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WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE REPUBLICAN UNDER TRUMP?  
FINDINGS FROM THE 2017 AMERICAN VALUES SURVEY

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**Introduction:**

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**Presentation of Survey Results:**

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## P R O C E E D I N G S

MR. DIONNE: I want to welcome everybody here today. This this partnership with Robbie Jones and PRRI has been a great joy for us here at Brookings. I'm E.J. Dionne. Our partnership is in our eighth year and I am happy to say that polling partnerships are not term limited, so I hope that we can continue with this work.

My colleague, Bill Galston, will formally welcome our friends Joy Reid and Henry Olsen. They have been partners with us now for many years and always give the best analysis of Robbie's numbers and kick off a really good conversation.

Just so you know how we're going to go, Robbie will do one of his patented PowerPoints, where he will explain all these numbers to you very clearly. And then Bill will come up and introduce Henry and Joy. They're going to have a response to the poll. We're going to do some Q&A and crosstalk up here and then we are going to bring you all into the conversation.

Robbie, as many of you know, is the CEO of PRRI and a leading scholar and commentator on religion, culture, and politics. He is the author of many books, including "The End of White Christian America," a fascinating book that came out last year, now out in paperback. If you have not seen it yet, you really should take a look at it. He writes a column for The Atlantic on politics and culture; appears regularly in a "Faith By the Numbers" segment on Interfaith Voices. He has been featured in just about every national media you can think of.

He has got a Ph.D. in religion from Emory University where he specialized in the sociology of religion. He also holds a Master's of Divinity from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and, so you can trust his numbers, a bachelor's degree in mathematics and computing science from Mississippi College.

He is the founder of PRRI and he also was an assistant professor of religious studies at Missouri State University. But as those of you who have not experienced it before, he is one of the best PowerPoint artists in the country and I wish I had those skills.

It's a real joy to welcome our friend Robbie Jones. Thank you, Robbie.

(Applause)

MR. JONES: Well, welcome, everyone. I am really pleased to be here for the eighth year in a row. It's been quite a while and I see a number of faces, many of -- has anyone been here for all of them? I was going to say, yeah, I see a lot of actual familiar faces up here.

Well, thank you for coming. And we also have a webcast audience who's joining us, so welcome to all of you who are joining us via live webcast.

I just want to say before I jump in a big thanks to the PRRI team. These big surveys and reports are always a team effort. And I want to say a shout-out to my co-authors, Dan and Alex and Molly, and also for the rest of the PRRI team helping with editorial, logistical, and everything under the sun to get us here today, to Carolyn and Sheridan and to Ariel, as well. So thanks to the PRRI team here.

Well, let's jump in. So we're going to take a look out sort of one year in and one year out from the midterms. So looking back and looking ahead a little bit, like where are we, and I think focusing a lot on trying to what's going on, if anything unusual, with the Republican coalition under Trump one year in. So you'll see a lot of different ways we're be slicing and dicing the data, particularly looking at fissures inside the Republican Party or no fissures as the case is in some ways. But hopefully, we'll come away with a better sense of where the country is on some major issues and also, in particular, where the Republican coalition is at this point in time, as I said looking back and looking ahead, as well.

If any of you are tweeting today, we do have a hashtag. It's #AVS2017, so feel free to use that if you're Tweeting along with us.

Okay, so I'm going to start with job performance. There's been a lot of press out here about President Trump's historically low job performance. We are also finding it at historically low levels. Among all Americans, we're at 41 percent approve; 22 percentage points of that is strongly approve. And then we are looking about 6 in 10 disapprove with 42 percent

strongly disapproving in the general public here. If you look, not surprisingly there are big partisan differences on this front. And, you know, one thing to say is that President Trump among Republicans, self-identified Republicans is doing quite well, so 84 percent overall saying they approve of his job performance. Only 13 percent saying they disapprove.

Independents look like the country as a whole, but they're Democrats, right? Seventy-two percent strongly disapprove, not just disapprove, but strongly disapprove with an additional 13 percent disapproving. Only 12 percent approving of President Trump's job performance level. So quite a partisan split, so we're going to take a little bit of a different dive here.

So here's the same numbers from before, 41 percent support, but looking at the gender divides on Trump job approval here. Men are basically divided on this, kind of men overall. This is in the entire country. About the same number approve and disapprove, but there is notably this big 49 percent block of women who not only disapprove, but strongly disapprove of President Trump's job performance. Only about a third of women approving of his job performance at this point in this presidency.

So we tried to take also another way of looking at this, a kind of deeper dive, and we asked a follow-up question of everyone who said that they favored President Trump's job approval. We asked a follow-up question and said, okay, great, so you've told us you favor him. Is there anything he could do to lose your support? Right. Kind of get a sense of just how tight the support was. And for those who said they did not approve, we asked the same question, also, is there anything he could do to gain your support on the other side, to get a sense of just how dug in these opinions were.

So this is kind of the typology here. Strong supporter of those who favor and say there's virtually nothing President Trump could do to lose their support, and then all the way down on the other side we're labeling strong opponents. Those who oppose Trump or don't favor his job performance and say it's virtually impossible for him to gain their support.

So here's what the lay of the land looks like. So basically there's that 41 percent job approval, but when you break it down this way there's 15 percent of the country who say they not only favor him, but there's virtually nothing he could do to lose their support. That's that 15-point anchor. And then all the way on the other side what you can see is that there's a pretty solid group in the country, 33 percent, who say they don't favor his performance and there's virtually nothing he could do to gain their support. So the people dug in on both sides is 2 to 1 on the opposition side, right, in terms of intensity here, which is notable, I think.

So when we look at this and break it out, I'm going to do two slides here. So who are Trump's strongest supporters using that same scale about favorability and those who say there's nothing he could do to gain or lose their support? This is what it looks like.

So these are Trump's strongest supporters here. Among Republicans you can see there's that 84 percent approved rating and about a third, 34 percent, saying there's virtually nothing he could do to lose their support. White evangelical Protestants have been a lot in the news here, especially with the Roy Moore candidacy down in Alabama, which I'm sure we'll talk about a little bit later, but 72 percent approving of President Trump's job performance so far, but 3 in 10 saying there's virtually nothing he could do to lose their support. So about 3 in 10 are really locked in.

White with no college degree or white working class Americans just barely over the 50 percent mark at 51 -- sorry, 55 percent here. About a quarter of them saying there's nothing that he could do. And there's white men at the bottom. But if I put the other side up you can kind of see how it falls out.

I do want to point out among white working class Americans here this 24 percent on each end. Right? So that's notable, I think, that this kind of next to the last column here a quarter say they approve and there's virtually nothing he could do to lose their support. On the other side, about a quarter saying they disapprove and there's virtually nothing he could do to gain their support. So this is kind of leaning a little bit more towards support, but there there is

this kind of intensity parity on either side.

Here's the other side of this equation, so those who are Trump's strongest opponents. And you can kind of see here's the approved side among groups that are least likely to support him. And yes, that is a zero hiding behind the axis there among African Americans on that side. (Laughter) But among Democrats, so it's 1 in 10, but 2 percent saying they really approve of him at that level.

But here's the real story if you look at the other side. Right? So all the green is disapproval and the dark green are groups who not only disapprove, but say there's virtually nothing Trump could do to gain their support. So among African Americans, 6 in 10 African Americans not only disapprove, but say there's virtually nothing he could do to gain their support. So really locked in groups.

Latinos are much more mixed than African Americans here. We'll see this in some other slides, as well. But the other groups, religiously unaffiliated, strongly also; and women, about 4 in 10 women not only disapprove, but say there's virtually nothing he could do to gain their support.

So that's just kind of the story on job approval, but let me kind of go through a few other political challenges here. And some of these are looking ahead, so right now and looking ahead.

So this is a question we've asked three times across the year. Based on what you've read or heard do you believe that President Donald Trump should be impeached and removed from office or don't you feel that way? When we asked right after the election it was about 3 in 10 who said, in February, who said they supported impeachment. That number jumped up to 4 in 10 in August, the next time we asked it, but it's remained steady since we asked it in August and this has been fairly stable.

But again, here you can see there's a fairly large gender gap with men about 2 to 1 saying that they would oppose impeachment and women evenly divided on the question. So

there's a really big gender gap on this particular question.

So looking ahead to 2018, one of the things we find here is a distinct Democratic advantage. It's not a landslide, but it is a 7 point Democratic advantage when we asked people to anticipate how they would vote for either the Democratic candidate or the Republican candidate in their election district in the midterm elections. Again, here fairly big gender gap going on here, 51-31, so there's a 20 point gap among female registered voters here with basically more than half of them say they prefer the Democratic candidate, only about 3 in 10 saying that they prefer the Republican candidate in their district.

2020, so we look ahead to 2020. Here's what we see. And this is looking at among Republicans here now saying whether they would prefer Trump to be the nominee or would prefer someone else. I do think it's notable that we basically have 3 in 10 Republicans saying they prefer another nominee in 2020 at this point in the presidency. It's 2 to 1 the other way, but there's 3 in 10.

And if we look at kind of strong Republicans and weak Republicans, and these are people who kind of self-identify as a strong Republican or weak Republican, you can really see that really who Trump has more in his corner are people who are strong partisans, right, people who strongly identify with the Republican Party. So it's not kind of outliers to the Republican Party, but people who strongly identify with the party. And among weak Republicans there's actually a plurality the other way, nearly half wishing there was a different candidate.

Here, white evangelical Protestant Republicans, and you'll see there it's 7 in 10 squarely in President Trump's corner, only about a quarter saying they prefer a different candidate. And then this is kind of all other Republicans, so this is kind of a binary break. Those are white evangelical Protestants and everyone else essentially; 56 percent of non-white evangelical Republicans saying that they wish for Trump and then 37 percent saying they wish for a different candidate. So to that question about who's still in his corner, clearly white

evangelical Protestants still strongly in the President's corner.

We also took a look at just perceptions of the party and especially with the midterms coming up what kind of party loyalty is there. And in particular what this political science literature suggested for a while now is the story here is less about who loves their own party and more about who hates the other party, right, that that's typically how it runs. So we try to get underneath this a little bit and get a sense of it.

So we asked this three-part question do you feel like the policies of the following group, and we gave people three options, are they moving the country in the right direction; are they somewhat misguided, but not dangerous; or are they so misguide that they pose a serious threat to the country? All right, so kind of giving people these three. So what I'm going to show you is what Republicans think about Democrats and what Democrats think about Republicans here.

All right, so I'm going to give you the first category first. Here are all the Republicans who thing the Democrats are moving the country in the right direction and all the Democrats who think the Republicans are moving the country in the right direction. (Laughter) Right? That's it, 5. So you can see where this is going, I think.

So here's the middle category, are somewhat misguided, but not dangerous. All right. And here's the last category, so misguided they pose a fundamental threat to the country.

So majority territory almost mirror images of each other, pretty perfect negative partisanship in the country today. So I think taking this in kind of helps explain a lot when we're puzzling over particular candidates and the party, I think, in particular. And we can come back to that, but this is where we stand.

Here's an example of the ways we can break this out that illuminates. We also asked this question not only about the Democratic Party and the Republican Party, but about President Trump's policies itself so we could compare the Republican Party versus the Trump administration itself.



And this one is among all Americans, so what's notable here is that among all Americans the parties fare about equally well. Right. It kind of goes to the divided nature of the country. But if we look among all Americans just at President Trump nearly half of the country, 46 percent, say that they see a distinct difference between the Republican Party and President Trump and see Trump's policies as a particular danger to the country itself.

However, if you look inside of Republicans, so this next slide I'm going to show you is the same data, but among Republicans, basically what they think about their own party and Trump. So this is among Republicans, what they think about their own party and Trump, and notably, a majority of them say that the Republican Party's policies are moving the country in the right direction, but about a third say they're misguided and 7 percent say they pose a threat to the country.

But here's what's notable and kind of to our bigger question about kind of Trump and the Republican Party, that more Republicans think that Trump is moving the country in the right direction than think the Republican Party is moving the country in the right direction. And it's notable, 67 percent. Nearly two-thirds of Republicans say Trump is moving -- Trump's policies are moving the country in the right direction, 55 percent of Republicans. So that I think is also notable just in terms of where Trump's strengths are inside of self-identified Republicans, rank-and-file Republicans on the ground.

Here is what Democrats think about Republicans and Trump, as well. So 54 percent, that's the slide we saw a second ago, but here's the Democrats' impressions of President Trump. Seeing a clear difference, about 20 points, more likely to say that President Trump's policies are misguided and pose a serious threat to the country.

All right. So one more round on is the GOP the party of Trump here? We also took another look at this, kind of another swing at it, in looking at whether people supported Trump as their preferred primary candidate in 2016 and whether they wanted him to be the 2020 nominee again. And so using those two questions we basically came up with people who

he was both their preferred candidate in 2016 and they'd like to see him at the top of the ticket in 2020. The exact opposite, on the other hand, that he was not their preferred candidate in 2016 nor do they want to see him in 2020. And then the mixed groups who were with him, but now say they'd like to see someone else, and then the people who were not with him, but are now with him. So we've kind of got people moving away here.

And this is what the lay of the land looks like here. And this is among all Republicans and Republican-leaning Independents. So we've kind of grouped everyone who leans Republican and self-identifies as a Republican for this analysis. But basically you see this first point is 18 percent is basically we've labeled Never Trump. Like he was not their preferred candidate in 2016 and he's also not their -- they wish there was someone else in 2020. Notably, this is where the predominant -- the predominant category where Mormon Republicans reside notably. So about 1 in 10, 11 percent, of that category is made up of Mormons, which is a sizable number given the small size of Mormons in the country as a whole. So that's one thing to say about that category.

The next category here is the leaning away from Trump. About 23 percent of the country's leaning away from Trump. The one thing I'll point out here is that this is category that has the most non-white Republicans in it, so people who are African American, Latino, or mixed race. And what this -- you know, one thing that we can see from that is that these are people who he was their preferred candidate in 2016 and are now leaning away from him saying he's not their candidate. So inside of this kind of Republican and leaning Republican group one thing we can say is that disproportionately non-white Republicans are moving away from Trump based on these two questions.

Then there's about -- you know, a similar number who weren't with him, but are now leaning towards him, 19 percent. And then this 40 percent over here were with him before and are with him again. So that's kind of the lay of the land.

To give you a sense of how this plays out on a couple of questions and to give

you just a sense of the attitudinal differences among particularly the poll ends here, here's a couple of Trump signature issues. Temporarily preventing people from some majority Muslim countries from entering the U.S., that's in the news today, building a wall along the U.S. border with Mexico. So these two numbers are where all Republicans and Republican-leaning Independents are, so a little more than 6 in 10 support among all Republicans. But if we look at the Never Trump group, there's a little bit of fall off on the kind of Muslim travel ban number here, but a fairly big difference on the idea of building a wall with Mexico. Those in the Never Trump camp really not on board with that.

But look what happens if we compare the Always Trump, people who have been with Trump both in 2016 and favor him in 2020, you can see these really big differences between these kind of factions inside the Republican Party, in particular on this idea of building a wall with Mexico. That's a 50 point gap between the kind of Never Trump category and the Always Trump category at the end.

One more look here is the negative partisanship numbers that we looked at just a minute ago. These are the same numbers that we looked at a second ago, but here we see sort of if we look at the Never Trump and the leaning away from Trump folks, neither one of them, if you look at the orange bars, neither one of them are in majority territory, saying that the Democratic Party is so misguided that it poses a threat to the country. But if we look at folks who are either leaning toward Trump now or were always with Trump, you see the kind of negative partisanship really jump. So this 54 percent of those leaning toward Trump and more than 6 in 10, 62 percent, of those in the Always Trump camp saying that the Democratic Party poses a fundamental threat to the country. So just much more strongly on this negative partisanship measures.

And then this late one I'll do, I'm going to give you a smattering of issues, kind of current issues, before we wrap up. But this last one here is a question we've asked kind of across last year, about some things we that heard actually in some focus groups. Because

things have gotten so far off track we need a leader who's willing to break the rules in order to set things right is the end of that question. And here are the number of people who agree among Republicans and Republican-leaning Independents.

So 55 percent of them agree, Republicans and leaners agree with that statement. But in the Never Trump camp only 35 percent agree that this kind of authoritarian leader is the kind we need. Those who have moved one way or the other are kind of divided on the question, but here's the number for those in the Always Trump category, sort of highly -- sort of agreeing with the statement, about two-thirds agreeing with the statement that we need a leader who's willing to break the rules if that's what it takes in order to set things right.

Okay. So I'm going wrap here with some selected current issues, some things where we're really divided. And I promise I'm going to leave at the end with at least one place where we agree. All right.

So most Americans, this question about athletes kneeling at football games has become something a political football, no pun intended. So here is where all Americans are. It turns out that all Americans, 55 percent, actually agree that professional athletes should be required to stand during the National Anthem at sporting events. Whites and Latinos are here in agreement, but look at African Americans on the issue. Three-quarters of African Americans disagree with that statement. And not surprisingly probably, the partisan divides are just huge on this: 86 percent of Republicans agreeing with the statement; two-thirds of Democrats disagreeing with this statement. So that's kind of where we are with that issue.

The media, do you think most reporters have a personal and political agenda? Are most reporters trying to report the news fairly and accurately? We'll have Joy up here in a minute, put the spotlight on her. (Laughter) But here's where we are. Most of the country, 53 percent, says that reporters have a personal and political agenda; 43 percent saying they're trying to report the news accurately. But it is just, again, a kind of partisan divide on this question, 8 in 10 Republicans saying reporters have a personal and political agenda; two-thirds

of Democrats disagreeing, saying that most reporters are trying to report the news accurately. So this kind of partisan lens even on the media here.

Then on, in particular, Trump's signature immigration issues, here we can see. So here's where the country is. I do want to pause here to kind of just take this in.

So here's three policies: temporarily preventing people from some majority Muslim countries entering the U.S., passing a law to prevent refugees from entering the U.S., and building a wall along the U.S. border with Mexico. I do want to point out that for neither one of these policies does support in the general population exceed 40 percent. Right? So that's kind of where the country is as a whole. But I'll put up the partisan divides and you can see why I think this has become a real fight.

So there's Republican support, self-identified Republican support for each of these three issues. It's 56 percent here passing a law to prevent refugees, so less support for that, but kind of very strong support for the Muslim travel ban and building a wall. And Independents and Democrats looking kind of much, much different. And this is, in some ways, what political scientists often call asymmetrical polarization. We have kind of one party out in one place and then Independents and Republicans more aligned on the other side of an issue, and particularly building a wall. You can just see this massive gap between Republicans and basically everyone else on this question.

One thing I don't have a slide appear on that I will say on the immigration front is that we did find 72 percent support for the basic policies underlying DACA. And the question we have asked about whether people who are brought to the U.S. as children should be able to stay in the U.S. and get legal status if they go to college or serve in the military. We find 72 percent support for that, including 6 in 10 Republicans in support for that. So there's bipartisan support for that policy, although there's these divisions here.

And this one here, there is also fairly widespread agreement on this question of sexual harassment. And the way we asked this question about it is basically whether stories

about women being sexually harassed and assaulted in the workplace are isolated incidents or are they part of a broader pattern of how women are treated? Seven in 10 Americans say it's part of a broader pattern. There is a gender gap, but it's not overwhelming and most men are agreeing with women on this question, that it's part of a broader pattern. There's also a partisan gap, but, again, both parties essentially on the same side of this question. So on this question that's been kind of all over the news pretty much every day we actually have bipartisan agreement and kind of agreement across the genders.

So I will kind of wrap it up with that little moment of agreement, bipartisan and across gender agreement. And then we will see where else we want to go with the discussion with the rest of the panel. So thank you. (Applause)

MR. GALSTON: Well, as always, Robbie, you've gotten us off to a running or even a flying start and we'll see whether we can keep the momentum up.

I'm Bill Galston, a senior fellow here at Brookings and a fully indicted co-conspirator in this effort for a number of years, I think actually since the beginning. And, you know, I am delighted that we've gotten our dream team back together for yet another return engagement. This is the band that never grows old.

I'll introduce our two commentators in the order in which they'll give their presentations. To Robbie Jones' right or left, depending on where you're looking, is Henry Olsen, who's a senior fellow at the Ethics and Public Policy Center, a very well-known commentator on American politics; someone who is passionately interested in thinking through the electoral challenges facing the Republican Party and resolving them favorably consistent with conservative principles and, I would say, doing right by ordinary Americans. And this perspective was the basis of his book, *The Working Class Republican: Ronald Reagan and the Return of Blue Collar Conservatism*, which was published in June of this year. And Henry's been an intellectual leader in a series of center-right think tanks going back quite a long way. I could go on, but if you want to know more it's all in the written materials that you have.

And we're equally delighted to have Joy Ann Reid back with us. As many of you know, she is a leading political analyst for MSNBC, the host of *A.M. Joy*, and a noted author, a swell. She wrote a book entitled, "Fracture: Barack Obama, the Clintons," and "the Racial Divide," published a couple of years ago; co-editor of a book entitled "We are the Change We Seek: The Speeches of Barack Obama;" and a widely read columnist at The Daily Beast.

So in that order we'll hear from the two commentators and then I will throw it over to E.J. for the first question, and we'll be off. Henry.

MR. OLSEN: Well, as the only Republican on this panel I feel that I am in a unique position and I feel like I'm the official responder to the State of the Union Address, which has been provided by President Jones. (Laughter) So in honor of the 2013 Republican responder to President Obama's State of Union Address, Marco Rubio, I'd like to start by taking a sip of water. (Laughter)

SPEAKER: He interrupted his address with a sip of water.

MR. OLSEN: Wow.

MR. DIONNE: Henry's better than that. (Laughter)

MR. OLSEN: I'm going to directly address the question what does it mean to be a Republican under Trump by trying to create a unifying theme underneath Robbie's data. I think what it means to be a Republican under Trump is to be scared that what drove appeal for Donald Trump in the primaries and what allowed him to unify a very hesitant party behind him and now turned many of them into loyal fans has been a sense of fear among different groups of Republicans. And that what explains the Never Trump people is actually a different type of fear, one that can be exploited by people of the Democratic Party if they're willing to understand it is the Never Trump people are afraid of and how that is both different from and similar to the sort of things that Democrats find so heinous about President Trump.

President Trump, if we'll recall, started with a strong appeal to what can only be called some form of economic, ethnocentric nationalism, that the focus on immigration and trade

and American First had both economic and non-economic appeals to it. The people who resonated most clearly to that at first are not dissimilar from similar types of people we find throughout the world, which is to say people who are less educated, native born, who are economically stressed or on a downward trajectory and who also feel themselves socially out of step with a changing country. We find that these are the sort of people that backed UKIP in Britain. These are the sort of people who support Marine Le Pen in France and so forth throughout the world.

These people are afraid of losing their place in a nation society, and that includes economic stress, which is one reason why Trump always talked about trade early on even though data had suggested since then that it was not the strong message across the board that he might have thought. Among this group of people it went hand-in-hand with opposition to immigration because what they felt was that through trade policy and through immigration policy people who run the country were favoring foreigners over citizens. And that was a basic breach of contract.

These people were afraid of losing their economic and cultural place in American life and they wanted it back. So Donald Trump rockets to the top of the American -- of the Republican Primary largely on the backs of this sort of fear.

He then adds to it security fear, that throughout the rest of the campaign you were talking about a Muslim ban. In fact, the time when Donald Trump really cements his frontrunner status, goes from a possible winner to an almost certain winner, was when he proposes the Muslim ban in response to the Paris and San Bernardino attacks. His favorable rating, if you look at the cross tabs, doesn't go up very much between November and January. He's still among Republicans at that time between 55 and 60-something percent, much lower than what you see now. But his conversion rate of support goes up significantly. He goes from 25 percent in the polls to 35 percent in the polls and never looks back.

And both data from the Voter Study Group that Robbie and Bill and I serve on

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and data from the exit polls show that the one issue that unifies Trump's coalition, as much as they disagree on many other things, is support, whether fervent or partial support, for the Muslim ban. And again, I think that gets into the fear question, is that people who are afraid for their lives and security, whether rationally or not, is something that Democrats and Republicans disagree on. But people who have that fear get added to the Trump coalition after the Muslim ban and they see that as a symbol that the President is fighting for them.

For many people, the Black Lives Matter and the crime discussion that President Trump interjected in the campaign later after the primary was part of that same equation. But after the primary he had to unify his party and he again did it on the basis of feeding into the fears that these different groups have.

Robbie is the expert here among white, Christian America, so I will be waiting to hear him offer modifications to what I'm about to say, but I think the default mindset for the evangelical Christian in the United States is one of fear, that this used to be a country that their social norms, if not their denomination, largely predominated both in law and in public mores. It is one in which their views no longer predominate in the law and often outside of their enclaves do not predominate in public mores. And they are afraid.

They are not only afraid for the change. They are afraid because they see the progressive left as wanting to stamp them out. And again, whether one thinks that's rational or not, one can see that fear when one talks to them. We have the case today about the person who won't bake a cake for a homosexual couple who want to get married. And if you're a religious evangelical the question is, if they won't even let him do that, what won't they let us do next? And so what Donald Trump basically does is say I share your fear and I'll give you what you care about: religious liberty and strong people in the courts.

For liberty Republicans, they've been afraid for quite some time that the America they believe exists, the America they believe is the best explanation of America, one where the federal government does as little as possible and gets out of the way to let people solve their

own problems is fading from view. Now, I think the data suggested that America left at least 85 years ago, but for about 15 to 20 percent of the Republican Party that's still something that they hold dear to and it's something that you see animated throughout Republican Party discussions. And I think the rapid move towards expanding government under Barack Obama, even if imperfectly obtained and even if imperfectly desired from the perspective of progressives, to these people stoked the fear that that America will never come back. And so Donald Trump pledges to these people deregulation and big tax cuts so that their fear gets addressed, too.

And Donald Trump wins the presidency by creating this coalition that basically feeds on fear. There are people in the coalition who are afraid of the changing racial and cultural aspects of America. And increasingly, in his Tweets in the presidency, the President plays into that. And I think the Voter Study Group data show that this is actually a very small part of his coalition, but it's one that seems to have a very large effect on his consciousness based on how he responds to it in the silence and the privacy of his own room.

But that explains in some part what it means to be a Republican in this time, and it shows up in Robbie's figures that the more partisan you are, the more likely you are to be loyally behind Trump, the more likely you are to think that the Democratic Party is posing a threat for America. And consequently, when you feel that, then virtually any means are necessary to combat that threat. And that supports the data that Robbie shows that says that the strongest partisans are the people most likely to say break the rules.

This showed up in the famous essay, "The Flight 93 Election," which was authored pseudonymously by a man now in the White House, Michael Anton, who basically posited that, which is to say that the Democratic Party, if they take control of the Flight 93 airplane will crash America into the ground and, consequently, anything is required, even supporting this man. That sort of mentality, I thought at the time, was like a pre-Spanish Civil War mentality and it gives rise to a civil war mentality, which is that we're in a war and we must win.

So if you understand that, you understand why the President can that support because there's nothing that the Democratic Party is doing that makes those fears go away.

So then what do we say about the Never Trump people? What are they afraid of? Well, what the Never Trump people tend to be afraid of is a party that used to be theirs that isn't theirs anymore. They don't share those fears most of them. We saw that in Robbie's data. They look and they say, you know, I prefer Hillary Clinton not to be President, but, you know, we got through things before, we'll get through things again. We'll have our a chance in power. America is still good. They look and they see a party that no longer represents their values, a party that no longer has a place for them in which they seem to be outcasts.

And then the question is, how do they fit into a modern two-party political system? And the fact is they don't. They don't fit into a two-party political system where the alternative has no room for them on any of the things that they do care about and they don't fit into a Republican Party that also has no room for them. And you saw this, I think, in what happened in the election, which is that Donald Trump won because he decisively won among the 18 percent of Americans who didn't like either candidate.

If you look at the GW Battleground Poll, that was the only major poll that was asking the same questions and provided cross-tab data before the exit polls, and they showed that same 18 percent in September of 2016 and in October of 2016. They were largely or disproportionately Republican or Republican-leaning, college-educated men and they broke very late to the President. They did not want to support him, but they ended up choosing the devil that they felt policy comfortable with over the devil that they felt policy uncomfortable with.

So what I leave the challenge for a Democratic Party that looks to be riding resistance to a very good midterm, if not a wave, then -- not a tsunami, then a wave, which is to say do you want to be a party that takes advantage of this to form a new coalition or do you want to commit the errors that the Republicans did in misreading the fervor of their base in the 2010 election for the mood of the country? And I think that's the challenge that progressives

and Democrats face going forward is how to accommodate and sooth some of the fears of the people who they could win over and how to make animosity among the people they will defeat much less to try and make our country a safer and more harmonious place. (Applause)

MS. REID: Okay. Well, thank you very much, William and Robbie, for the amazing data, and of course, my buddy E.J. Dionne. Thank you all for coming.

I, surprisingly enough, will just concur with everything that Henry Olsen just said because I think he's absolutely right. (Laughter) And I think it's important that he mentioned UKIP and the international community. I feel that you can't really understand Donald Trump in a vacuum of just looking at American politics.

Just this weekend on my TV show we did a story that had to do with the slave trade in Libya. And I'm going somewhere with this, it's relevant. It turns out that part of what's happening and the reason you have Sub-Saharan African mostly men, but men and women, being sold in a slave market in Libya is because these are people who are trying to flee to Europe.

They're economic refugees who are, in large part, ending up in places like Italy and are being soundly rejected by the Italian public who are really freaked out by this massive wave of immigration, much as other parts of Europe are really responding to a massive wave of immigration from North Africa and from places like Syria that has driven far right politics in Europe and led to the growth of parties like UKIP, of people like Marine Le Pen, of these same movements really throughout Western Europe where people see an influx of immigrants who to them are not European, who are not French in the sense that French had a meaning in their view, who are not British in the sense that being British had a meaning in their view; that was in part cultural, but in part racial, quite frankly. And that seeing these waves of immigrants over time who don't assimilate into the country in a lot of cases because culturally it's a lot harder to assimilate in Europe than it is in the United States.

We're sort of a country that builds in the idea that you can become American in

one generation, like I did. But in Europe it's not always the case. You can be two and three generations in and still be seen as Moroccan or Pakistani. And so as you've seen these more recent waves of immigration that have resulted from either economic want on the African continent or war in places like Yemen and Syria, you've had the growth of really what are many Donald Trumps and many movements that are exactly like Trumpism. And then if you look at the data, look exactly like Trumpism.

So I think Henry is absolutely right that what you have is that you have a part of the country that is nostalgic for a past where it had cultural hegemony and economic hegemony, but where the cultural hegemony is the thing that they feel they're losing most. And I'll point you to some of Robbie's data that I found really interesting was on the coming tax cut, which probably will pass and which has become the subject of a lot of our coverage because of how unpopular it is with almost everyone, including with a lot of Republicans.

And in Robbie's data nearly 6 in 10 people -- I'm sorry, the majority of people polled here, nearly half believe that the tax policy when ascribed to Donald Trump will be of almost no benefit to them at all. And we found not just in Robbie's poll, but in other polling that Republicans agree that they probably won't get much of out it. The difference is that Democrats really care about that, Independents really care about that, and Republicans by and large don't. And so economics and saying that economic want is the driver of Trumpism I think misses the point.

You also have growing agreement across parties -- Democrats, Republican, and Independents -- about healthcare. When we in our business talk with people who are in places like Kentucky or places like North Carolina, there's as much anxiety about losing their healthcare, including losing Medicaid, as there is among Democrats. There's an agreement, a growing agreement, and a growing disinclination to oppose the idea of federally driven healthcare even among Republicans.

Robbie's data has the opposition to the federal government being involved in

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providing healthcare going down from 75 percent in 2013 to 66 percent among Republicans. So even Republicans are coming around to this idea that the federal government should be doing something to help people get healthcare. The difference is when the policy is attached to the Republican Party and Donald Trump they don't care.

I recently spoke with a long-time Republican in Alabama as part of a story I was doing for *The Daily Beast* which talked about black versus white attitudes in the election and the fact that African Americans in Alabama are feeling that they're getting the disproportionate sort of attention and potential blame from the media for what will probably be a Moore victory. And they're saying, well, you really need to look at the other party because they are almost universally Republican in terms of white Alabamans. And so it's really on them if they're going to reject Roy Moore was the message I was getting from black politicians in Alabama.

So I spoke with one of these sort of white political poohbahs who said, look -- and this was somebody who reluctantly voted for Roy Moore in the primary because they saw Luther Strange as being corrupt and part of the whole corrupt machine of Alabama politics that, in case you don't know, had gone down in sex scandals and money scandals and all sorts of stuff, and Luther Strange was associated with it. And this person had a lot of justification for saying Moore was the lesser of two evils. But it was interesting what this person said to me about -- and they're a long-time political player in Alabama, which was that the support for Roy Moore, and they were very frontloaded about saying it had nothing to do with race, it had nothing to do with bigotry, but that it had to do with Alabama Republican voters, who are the majority, worrying that not having Roy Moore there would mean that their values didn't carry in Washington. And that the most important things to them were: immigration, and it was mentioned over and over again that people in Alabama, which is not a state that shares a border with Mexico, that people in Alabama were very concerned that we are not controlling the border, and that the border must be controlled and that immigration must be curtailed.

And I asked this person whether or not there was a large problem with unlawful

immigration in Alabama. And they could not tell me there was. I asked him whether they had had personal contact or knew of people who had negative contact with immigrants. They could not. They lived in a community that was almost entirely white. They really encountered no one other than white people and black people. But they still had a very strong feeling about immigration being the top problem in the country.

The second thing that this person mentioned was religion and was the fact that in their view there needed to be judges who would respect religious liberty, which in their view meant that Christians would have certain rights protected by the federal government. And there are things that Donald Trump, who doesn't seem to be a very religious man, has done that has earned him the absolute fealty of Republicans.

I had another Republican text me this morning, who's somebody I've had on the show who's a very religious Republican, who's an abortion voter is what their main thing is, gleefully telling me that Donald Trump is going to move the American embassy to Jerusalem, which, of course, would probably touch off a third intifada and absolute outbreak in the Middle East. But to this person, this was the best news ever and it was a sign of Trump keeping his promises to his voters and to Christians. And so Christians seem Donald Trump as sort of a figure that while he may be personally heretical, was carrying the gospel into public policy because he's putting judges in who will protect Christian cake bakers, who will in this tax bill sign a piece of legislation that will drop the federal prohibition against churches directly getting involved in politics, whose tax policies will favor people who educate their children at home schools and in private schools and disproportionately disfavor public schools, which a lot of the Republican voters also oppose because they think they're inculcating children with liberal and almost communistic values.

And in the South you had after the successful desegregation of public schools, one of the ramifications of that is in the South you had a lot of white parents just pull their kids out of public school. And a lot of these parents send their kids to private school or home-school

them, so they don't care about public schools necessarily and they sort of like the idea of disadvantaging them.

And so those were the most important issues to him. So it was religion; it was a Muslim ban, which this person -- I'm back to my first Republican, my Alabama Republican, also said it's very important that the country curtail the migration and influx of potentially dangerous Muslims into the country. They thought that was very important.

The one thing that neither of these two Republicans ever mentioned to me was economics or taxes, quite frankly, or deficits or anything like that. There was no mention of economic want and neither of these two people are poor.

Moving on to my students, I teach a class on race, gender, and media for Syracuse University. And I had my class do an exercise where I had them go out and interview a Trump voter, which for a lot of them was difficult for them to find among their colleagues, their friends, right, because they're college students. So some interviewed their parents or relatives, some interviewed people they knew. I had to supply two people with a Trump voter to interview because they couldn't find any. (Laughter)

But what was remarkable about these interviews, which I asked Robbie permission to just let him see because they're really amazing, they kind of read like the narrative of the data that you just saw. The number one unifying issue among the individual people who ranged in age, who did not range in race -- they were all white -- they were mostly male, the number one issue among these Trump voters was immigration. Far more than anything else immigration was mentioned as a negative impact on the country and it's mostly down to illegal immigration from Mexico and that it just be curtailed and that there must be a wall. That was the number one issue.

The Muslim ban did come up. One thing that barely ever came up was economics, was economic want or economic anxiety. I have been just reporting on the President and on his supporters now for over a year. Very rarely come across economic



anxiety except among Democrats who favored Donald Trump.

When you talked to Republicans who favor Donald Trump it is mostly down to culture. It is mostly down to immigration. And I think it's uncomfortable for my profession to confront it, but it's a lot down to race. It's a lot down to a discomfort with a country that is changing ethnically and that in their view is washing a wave of what they see as not real Americans over the country's cultural life and putting them in the margins. And they don't want to be in the margins and this is a fight. It's a war.

And I'll end by saying that in a lot of ways what's interesting about Donald Trump is that he's sort of almost a flip side kind of Bizarro World Obama. And what I mean by that is that for a lot of hardcore Obama voters, Obama was the point. It wasn't specifically that he would do some specific economic thing. This is the reason that you never really saw much of a drop in enthusiasm for reelecting him, particularly among African Americans, because in a lot of ways he was the point. His physical persona was the point. It was the symbolism of having somebody who was not white, somebody who has international roots in his family, somebody who represented a changing America. He in and of himself and his biography represented new America. And having that symbolism and that family, those children, that wife, those people in the White House was in a lot of ways the point. It was that that was the catharsis for a lot of Obama voters. It was seeing ourselves in the mirror and seeing Obama and his family reflected back.

For a lot of Trump voters Trump is the point. It isn't his policies. It's not what he's going to do even for them. If you tell them that the tax cuts are going to hurt them and they're going to pay for tax cuts for the rich, we haven't seen much evidence that they care. If you tell them that Donald Trump's policies are going to make America less popular around the world or less effective around the world, that is not an argument that works with them. They really don't care. Just having that man who is white and very ethno-nationalist in his whiteness and who is in a sense, as I think Ta-Nehisi Coates has called him, the first white President, very

proactive about putting forward his gender and racial identity and saying I represent this and I will attack the people who in your view are detriments to it. I'll attack that black football player. I'll attack Jemele Hill from ESPN. I'll attack black women. I'll attack people of color. I'll attack the people that annoy you, too. And that's the point.

And so I think for Democrats who are really kind of obsessed with this idea of converting Trump voters over, I'm not sure that that can be done because I think that for a lot of people Trump is their Obama, you know. And he has a cultural power over at least a third of the country that I don't think anything can break. And I was not surprised by Robbie's data that 4 in 10 Republicans say there's literally nothing he can do to not earn their support, and 100 percent believe that. (Applause)

MR. GALSTON: Well, after hearing these three presentations I bet everybody shares my feeling: I wish we had all day to talk about this. But we don't. We have 34 minutes, pretty much evenly divided between this group up here and this group down there.

So, E.J., first question.

MR. DIONNE: Okay. I'm going to combine two questions just so we can move forward. And the first question I'm going to pose differently to Henry and Joy, although it's based on the same data.

To Henry, I think these numbers help explain why Democrats had such a good day in the off, off year elections. These are very dangerous numbers for Republicans. Only 15 percent in Robbie's numbers are strong Trump supporters. Basically no matter what he does, will stick with them. And among Republicans only 37 percent are in that category, which is quite remarkable and a potential problem.

On the other side, you see enormous mobilization and much stronger feelings. There are 15 percent strong Trump supporters, 34 percent who disapprove and say nothing will change their minds. That's double. That's more than double.

And I note there's a chart in the report that Robbie didn't put up that two years

into Obama's presidency, this was after the bad midterms, after all the Tea Party attacks, 50 percent were still enthusiastic about him. Only 320 days into Trump's presidency, if Trump were here, as my friend Norm Ornstein likes to say, 320 days longer than any other President in our history. (Laughter) But after only 320 days he's at 48 percent. That's a pretty quick decline.

So the question to Henry is -- I won't combine the two questions; I'll just throw this one out there first and I'll hold on the other one -- how do Republicans come back from this? Because the Trump base that we talk about so much by this reckoning is actually quite small relative to the current base that opposes him.

And to Joy I want to flip that around. Because to me these numbers show that there are a substantial number of Trump voters or supporters who can be converted. I agree with you that among those 15 percent in the country and those 37 percent of Republicans, nothing in particular will change their minds. But this is a substantial drop-off from where Trump stood on Election Day 2016. So I want to sort of challenge you on the "there are no converts to be had" on the one hand. And I want to sort of ask Henry what in the heck are the Republicans going to do with these kind of numbers?

MR. OLSEN: So what are the Republicans going to do? They're going to ignore them. I think that's what the tax bill basically shows is that they remain wedded to old dogma and they're going to argue that old dogma is going to get them out of this. I think they're wrong.

But I think what we should do, though, is break down the electorate, which is that if we take a look at Virginia, which is where a lot of attention is paid because of the massive gains in the House of Delegates races. I wrote about this in *City Journal* magazine, but if you look both at the exit polls and you look at the places where they gain, it mirrored the 2016 presidential race very, very closely. The reason they won so many seats in the delegates race is because Republicans held a lot of places that Hillary Clinton had won with a majority of the vote. In 2017, the people voted for Hillary Clinton in 2016 voted for Democrats for the House of Delegates.

What that suggests is that the phenomena that saved the House for the Republicans in 2016, the Romney voter who voted for Clinton, but split their ticket, is not splitting their ticket anymore. These people are disproportionately educated whites in major metropolitan areas. The Republicans hold the House by 24 seats. There are 23 seats that Clinton carried. All they have to do is hold on to that and they're going to be within an eyelash of winning the House.

But the flip side is the Obama Trump voter. If you look at the exit polls, most of those people voted for Ed Gillespie, they just didn't come out as much. And if that's what --

MR. DIONNE: And that's what I think -- that's the problem I'm alluding to.

MR. OLSEN: Right. Now, if that's what happens in the fall, then what'll happen is that some of those seats that are based on Obama Trump voters will fall away from Republicans, as well, not because Democrats have converted them, but because their man isn't on the ballot and they're not enthusiastic about it. But the Republican base, whether they like Trump or dislike Trump, are going to stick with him absent something major that happens that causes any sane person to reconsider over the next year. You know, which is to say that that transcends genuine policy differences between the parties. That has not happened yet. So I would expect it's going to be a good year, but not a great year, for Republicans.

But Republicans so far show no inclination of reacting to this and are basically doubling down on the idea that economic growth will win back the Romney Clinton voter and cultural issues will continue to excite the Obama Trump voter. And I think there's little evidence for that.

MS. REID: Right. And I again agree with Henry. I don't know what's happening to me. (Laughter) I don't know what's going on.

MR. DIONNE: You're bringing students and Trump voters together.

MS. REID: I'm bringing them together, yeah. No, I'll tell you what my Republican strategist friends say about this. And I do have Republican strategist friends, believe it or not.

What they're saying is that, again, Trump is the upside down Obama, right. Do you guys watch *Stranger Things*? He's in the Upside Down, but he's Obama in the Upside Down.

And the Obama voter that was brought to politics by Obama in 2008 was an Obama only voter in the main. They weren't a Democratic voter, meaning that they weren't to be counted on two years later when Obama wasn't on the ballot, but they came roaring back when he was again. That drop-off voter that caused Michigan to have 66 percent turnout or something, 64 percent turnout in '08 and then 44 in '10, and then 62 in 2012 and then back down in the 40s.

That's what my Republican strategist friends are worried about, that the Trump voter who was the most marginal kind of voter, they're not a regular voter necessarily, but they were really excited by the economic populist message, the anti-immigrant message, the wall, all of that stuff, they're there for Trump. And by and large, that same voter is actually angry at the Republican Party because they don't think that they're supportive enough of Trump. They don't think -- I've actually heard very strong Roy Moore supporters say that the enemy is Mitch McConnell. And they speak more angrily about Mitch McConnell than they do about Democrats. And sometimes they don't even talk about Democrats. They just talk about how weaselly the Republican Party has been and that they're not helping Trump fulfill his agenda.

So what my Republican strat friends are concerned about is that what you'll have is not conversion, because I don't think that -- I think voting behavior typically is that people now vote tribe, that your party is your tribe. Hillary was sui generis in that some Never Trump Republicans thought Trump was so dangerous that they reluctantly cast their vote for Hillary Clinton. I don't think they're people who generally bounce back and forward, and probably had not voted for another Democrat ever.

But in the case of these voters who voted for Donald Trump and are Republicans, it's much more likely that they just stay home and that they just don't show up. And so what Republicans are concerned about is that they have a drop-off in turnout while

Democrats have a surge in interest and turnout. And that if they lose the midterms and they lose the House, that is what will lose it. It won't be converts. It will be people who stay home on their side and many more people in the resistance who vote.

MR. DIONNE: Bill, do you want to take it from there?

MR. GALSTON: Oh, gosh, I wish --

MR. DIONNE: I'll ask my other question, but I wanted to --

MR. GALSTON: No, no, no. (Laughter)

MR. DIONNE: I thought that would persuade you.

MR. GALSTON: Yeah. When I said oh, gosh, it wasn't because I was at a loss for questions. I know I'm only going to get one shot and I'm trying to figure out what that shot is. But let me put this way.

Joy made, I think, a powerful case -- a case with which I happen to agree -- about the primacy of the immigration issue as a driver not only of contemporary American politics, but of populist movements throughout the democratic West. A query to Henry and Robbie. Based on your reading of the data do you agree with that proposition? And if so, what are the implications?

MR. JONES: So immigration, I think, is -- am I on? I'm on, okay -- a really interesting thing. What I wanted to say is I agree with Henry about where he started, that one of the operative things going on, particularly on the Republican side of politics is fear. Like that, I think, is just -- we have to take that in. It's fear and our data using the Voter Study Group data indicates that it's more cultural fear than it is economic fear. They're both in the mix, absolutely, but the cultural fear, particularly among white, working class Americans, tends to trump, no pun intended, the economic fear.

But what's interesting is that it's the symbolic issues that are animating more than the practical policy issues on immigration, so it's actually kind of tricky. So if you talk about the wall, right, that sort of symbol, I think this idea that symbols are -- when you're at war, and I

think that's right, when you're at war symbols begin to matter in ways they didn't matter before. Right? So Confederate monuments, flags, these kinds of things, they come into the foreground, and I think the wall is one of those things. Right. It's something that I think most people don't really think is actually going to get built, but the idea of it I think is quite important to some people and particularly to Republicans. Like we're showing 73 percent of Republicans favor building a wall versus only 12 percent of Democrats. So that's where we are on the wall issue.

But if you ask about policies, if you ask about DACA, if you ask about even a path to citizenship, which hasn't been a real legislative option in years, even there you get 6 in 10 Americans and half of Republicans, even on a path to citizenship among rank-and-file Republicans, supporting that policy which, politically speaking, has not been viable, like I said, for several years now.

So when you turn from symbols to policy, there's less polarization. But the symbols and the fear of it, I think, has overrun the policies really and the policies just get run under by the fears. So if you get people out of that mindset and you just ask them about what should we do with 11 million undocumented immigrants in the country today, Americans are kind of pragmatic about that. But if you talk about the wall, I think pragmatics and kind of rationality kind of goes out the window.

So I think that's kind of where we are with the way that immigration's playing in our politics. And as long as it's being sort of stoked, I think, pulling together kind of the pragmatic, you know, with the political is going to be a really difficult thing to do.

MR. OLSEN: I write a lot about international populism for an English website called Unherd, U-N-H-E-R-D, so you can see -- yeah, I got my plug. (Laughter) So, you know, I do it every week, so I can take a look ongoing at my thoughts. Last week's column was about Australia's blue collar populist party, One Nation.

What's interesting to me is two things or a couple of things. One, it's always the same sort of people around the world who get animated by this. Two, they're always in

economically down-scale places, not just -- they tend to be in the left-behind places. Like even in Germany, where AfD tended to do best are in East Germany which still has never recovered from Communist domination, or in the West, really rundown parts of the industrial rural belt where you can find these areas, which is the German version of Youngstown.

So I think things go hand-in-hand. That's what Ruy Teixeira at the Center for American Progress found when he looked at this, is that economic anxiety helps enable cultural anxiety. So it's kind of like taking one strand from the DNA's double helix and isolating it.

You know, take a look at Germany, which was almost unique among Europe for not having one of these parties, even though they had 2 million Turks who have been living there for 50 years. You know, what sets it off? What sets it off is the decision to admit up to 2 million refugees at one time, which would be as if 8 million people in America came across the Canadian border. I think if 8 million Syrians were coming across the Canadian border in one calendar year, that would have set off an -- that's basically what happened in Germany. But it took that rather than anything else, which suggests that there's something rational as well as something irrational going on.

And then the third thing I'd want to say is what do you do about it? You know, one of the things that I chronicle throughout the world is that whether you are on the left or on the right, if you're educated and well off you tend to look at these reactions as being hopelessly naïve, out of touch, racist, irrational, and consequently worthy of being ignored. And I've had these discussions with German parliamentarians, with Swedish business people, Australia's Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull is of the Liberal Party, which is the conservative party there. And he thinks that One Nation's people are racists.

And so the question is how do you negotiate a peace? If that's the response, you shouldn't expect them to give up their arms. And so if the question is how do you deal with this, you have to deal with it in some way, as many leaders are beginning to deal with it, just trying to peel away legitimate grievance from illegitimate grievance and, consequently, letting



the air out of the populist balloon. But if the answer is basically to build a wall around populism, what you'll simply do is build up the tension, build up the partisanship. And then if you go through some sort of economic decline that makes even more people despairing, you raise the possibility of a much more dangerous counter reaction than if you slowly peel away the legitimate from the illegitimate and let the air out of the populist balloon.

MS. REID: And can I just add one quick thing. I think the problem -- the challenge, it's not the problem, the challenge in the analysis it that no one has successfully answered the question why the groups who are the most subject to economic want, right, people who have always lived in communities that were going nowhere -- and I'm talking about black and Hispanic people -- if you look at black communities in Mississippi that have essentially been poor since the end of slavery, why have they not been tempted by populism? Why are more economically down-scale black and brown people not tempted by this?

That's the reason that you have to bring race into the analysis because there's clearly nothing biologically different about all of these different people. They're all people, they're all Earthlings, and they're all down-scale economically, but their reactions to being down-scale, I mean, for god sakes, black people have been down-scale for 420-something years in this country, right, or since the arrival in Jamestown. And there were brief moments of temptation to a more radical reaction. You know, you can look at the rise of the Black Panthers where they were very attractive in part because they were providing breakfast to kids. But other than those sort of sporadic retreats toward radicalism, I think we do have to start doing a deeper analysis of what's going on in this country as regards to its legacy on race to try to understand why this particular group is more subject to this kind of ethno-nationalistic populism than everyone else and why that is true in the West. There is something else to it.

MR. OLSEN: One thing I just want to throw out I think if you want to do that you have to also look at the Democrats. You know, which is to say that most people I think would say that Bernie Sanders offered some form of Democratic populism, but yet African Americans

in the Mississippi Delta rejected him 9 to 1. But yet you can't say that race is part of that analysis because nobody's going to stand up -- and maybe I'm wrong about this in my Republican bubble, but, you know, I don't think most people would stand up and say that Bernie Sanders appealed to race or is a racist.

So if they're rejecting left wing populism in this chance where they are a dominant feature and they're not, then the question becomes something a little bit different, I think. And, you know, in other places you don't have the history of racism, but yet you still see similar behaviors, which is why I'm less likely to ascribe what's happening in blue collar communities solely to race because you see it in other places that don't have the legacy of slavery or racism to the degree that America did.

But I think African American voters with respect to how they respond to economic depravation is a very different thing and I can't say that I understand it, but it's clear that both left and right, they're not open to the same sort of populist appeals in the United States. And the question would be why?

MR. JONES: So I just have one quick comment. I know we want to get to the floor, but just very quickly. So Joy, you and I have talked about this a little bit, both in private and on the air. But when I was working on the book, calling it *The End of White Christian America*, one of the reasons why I chose the term is because I think that's actually part -- it's not the whole answer, but I think it is part of the key, right, that for many even down-scale whites, the link to being part of the dominant race and the dominant religion played a huge role in their self-perception. And what Henry was saying earlier, I think it's less about being just economically deprived than it is about loss of status and loss of -- you know, that's a nice way of saying loss of dominance. Right?

And it really is about moving from a place of cultural dominance to a place where you're no longer the dominant culture, neither in terms of race or religion. And feeling the country shifting in ways -- I mean, the Supreme Court case today is about this shift, the

Masterpiece Cake case that it's about this kind of cultural shift. I mean, you know, 10 years ago, 6 in 10 Americans opposed same-sex marriage. Right? Today more than 6 in 10 Americans support same-sex marriage. It's a huge shift in a short amount of time.

And I think it's this perceived demographic shift, cultural shift, and religious shift in the country where it kind of moved from dominance to not a place of dominance, to a place of vulnerability in many ways, that I think is the difference for many white particular Protestant Americans today.

MS. REID: I think don't underestimate how much Barack Obama radicalized a lot of people who had the propensity to feel this way. And don't underestimate how much the misperception that he is Muslim combined with the fact that he is black fed that radicalization. Because that in a nutshell is what Robbie just said. The perception that over the will of the majority of white Americans who only gave -- Barack Obama only got 4 in 10, so only about 4 in 10 voted for him. And that against the wishes of the majority of white America, this black person who they perceived as a Muslim gets elected and reelected by the sheer will of non-white America in their perception. Don't underestimate that.

And Donald Trump's presidency is animated by a vehement rejection of Obama's existence on this planet and a desire to erase it retroactively, to go back and scrub it out. And that is actually a very powerful message irrespective of what he offers economically.

MR. DIONNE: I just want to say something quickly. (Laughter) I think what we're dealing with here is a real conundrum that I think we've been grappling with for the last several years. On the one hand there is clearly racism out there that is substantial that has to be dealt with. Second, there is the sense of cultural displacement and the fears that Henry described that are not necessarily racial or racist, although they sometimes are linked. But all of this has happened in an economic context, as Henry pointed out, a lot of the communities where this happens are communities that have been left out of economic growth.

And, one, I rather doubt that we would be having exactly this conversation if lower middle class, working class voters had had 10 years of 4 percent growth in their incomes, and that we've got to kind of keep these two things or three things in mind at the same time, and that's a real challenge.

Joy mentioned Earthlings. Imagine what the political reaction would be if Martians were pouring across our borders. (Laughter) But thank you for that, reminding us we are all one.

MR. GALSTON: It depends on Martians' voting propensities, I suspect. But that's --

MR. DIONNE: That's our next survey.

MR. GALSTON: That's our next survey, absolutely. Okay, I believe in fairness. I believe in fairness to audiences. I believe in geographical fairness. So I'm going to start not in the front of the room, but with this gentleman right here. And there are roving microphones. When the microphone arrives, please identify yourself and in deference to everyone else ask a question briefly.

MR. SKINNER: Hi, I'm Richard Skinner. I teach at Johns Hopkins. Henry and I got into a discussion on Twitter a few days ago in which I said if you voted for Trump thinking that he was going to be Ross Perot rather than Pat Buchanan, which is not the real Ross Perot, but people's idea of Ross Perot as this non-ideological, get it done businessman as opposed to a cultural warrior like Pat Buchanan, you really haven't gotten a lot. And I'm connecting this to questions about divisions among white, working class voters. Is there any data out there not just on divisions on gender, but divisions between religious and secular, white, working class voters?

There were signs that Trump did unusually well with fairly secular, white, working class voters and also those voters who are strongly motivated by issues like immigration and race and those who are not.

MR. OLSEN: I have not parsed data to that level, but I think Robbie would be able to come up with some of the cross tabs. I know that the group that I'm on, the Voter Study Group, would have the data that would allow us to do that, but I haven't parsed the subgroups in that way. I mean, we know from the primary vote that the more secular you were, the more likely you were to tend to vote for President Trump in the Republican primary. Some of that is because the religiously observant were being attracted to Cruz. Some of that was because of an attraction towards Trump in the other direction. But I have not broken down the data, but those are all excellent questions to take a look at.

MR. DIONNE: I commend a piece by Guy Molyneux in The American Prospect a few months ago called "Mapping the White Working Class." I was going to look it up, but I didn't have time. As I recall he finds that about 50 percent of white, non-college voters are reliably conservative, vote Republican; about 15 percent are liberal and vote Democratic; and that there's about a 35 percent swing group within this category. And he has a lot of interesting things to say about what makes them swing.

I think it's important piece because we shouldn't treat any group as monolithic, and that includes the white working class, and I think he shows some interesting nuances in that piece.

MR. OLSEN: One thing, the white working class heavily overlaps in this country with evangelical Protestantism. And I think what Trump did was appeal to the non-evangelical Protestant, the white working class in a way. And if you take a look, his numbers in the South where white, evangelical Protestants are primarily working class went up, but not by a huge amount. Where they go up a huge amount is where you find Catholics and non-evangelical Lutherans and Methodists and secular people in the Midwest. That's where it goes up a lot.

So whether he's holding them or not is another question, but that goes to the importance of, E.J., breaking a group down because the white working class is far from monolithic.

MR. GALSTON: The woman in the second row, microphone, please. Do we have just one microphone?

MS. ORCHOWSKI: Thanks, Bill. I'm Peggy Orchowski. I'm the congressional correspondent for the Hispanic Outlook magazine and I cover a lot about immigration and higher ed. And by the way, Latinos and I think a lot of blacks do poll much higher in their belief in the American dream than a lot of whites do. I think that's one reason they haven't become part of the populist, as you call it, movement.

But I think this may I say obsession with racism and the ID politics of the Democrats are missing something that's right out there with Trump and I'm wondering why you guys haven't talked about, and that's the threat of globalization, the whole idea of America First. I think immigration's a lot -- it's not anti-immigrant or anti-immigrants, it's about national borders, about law enforcement. Law and order is still a big thing for Republicans, the "Daddy Party," you know, not the "Mommy Party." And there's an impression that Democrats don't support law enforcement and particularly when it comes to immigration, and I think that should be addressed.

MR. GALSTON: If I can put a question mark on that. Anybody a straight answer?

MR. OLSEN: Very quickly. We have data from the Voter Study Group survey that we did that we'll be releasing soon that suggests that, that attitudes among Republicans, if you ask whether illegal immigration is a drain, you know, very heavily supportive of that. When you ask if legal immigration is a drain, much more positive, that the Republican voters themselves distinguish between illegal and legal and the rational explanation for that would have to do something with the value one attaches on enforcement of the law.

MS. REID: But I would point out that if you look at Donald Trump, who presented himself as sort of an anti-globalist, populist candidate, and then contrast him with Mitt Romney, who I think anybody would agree is probably more of a globalist sort of Republican, they both

got the exact same percentage of the white vote: 59 percent for Romney, 58 percent for Trump. There was almost no difference in their electorates.

So, in a sense, I don't necessarily think that it's just that simple. And so the globalization issue is definitely a talking point among the alt-right. If you go to that extreme part of the right they are fixated on globalization, which for them, unfortunately, is also something about Jewish people as a sense, right. There's the globalization as a sort of slur that's used on the very, very, very far fringe, and this sort of theme of globalization definitely shows up in the alt-right.

But I think among just rank-and-file regular Republicans I've never had one say it to me. People say they're very much -- it's much simpler. It's immigration, it's the country's going to hell, it's Obama ruined the country, it's just more simple. I think the globalization thing is much more a fringe issue at least. I don't think rank-and-file voters necessarily think about it. Robbie, you could correct me if I'm wrong, but I haven't had a Trump voter say globalization to me.

MR. JONES: Well, we did ask about free trade. I didn't have a chance to put it up here. We did ask a question about kind of economic protectionism and free trade versus restrictions. And it turns out that the Never Trump category 2 to 1 is the promote free trade group and Always Trump is basically divided between restrictions and free trade. But there's a 20-point gap between the Never Trump folks and the Always Trump folks on the issue of free trade.

MR. DIONNE: Yeah, I think there's a lot -- I think what's fascinating about this survey is that Republicans, partly because of the Trump effect, have moved toward a more hostile attitude toward free trade than they used to have. And I think trade is -- I doubt many voters would use the term "globalization," but I think "trade" is right there as a marker for this view that's strong out there among these voters.

MR. OLSEN: One thing I just want to say is that it's true that they got nearly

identical shares of the white vote, but the types of whites are very different. Romney does much better than Trump among college-educated whites and you can see that both in the exit polls and the voting returns, and does much, much better than Romney among blue collar whites. So what he basically did was shifted the share of the white vote to an electoral college efficient winning formula whereas Romney was winning whites in places that didn't matter and Trump was winning whites in places that does.

MR. GALSTON: And, of course, they got just about identical shares of the popular vote.

Okay, I'm going to take two more questions, put them together, state it briefly, answered crisply, and we're out of here. So the woman in the front row and the gentleman with the orange tie.

SPEAKER: I identify with being from Wisconsin even though I'm here. And in Wisconsin, Michigan, and Pennsylvania, there was really only a difference of about 100,000 votes that carried those three states that won it for Trump. He worked them on the trade issue, on the "you're losing your jobs." And my question to you all is if Trump doesn't deliver on trade, what is your perception of their likelihood to vote in 2018?

MS. REID: You know, I'll tell you, and I've said this before, that I think the most powerful ad in the election, it wasn't made by either of the candidates, but it was for Donald Trump. It was an ad called "Man of Steel." And I remember seeing it when we went to Ohio to do a focus group of steelworkers in sort of the Cleveland area. And this ad it said -- it showed all these blighted factories all closed and chained up. It was black and white and grim.

And then it turned color and it said we can bring them back. We can reopen these factories. American hands will rebuild this country. American steel will provide the grist for the return of America. It was a powerful ad with a Hollywood sort of voice voicing it. I think it might have been James Woods. But it was a really powerful ad and it didn't say Trump. It never said Trump. But at the end, the final line is, "We can make America great again." And



the Democrats never answered that ad.

And I remember saying on TV shows when are they going to answer the “Man of Steel” ad? Because I saw that ad played on a loop throughout Ohio. If you went to Pennsylvania, where our next focus group was, that ad was running. And they were really getting at not just Republican voters, but Democrats.

Our focus group that we did in Ohio featured six men: one Hispanic, five white, all displaced steelworkers, none of whom like Hillary Clinton at all, who thought they liked her husband, but they felt that she didn’t care about steelworkers, and they were at least open to Trump, and these were all Democrats. Some of them were active union guys, so their unions were supporting Hillary Clinton. And we found incredible support among these six Democrats for Donald Trump based on that idea that he believed in American steel, even though his own buildings didn’t use American steel. He used Chinese steel, but they didn’t know that and Democrats never pointed that out.

So I think one of the big mistakes that Democrats have made is not pointing that out and letting go their own voters who just want America to come back in the sense of being an industrial leader.

And I think and I’ll be very quick in saying that I think the big unsolved problem of really global Western politics is what do you do with the people whose skill set is no longer “needed” in the marketplace? It’s no longer a growth industry to be a steelworker or to be a miner. But this is what you’re trained to do and your identity is bound up in this is what you do, this is who you are, this is who your son wants to be because he looks up to you. And the West has not solved this problem because I think elites have made the mistake of seeing these people as sort of throwbacks and ignoring the idea that they really have no identity without the thing that they do.

And what do you do with those -- what do we do with a generation of people who don’t have a college degree, are not techies, they can’t go work in Silicon Valley? That’s going

to have to get solved because you're only going to get more populism because people will turn to the answer that feels viscerally satisfying, which is, well, the immigrants are doing it to me. They're doing it to me. The black people are doing it to me. The welfare cheats are doing it to me. They're going to that answer for a reason because I think our countries, our societies have not provided an answer.

MR. GALSTON: Well, I've done my best, but I've failed. (Laughter) We've reached the witching hour and at least one of our panelists has travel plans and a hard stop. So please join me in thanking this extraordinary group of people. (Applause)

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