've had my issues with Trump's make America great comment, because I think America is great, we don't need to make it great again, it is great. And it's a buzz term or a dog whistle, if you will, for those who want America to look like the days of leave it to beaver. And there are certain people -- I mean, look, I'm not battled, but I will leave it to beaver. But I think --

SPEAKER: I want a rerun, rerun, rerun --

MR. CHRSTIE: If I do, you've got to help me out, man. But I think, really we have deplorable choices, when you have deplorable candidates that appeal on fear, rather than saying what they are going to do strengthen the country rather divide the country based on race, or gender, or sexual preference.

MR. IYER: So, I'm trying to make a couple of points that are different from what we've heard. I think, you know, one thing to keep in mind is that, yes, it's a politics of fear, but it's not new. This has been something that's been percolating in the United States for decades now. I mean, historically people of color and immigrants have always been framed as threats, takers, others, invaders, right? But definitely over the past 15 to 20 years, and I'll use the frame of Islamophobia, since that's kind of what I've been working on.

When we look at, you know, over the past 15 years since 9/11, both

sides of the aisle, have actually engaged in very volatile vitriolic, divisive, political rhetoric and discourse and policymaking; when you think about racial and religious profiling, surveillance. When you think about the hearings that were held in Congress by Representative King on "Muslim radicalization."

This is something that has been happening for quite some time, and oftentimes it's also happening under the radar. You know, I write in my book about Islamophobia in the Bible about, with an emphasis on the State of Tennessee. Where, what we saw since 2010 is this kind of coming together, this confluence of Tea Party conservatives, what we call the industry of Islamophobia, folks who are fanning the flames of this, you know, fear of anyone who is Muslim or perceived to be Muslim, and when it ended up in just that state, where, the introductions of anti-Sharia law. You know, the obstruction of a mosque that was said to be constructed.

People saying things, like, well, is it going to be a mosque or a Jihadist Center? You know, the fear mongering, and the language, and the rhetoric used to say, well, these people are outsiders and they are threats, and we need to preserve our interest. And to do that we have to pass these restrictive laws, we have to make sure that they actually don't even have a place to pray in our communities. And that's the sort of rhetoric and policies that we've been seeing for the past 15 years.

And I agree with you in terms of, it's not enough to call it out, I think that we need our elective leaders to actually set forth a more inclusive vision of empowerment. It's not enough to just say, well, this is bad, and this is what you'll get. What is that inclusive vision of a multiracial America that actually looks at what the most marginalized in our communities need?

And that is where I think candidates have to be responsive, to what the Movement for Black Lives is asking for, for what undocumented youth are asking for, for what Muslim communities are asking for. That is a sort of inclusive vision that I think we need to see for it to go from fear to empowerment.

MR. HARRIS: Okay. We are going to open it up now for questions. You know, as a professor I always like to go to the student who is the furthest back. You're not a student, but the woman with the glasses. Yes, you. Wait for the mic.

MS. BEVERLY: Hi. Good afternoon. My name is Elena Beverly. I'm with the University of Chicago. I wanted to ask a question of the panelist, but particularly Maria Teresa. I appreciate your comments about generation Z and millennial voters, or younger voters, so to speak. There recently was a survey conducted by the Black Youth Project, and Associated Press, New York, about that generation.

Millennials being monolithic in their approach to policies, particularly when you break it down by race, we have varying positions. And I'm wondering, to what extent are we seeing the candidates speak to issues to engage the millennial voters, to engage generation Z, and everything from police brutality to racism, because I think that we are race bating, but not discussing racism?

Two issues including immigration. And my second question is more for William, is demographically, what do the candidates need to do? I mean how many of the millennial voters, or how many of generation Z do they need to win?

MS. KUMAR: So, it's interesting, I was just cramming for this, because I just received the site that you referred to, and a couple other things that -- and not a surprise -- but I think that might be a surprise to the audience, is that 68 percent of both African-American and Latino youth, 18 to 30, I believe that there needs to be stricter enforcement and criteria for when it comes to the use of police -- the police force.

There is a lot, when you look at people of color especially when it comes around the racial lens of enforcement by police, by racial profiling, by gun safety, overwhelmingly, a number of them, 60 percent of them actually believe that there should be some sort of restrictions when it comes to gun safety.

Conversely 58 percent of young Whites believe that is should be basically, that we should not touch gun rights. So that's where you see a big division.

And the same thing comes when you start talking about racial profiling, 8 out of 10 people of color, young people of color, actually are concerned with White supremacist violence; 7 out of 10 conversely, Whites are. And clearly it's because, I think that there's an increased pressure and concern.

Sadly, and as I mentioned before, sadly this presidential election has not really been a forum for issues. We are not battling intellect, and we are not battling nuance, and differentiation in neither case. And it's, even when, if you were to, for the folks that tuned in on the Commander and Chief Forum, it was sadly not only asymmetrical but -- So, I love politics, and I love presidential elections. This is what I live for. This is basically my World Series. I've never been so concerned that it has become so easy not to be fact-based, not to actually -- intellectually challenge your opponent, and not to actually try to capture the hearts and minds of all Americans.

And that's what the purpose of a politician should be, and we are not seeing that in a very straightforward manner. Part of it because when you start talking about race in this election, and this idea of extremism, one candidate decided to bring the outright into the belly of this campaign. And the outright for the folks that may not know are the ones that are perpetuating a lot of White supremacy across the board, that are incredibly misogynistic as long -- as well as Islamophobic. Right?

And so it's hard to distinguish where those issues are, because they haven't really hit the forefront. That said, if you follow very closely Donald Trump's use of language, he is finding ways to split, I would say, young African-American men from this.

When you hear him talk about undocumented immigrants, and immediately talk about the reason why young, African-American men do not have jobs, it's because he -- There is something there that he's tearing apart, and I've had -- and these are anecdotal -- but if I've had conversations with a lot of young men that are in service sector jobs that are in the African-American community, that without skipping beat, tell me that they are voting for Trump.

So, he's touching something there. When he did this speech on immigration, and I call it -- for it was a hate speech, in Arizona, there is no reason why he was talking about vouchers, but it was to actually hit to the heart of African-American communities' concerns on that. No one talked about it, but that was very much who his audience is.

So, when he goes into Black Churches, yes, it's not all, but it's very much, he's speaking in tones, and in dog whistle, that even -- or behind-closed-doors conversations are happening within communities but has really been out in the open.

MR. HARRIS: William Frey, do you want to chime in?

MR. FREY: Well, ah, just worried about (inaudible). You know, I'm pleased that this panel has recognized -- Thanks. I'm pleased that the panel has recognized that millennial population is now maybe 45 percent minority, in terms of its makeup. You don't normally see that when you look a lot at the popular press when you hear them talk about millennials, but in terms of voting, you know, in general the young adult population, age 18 to 34 -- 18 to 29, but millennials are now 18 to 34, tends to me, have the lowest turnout.

And I think especially among the minority groups, even among the Black, young adults in 2012, despite the high turnout among the Black population; it was lower among the young adults in 2012 than it was in 2008. And among the other groups, Hispanics and Asians, you know, it was again, much lower than some of those other groups.

So I think in terms of the potential of millennials, can do a lot, but I think they need to overcome two barriers, one, that young adults typically don't vote that same amount and have the high level of turnout, and the kind of the minority turnout especially among Hispanics and Asians of that group, there really needs to be a lot more energy put into that, to have them fulfill their potential in terms of their numbers.

MR. HARRIS: Yes. You know, I just have a quick follow-up question on

that, it is true that African-American youth voters had a higher turnout than Latino and Asian youth?

MR. FREY: Yes, that's right. But the younger ones are not as (inaudible).

MR. HARRIS: Yeah. Right, right. Just one second. I just also want to remind people. I should have done this earlier. That if you are tweeting, it's hashtag 2016Voters, and so I just want to remind people of that. Let's see, the gentleman in the shirt -- Oh, all the gentlemen have shirt, but the guy here, with the computer in your hand, yeah.

MR. NEWHALL: Hi, Ron. Tyron Newhall from Quicken Loans. Thank you, all, for being here. And I think is a really important topic and discussion. So, I'm pretty young, but I'm starting to see a lot of parallels, and Maria Teresa, you stated touching on it a little bit with White voters and a lot of their fears. And I think you can see these parallels with, obviously, the Midwest losing a lot of manufacturing jobs, but also the heroin epidemic as well, with looking at crack cocaine, et cetera.

And my question is, and may be more directed at Ron. What do you see the future of the Republican Party, because I think you do see them supporting things like criminal justice reform in terms of low softening on drug enforcement, but also trade adjustment assistance, et cetera?

MR. CHRISTIE: Well, it's a simple question to throw at me. Okay, I think the Republican Party needs to have a very strong introspective look of how did we get to be a party of prominence, you recognize that we control a majority of the state capitals, we have a majority of governors across the United States, so there are clearly people who believe that the Conservative brand, that the Republican brand is right one in states. So how do translate that to a national level?

I think you are absolutely right, I again go back to my old boss John Kasich, I might not be a fan of the Affordable Care Act, but one of the things that

governors have had the opportunity to do is to expand Medicaid, to allow more folks who didn't have access to health care to get in the system. And one of the things that I've found with what's happening in Ohio, for example, is that Kasich's justification for expanding Medicaid in Ohio was, look, we have a lot of people who need mental health issues, or need access to care, and if you can get these folks in the system they can heal, then they go off the system, and actually cost the taxpayers less money than more.

And so there is a way of looking at what the -- system exist, and saying, I'm going to work the system; I'm going to help people. And so in order for us to be a majority party to regain the White House, to keep the White House, I think it's going to have to be a broader appeal to people of color. It's going to have to be a broader appeal to the millennials. I mean, it's no joke.

My friend, Elise Stefanik, who was the youngest woman elected in the Congress, she was elected two years ago at 30, will tell you that the millennials tend to be more conservative, they tend to be a demographic that is increasing and flexing its power of going out to vote. So if you get a more brown, and a younger population to vote for you, I think that's the way to go, but you've got to talk about the issues, about what you are for, as opposed to what you are against, or people that you, perhaps, don't like for whatever reason, based on their religion or their ethnicity, or where they came from originally.

MS. NELSON: Good afternoon. I am Dr. Sherice Nelson, and a former student of Michael Fauntroy, so I'll put that disclaimer out there before I start. But my question is to absolutism. And when did we see in a -- When did we start seeing a trend of having to be all for or against? Because I think that, to me, is the overarching issue here, across demographics and across ethnicities, is that if you latch onto to a Black voter, it's the -- it may be well for her, it may be the Crime Bill.

If you latch onto a particular White voter it may be, Islam. So we've made this an absolutism type of participation. And how do we get out of that? How do

we move away from that? And what does this election do for that?

MR. HARRIS: Professor?

MR. FAUNTROY: Okay. Well, absolutism is a significant problem in America's public discourse, and in American politics generally. You know, there used to be a time where partisans could disagree and then not be necessarily, blood feud, and unfortunately we are way from those days. You know, there's a great book out, published a few years ago, called the Gingrich Centers. If you get a chance to read it, take a look at it, because it helps to trace how we got to a sort of absolutism in Congress.

So, you know, the author traces it to the 1994 elections, and right around that time. I think absolutism is part of our discussion because it works. It boils things down to the lowest common denominator, and makes it easy for someone to say, yeah, that makes me mad, and so I'm going to vote for this person, even though this person opposes virtually everything else that I support, but because they oppose this thing over here, we are going to go with that person. So the enemy of my enemy is my friend, and so I sort of see it that way.

And until we can have a more fulsome and reasoned conversation, and public discourse, I think this is sort where we are going to be for the foreseeable future.

MR. HARRIS: Deepa? I wanted Deepa to --

SPEAKER: Okay. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

MR. IYER: It will be short. I was just going to say that along with the browning of America, I think there's also been a sort of dummied down of the American electorate as well. You know, and I think that that's what leads us to see these issues and communities in these monolithic ways. You know, for Asian-Americans, we are often seen as a monolith, but we are an extremely diverse community.

So, if you even look at an issue like immigration, for example, you know, we can't assume that all Asian-Americans, say, are going to prefer legalization for undocumented immigrants, except for the fact that we are seeing in our community larger

and larger numbers of undocumented immigrants.

So these are conversations we are having internally, within our communities as well. How, when we talk about being a community of immigrants, how are we supporting those who face a lot of stigma within our community for being undocumented and being out of status? How are we connecting with, as Maria Teresa talked about earlier, African-American immigrants who might not understand what the issues are that they have in common with Asian-Americans immigrants?

So I think that there is both, in terms of pushing back against that absolutism that you talked about, I think it's really important not to see voters as a monolith. It's important to have these nuanced conversations about policy issues, and how they affect each of our different communities, about learning about each other's history in this country, we don't do enough of that, because we are so siloed.

You know, whether it's neighborhoods or schools, or communities, we have gotten to a point where we are more siloed than we actually ever used to be. So I think that it's really important to address it from standpoint of political education, internal community mobilization, nuancing the issues and get away from this siloism that is also leading to the absolutism.

MR. HARRIS: Okay.

MS. KUMAR: So, Ron is not going to like us at all, but I actually think that in order to get away from that, is that we have to stand -- the Republican Party has to go through a cleansing. And I think one immediate, almost overnight cleansing, is basically to have a tsunami election of opposition to Trump, so that the Republican Party can actually say, this is not something is good.

And what I mean by that is, if at the end of the day a candidate -- and again, this is more about -- in my view, it's very much about where is it that we are going to have political discourse in the future. If we basically have an opening where it's only a 51 percent win, for example, for one candidate. That does not give up to your party any

need to do a real inside cleansing of what needs to happen.

Whereas, if it's a landslide election, it's very clear that this is not what is acceptable or that's going to build out of possibility of the future, it allows the Republican Party to really have a coming to Jesus.

Right now, one of the reasons why we don't have -- I think Paul Ryan is having such a hard time in Congress, is that he has legislation that he may have, perhaps would like to pass, but he has roughly 28 members of Congress who are highly gerrymander districts, that won't budge --

SPEAKER: Forty.

MS. KUMAR: Forty, I'm sorry 40, that just won't budge, even though they are in safe districts. So, unless there's a real line within the Republican Party and they get the clue that the majority of American people and that -- I'm not talking about press, but I'm talking about Independents and Republicans themselves saying, this is not the party that holds my value right now. I think that's the only we are actually going to go back into fighting for voters.

MR. HARRIS: Except though, there was a tsunami election in 1964 with Barry Goldwater, and then in '68 we got law and order, Richard Nixon. Just a historical footnote.

MS. KUMAR: When some people (inaudible) to become President.

SPEAKER: Yes, there is that.

MR. HARRIS: Well, that's true. We'd love to talk about Richard Nixon.

MR. CHRISTIE: Fred, can I jump in for just a second on this.

MR. HARRIS: Sure. Yes.

MR. CHRISTIE: I want to go back and I associate myself with the comments my colleagues on my left here, for their sort view on absolutism. But I would say, Michael, I'd go back a little than the 1994. I would go back to 1989, and this is where I think the absolutism came in. So you go back to 1989, and a backbencher from

Georgia, by the name of Newt Gingrich, knocks off Speaker Jim Wright.

And then, Gingrich becomes Speaker of the House, and then it's
payback time to the Democrats. Then Nancy Pelosi comes in and says, ah-ah, it's
payback time to the Republicans, I'm going to get you. Boehner did the same thing, and I
also think the 40 folks that we talked about in the Freedom Caucus, and the House of
Representatives, anything that Barack Obama is for, they are pretty much, automatically,
against it. And I look back to Rush Limbaugh, I like listening to Rush Limbaugh, but I
remember his comment when he said, we have to make sure that the President fails,
when came into office.

And I though, my God, what a terrible thing to say. The President is the
President of the United States, not the President of the Democratic Party, but he's the
President of the United States. And finally, for being one of those recovering lawyer,
recovering lobbyist, and recovering pundits, I also think that the 24/7 news cycle has
driven this, because if I go on MSNBC, you know darn well Chris Matthews is going to
get in my face and scream at me and say, you terrible Republicans.

If a Democrat goes on Fox, you can pretty think that Sean Hannity, or the
like, will jump on them. And it's, you are always wrong, I'm always right, I'm not listening
to you. And I think that when people see this 24/7, and then as Michael mentioned, you
go back to these gerrymander districts, where over 90 percent of Members of Congress
are going to get reelected. They don't really face partisan opposition, and they can say,
well, the heck with these Democrats, look how crazy they are. Vote for me.

Look at these silly Republicans, look at the -- So when you throw all of
that together, I think that we are in the absolutism spot that we are of, we need to do a
better way of choosing our candidates to run for office, and we need a better way of
cleaning up the airwaves, so it's not I'm wrong -- or, I'm right, and you are wrong all the
time.

MR. HARRIS: Yes. Also, with social media and that gumball that you

just described. Because I think it's also contributing to prioritization too. Yes, this gentleman, here, in the suit. Yes. Can you wait for the mic?

MR. ANDERSON: Oh, sorry. Hi. My name is Yul Anderson, I represent the African-American future society. And, Ron, just to add to your comment. What do you think about concentrated power in the hands of George Soros, or -- I forget the guy who runs all the newspapers at the moment --

SPEAKER: Rupert Murdoch.

MR. ANDERSON: -- Rupert Murdoch, and how you may feel that the direction of the 24/7 news media is coming from the top? And how do you see that playing on the characterization of minorities and voting?

MR. CHRISTIE: You know, I'm always leery when you have people who have the money and the ability to influence people's perceptions, and of course for being a conservative, I applaud people who are entrepreneurs, but who work hard. And I would take your question, and I'll flip it a slightly different way. I worry about the rise of dark money in politics, of untraceable money, for ads that can go after people, based on race or their ethnicity, or other factors, that you have no idea who these characters are, who these actors are who are poisoning the well.

And so yes, Murdoch, I think has a very strong empire both in Australia and here in the States, with of course owning News Corp which is the parent -- which is a parent company of Fox News. And Soros has his influence, but when you hear about Soros or the Koch brothers and, you know, unregulated money, that's what worries me, of Citizens United, which I supported, but I think the outcome of Citizens United, is an outcome none of us could have ever predicted, and has led to the proliferation of money in the political system that has really poisoned the well.

MR. HARRIS: I want to go all the way to the back; there is someone who has their hands up.

MR. WILKINSON: Winston Wilkinson. I actually live in Bethesda, work

outside of the area, and every once in a while I'm here in D.C. And I just want to shout out to D.C., I had the opportunity this morning to go to an event, where I just heard from FBI, they like to call, and they can walk across the street and come here to this panel. So I want to thank Brookings for this opportunity.

Director Kumar actually mentioned something you just spoke on, kind of the silo where have folks who kind of in their own little silo with other people who think the same and mentioned how that has made his job difficult in terms of governing. And so I wanted to agree with that.

My question is, I saw a poll, actually a report, a couple days ago where it listed, there was actually a poll about how Whites view us, African-Americans, or their hatred for, and it's clear that there's some hate there, and so when you say that Trump is responsible for this. I want to ask you, do you think it makes sense to flip it and say that maybe Trump is not responsible for this, but maybe he is kind of being a smart marketer, and just giving people what they want; and if that's kind of driven his excess?

And then a second question with that is, there is obviously a strong group of people who are -- again, they might not all be racist, but they do feel certain ways about immigration and about certain minority groups. What happens when, you know, Trump does lose, what does that block of people do? And how does that impact the next election cycles, and actually how we govern ourselves?

MR. HARRIS: Anybody?

MS. KUMAR: I can tackle the last one. I think that's why -- my concern is that he has started to create and mainstream the outright and create something that he has the foundation for the next person that is savvier that he is, can very well take the reins. And that's way, when I say tsunami, it has to be the American people standing up to this in order for it to be very clear, that that part of our hearts and mind is not going to be. Is not who we are.

MR. HARRIS: That kind of tsunami. Okay.

MR. IYER: I would echo that by saying that I think that, you know, regardless, right, of who gets into office we are going to have to deal with what has been started, what has bubbled up, what is percolating under the surface. And even with, for example, Trump kind empowering or reinforcing some of the sentiments against people of color, we have already seen a lot repercussions of that, right.

And whether you are thinking about violence at rallies, to actual policies that have been put in place in certain states. Like English-only policies, or anti-refugee policies, have actually got introduced in several states around the country, just over the last six months, since the election started. So it's really empowered, yes, the outright, but also others, right, who feel that they actually are finding people of color and immigrants to be threats, and are taking it into their hands, or into policy.

So I think that it's going to be a time of both healing, but also a time to really reconcile with ourselves what has happened as a result, and how we are going to organize and mobilize around that.

MR. HARRIS: Okay. Well if you have a very quick question because we are hitting up against the clock. Sorry, this is going to be our last question.

SPEAKER: So, we talked a little bit about what candidates to outreach to the minority community and millennials, and other communities in general. And one of the tactics we are seeing is surrogates. We saw Ben Carson being used with Donald Trump at churches. Barack Obama spoke on Tuesday. Michelle Obama is speaking on Friday. Can you talk a little bit about, you know, how we think surrogates are to be helpful, and if they are going to be useful? And really, what demographics they are going to be appealing the most towards?

MR. HARRIS: Okay. Can we have a couple of responses on that?

MR. FAUNTROY: Quickly, from my perspective, it all depends on the quality of the surrogate. You know, to Ron's point. I think that to the extent that Donald Trump, for example, had an opportunity to get in with African-American voters, if I could

use that phrase, I think you can't do that with Ana Rosa, and one of your primary surrogates. And you just can't.

MR. HARRIS: The word that has been (inaudible).

MR. FAUNTROY: Oh, my, goodness gracious, yeah. So I think a lot of it depends on who is it that you have speaking on your behalf. If you have Syrian surrogates, people will have legitimacy and credibility within communities without regard to the color of the community, I think you have a shot, but if you don't, then you are really not providing anything serious to a community other than the kind of symbolism that we've seen recently.

MR. HARRIS: Okay. So, as you see, there's a lot at stake in this election, and minority voters are going to be critical. I think we've had a great discussion. I want to thank Bill Frey, and our very capable panelists for a great discussion. And hope to see you again in the future. Thanks so much for coming. (Applause)

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