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Can Trump Appeal to America's Black Silent Minority?

By Matt A. Mayer

One of the largest obstacles standing in the way of Donald Trump's re-election is his weakness in every big city in America. Some cities produce such large vote advantages for the Democrats that a Republican simply can't make up those votes across the rest of the state. That disadvantage is a write off in New York City, Los Angeles and Chicago because Trump is guaranteed to lose the deep blue states those cities are in. It will matter, however, in nine battleground states that will decide who wins the 2020 election.

Specifically, in Arizona, Florida, Georgia, Michigan, Nevada, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin, the vote totals in the big cities and counties could make it nearly impossible to win those states in the suburban and rural areas. In 2016, those nine states possessed roughly 91 million Americans. Just three years later, those states added another 2.5 million people, with most of the growth coming in the south and west. In 2016, Trump won eight of nine states, with his only loss coming in Nevada.

In those states, there are 28 counties with large cities that result in six-figure vote tallies. The key for Trump is to minimize the damage he will suffer in those counties so that he can overcome the vote differential in the suburban and rural parts of the states. In 2016, Trump suffered 100,000+ vote defeats in 14 counties in seven of the nine states. Nonetheless, he still won all seven states, with narrow victories in Michigan, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin.

In the two states where he didn't suffer large county losses, he won Arizona because he managed to win Maricopa County (Phoenix) by 45,000 votes while losing Pima County (Tucson) by 58,000 votes, so secured the state by 91,234 votes from the remaining counties. Conversely, he lost Nevada because Hillary Clinton won Clark County (Las Vegas) by 82,000 votes, which allowed her to hold onto the state by just 27,202 votes.

The 14 most perilous counties for Trump in 2020 are: Broward County/Fort Lauderdale, Florida (lost by 292,369 votes); Miami-Dade County/Miami, Florida (290,147); Orange County/Orlando, Florida (134,678); DeKalb County/Atlanta, Georgia (199,902); Fulton County/Atlanta, Georgia (179,268); Wayne County/Detroit, Michigan (290,451); Mecklenburg County/Charlotte, North Carolina (139,044); Wake County/Raleigh, North Carolina (106,585); Cuyahoga County/Cleveland, Ohio (214,060); Franklin County/Columbus, Ohio (151,867); Allegheny County/Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania (108,137); Philadelphia County/Philadelphia, Pennsylvania (475,277); Dane

County/Madison, Wisconsin (146,422); and Milwaukee County/Milwaukee, Wisconsin (162,753).

Again, Trump's goal in those counties isn't to win them, as that is a Sisyphean task; rather, his goal is to keep his losses as close as possible. So, how can Trump do that over the next five months?

Trump must define Joe Biden before Biden can define himself. Trump already has started to do this by labeling Biden 'Sleepy Joe' and raising concerns about his mental capabilities. Trump also has crafted the narrative that Biden is soft on China. Trump will use Biden's comment that 10 percent to 15 percent of Americans are just bad people to crush him among the blue-collar voters alienated by Clinton's 'deplorables' comment and Barack Obama's 'clinging to their guns and religion' comment. Trump and his associates will make great hay asking who exactly does Biden believe is part of the 48 million 'bad' Americans.

Trump must hope the economy comes roaring back and the Wuhan virus continues to recede. With the job numbers from May released last Friday showing a solid decrease in unemployment instead of an increase as many predicted, the possibility of a 'V' recovery rose. The stock market has gone up substantially over the last two months. It is hard to imagine as more and more states fully reopen that the job numbers and GDP figures won't improve.

Crucially, Trump must neutralize the racial tension as best he can, as he cannot afford for African Americans to turn out and vote against him as they did for Obama against John McCain and Mitt Romney. Though no Republican will win the African American vote in my lifetime, I do think Trump has the chance to reach or exceed the 15 percent threshold, which would make it near impossible for Biden to win any of the key states. In fact, Rasmussen released its daily tracking results last Friday showing Trump's approval rating among African Americans had risen to 40 percent — after a week of riots and non-stop Democrat and media attacks on Trump.

Contrary to the current conventional wisdom, I think there is a growing silent minority among America's minorities, especially African Americans, in the cities where the recent rioting destroyed their businesses, homes, and communities. Biden's pandering and attack on Trump for Floyd's death simply missed the mark and came across as shrill. No one blamed Obama for Eric Garner's similar death in 2014 so trying to make Trump the scapegoat for the death of a man

in a city and state totally controlled by Democrats looked weak. The left's utter failure to condemn the rioting and looting as it applauded the 'defund the police' movement and funded bail for rioters won't sit well with the millions of African Americans who didn't protest or riot, but watched their communities get ravaged. African Americans want law and order as much as anyone. They're as outraged by the African Americans killed by the rioters, as they were of Floyd's tragic death knowing that all black lives should matter. One African American killed was retired police captain David Dorn who was guarding his friend's pawn shop on, ironically, Martin Luther King Drive.

Moreover, on race, Biden can't just rely upon the old 'my best friend is Barack' canard. Biden's own words and acts are, frankly, damning. From his comment that blacks who don't vote for him aren't really black to referring to Obama as a clean, articulate black man suggest Biden has an odd Archie Bunker type mentality when it comes to minorities. His support of the hated criminal sentencing laws in the 1990s also won't play well in the African American community, especially in contrast to Trump's success in passing criminal justice reform, in increasing funding to Historical Black Colleges and Universities, and, before the Wuhan virus hit, in driving African American unemployment to an historic low.

Going forward, Trump should spend the next five months in a full-throated attack on the public school industrial complex that fails millions of kids every year, especially minority kids already in high-risk situations. He should specifically call out the National Educational Association and American Federation of Teachers, which are more interested in protecting bad teachers and preventing competition from charter schools than ensuring public schools perform. African American parents care greatly about this issue and Democrats, including Biden, are squarely in bed with the swamp creatures at the NEA.

To complement this aggressive move, Trump also should launch an initiative led by Ivanka Trump to once and for all tackle what I call the '4:00pm to 8:00am' problem — the dysfunction and devastation from too much screen time, too much violence, too much drug and alcohol abuse, too little good nutrition, too little reading, and too little sleep that occurs in too many kids' lives when they are not at school. This initiative should comprehensively analyze every federal program aimed at America's poor to see if those programs can be reformed to truly improve the lives of the countless single moms and their kids.

Critically, Trump must ask the millions of middle class and upper class Americans now focused on the plight of America's minorities to walk-the-talk by creating volunteer programs in churches and community groups pairing mentor families with mentee families focused on teaching basic finances, nutrition, delayed gratification, and other vital life skills.

There also are a few stunning aspects from the last week that will grow in importance in the coming months. The abhorrent video of the mob violently beating the Dallas small business owner until his body laid strewn on the ground surrounded in

blood will get viewed millions of times. The clip possesses a 'Willie Horton' racial edge that could impact the election in a way I'd prefer they didn't, but, given human nature, likely will.

Lastly, the growing debate over what [Drew Brees](#) initially said about his respect for the American flag and National Anthem will continue. Don't forget, tens of thousands of African Americans serve in the military, in America's police forces, and as firefighters. Even more have family members who fought for America as Brees's grandfathers did. Patriotism truly is colorblind. Numerous high profile African American figures have come out in support of Brees's original comment, especially given his long history of working to better New Orleans.

At the end of the day, the reality is that polling today is meaningless. Emotions are hot right now, but will cool. Common sense would indicate Trump likely won't be reelected in 2020, but common sense doesn't cast votes. People do, and those people vote with their pocket books and safety in mind. Trump has proven common sense wrong again and again so only a fool would bet against him.

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