

## Trump and the real resistance

By Brendan O'Neill, Editor, Spiked Online, 8 November 2020

*The 70 million people who voted for Trump are revolting against the new elites. We should listen.*

So, Joe Biden has won the highest popular vote in the history of the US. At the time of writing, more than 73 million people have voted for him. He has beaten the record set by Barack Obama who was swept to power on that famous wave of 'HOPE' and 69.5 million votes in 2008. But here's the thing: so has Donald Trump. Trump might trail Biden in the popular vote of 2020, but he, too, has beaten Obama's 2008 record. Trump, at the time of writing, has 69.7 million votes. So he has won the second-highest popular vote in the history of the American republic. That is remarkable. Far more remarkable than Biden's very impressive count.

Why? For one simple reason. Trump is the man we're all meant to hate. He has been raged against ceaselessly by the cultural elites for the past four years. Hardly any of the American media backed him in 2020. Globalist institutions loathe him. Academia, the media elites, the social-media oligarchies, the celebrity set and other hugely influential sectors have branded him a 21st-century Hitler and insisted that only a "white supremacist" could countenance voting for him. He's the butt of every snifty East Coast joke and the target of every fiery street protest. He's the worst thing to happen to Western politics in decades, we're told, by clever people, constantly.

And yet around 70 million Americans voted for him. The second-highest electoral bloc in the history of the US put their cross next to the name of a man who over the past four years has been turned by the political clerisy into the embodiment of evil.

That is what makes the vote for Trump so striking, and so important. Because what it speaks to is the existence of vast numbers of people who are outside of the purview of the cultural elites. People who have developed some kind of immunity to the cultural supremacy of the "woke" worldview so intensely mainstreamed by the political and media sets in recent years. People who are more than content to defy the diktats of the supposedly right-thinking elites and cast their ballots in a way that they think best tallies with their political, social and class interests. People who, no doubt to varying degrees, are at least sceptical towards the narratives of identitarianism, racial doom-mongering, climate-change hysteria and all the pronouns nonsense that have become dominant among political and cultural influencers, and which are essentially the new ideology of the ruling class.

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Hillary Clinton infamously referred to many Trump supporters as "the deplorables". But a far better word for them would be "the unconquerables". These are minds and hearts uncolonised by the new orthodoxies. Seventy million people in a peaceful state of revolt against the new establishment and its eccentric, authoritarian ideologies. This is the most important story of the

The fury of the elites in the wake of the US election is palpable, and at times visceral. Even though their man has won, they are incandescent. Already there is rage against the innate racism and “white supremacy” of the throng. Already there is neo-racist disgust with the Latinos and black people who, in larger numbers than 2016, voted for Trump. “We are surrounded by racists”, said New York Times columnist Charles M Blow, capturing the sense of siege felt by the woke clerisy. This rage of the elites against the masses, despite the victory of the elites’ preferred candidate, suggests they instinctively recognise their failure to bring significant sections of the masses to heel. They splutter out terms like “racist” and “white supremacist” as reprimands against the millions who refuse to take the knee to their politics of fear, politics of identity, and politics of cancellation and control.

The elites, despite getting their way with a Biden presidency, have been thrown by this election. First, because they called it so wrongly. Their predictions of a “blue wave” did not materialise. Their polls and punditry insisting that Trumpism would be resoundingly defeated turned out to be catastrophically incorrect. The stories of a 10-point swing to Biden evaporated upon contact with reality. So far, Trump has increased his vote by seven million.

The elite’s wrongness about this election is itself a crushing confirmation of their failure to ideologically domesticate large numbers of Americans. Many Americans have clearly chosen not to communicate their beliefs to pollsters, a key part of the new political clerisy, because they are aware that the political elites hold them in contempt. As one election analyst said, because of the “degree of hate” directed to Trump supporters “by nearly all the media”, we have a situation where “people didn’t necessarily want to admit to pollsters who they were supporting”. Not only do many Americans refuse to embrace the new orthodoxies of the uniformly anti-Trump cultural elites, but they also refuse to engage honestly with the cultural elites. They know it’s a waste of time. That is the size of the moral and political chasm that now exists between the guardians of correct-thought and millions of ordinary people.

The second reason this election has rattled the seeming victors — the pro-Biden establishment — is because of who voted for Trump. Exit polls suggest there were significant shifts of black and Latino voters to Trump. It is reported that 18 per cent of black men voted for Trump, up from the five per cent who voted for John McCain in 2008 and the 11 per cent who voted for Mitt Romney in 2012. A shift of this kind towards a politician relentlessly described as a “white supremacist” is very significant. According to the AP VoteCast, 35 per cent of Latinos seem to have voted for Trump. And a whopping 59 per cent of Native Hawaiians and 52 per cent of Native Americans and Alaska Natives opted for Trump. Seemingly these First Nation peoples didn’t get the NYT, SNL, DNC message that Trump is a racist who hates all non-white people.

As we should expect from the neo-racialists of the identitarian elites, there is already fierce denunciation of minority groups who voted for Trump. They have sold out to “white supremacy”, woke academics and columnists claim. Blow writes in the NYT that the Latino and black shift towards Trump is proof of the “power of the white patriarchy” and the influence it has even over oppressed racial groups: “Some people who have been historically oppressed will stand with their oppressors.” That’s a lot of words to say “Uncle Tom”. The anger with Latinos and blacks who voted for Trump is motivated by a view of these people as racial deviants, as traitors to their race. In the rigid worldview of the identitarian elites, people are not individuals or members of an economic class — they are mere manifestations of race and ethnicity and they must conform to that role. That many voters have clearly bristled at

such racial fatalism is a very positive development. Identity politics was dealt a blow in this election, and the elites know it.

More striking still is the educational divide in terms of who voted for Biden and Trump. A majority of people whose educational level is high school or less voted for Trump, while a majority of college graduates voted for Biden. Among white voters, the educational divide is even more stark. Majorities of white men voted for Trump, but among white men who didn't go to college 64 per cent voted for Trump, while among white men who did go to college it was only 52 per cent. Meanwhile, 60 per cent of white women who didn't go to college voted for Trump, whereas 59 per cent of white women who did go to college voted for Biden.

The educational divide is telling. Naturally, some observers claim it is proof that clever people primarily vote for Biden while dumb people prefer Trump. In truth, this split is primarily reflective of the key role universities now play as communicators of the new orthodoxies. In recent years, universities in the Anglosphere have gone from being citadels of intellectual consideration and experimentation to being factories of woke indoctrination. From critical race theory to genderfluidity, from the view of American history as one crime after another to the myopic policing of speech — including conversational speech in the form of “microaggressions” — universities have become important transmitters of the ideologies of the new elites. As a consequence, one of the great ironies of our time is that it is those who have not attended a university who seem better able to think independently and to resist the coercions of elite-decreed correct-thought.

US President Donald Trump golfs at Trump National Golf Club, on November 7 in Sterling, Virginia. Picture: Getty

The ideas that hold on a university campus — that men can become women, that offensive people must be “cancelled”, that complimenting a woman on her hair is a racial microaggression, that describing America as a “melting pot” is a denial of people’s “racial essence”, as UCLA has claimed — hold no sway whatsoever in the factories, delivery centres, mess rooms or bars of vast swathes of America. That university-educated and non-university-educated people now think so differently is testament, not to uneducated people’s stupidity, but to the transformation of universities into machines for socialising young adults into the ways and creeds of the removed new elites.

Indeed, the split of Biden and Trump voters on issues is striking, too. Of the voters who think the economy and jobs is the most important issue, the vast majority are Trump supporters: 81 per cent compared with just 16 per cent of Biden supporters. Of the voters who think racism is the most important issue, 78 per cent were Biden supporters and just 19 per cent were Trump supporters. And of the voters who think climate change is the most important issue, 86 per cent were Biden supporters and just 11 per cent were Trump supporters. On Covid, 83 per cent of Biden supporters said it is “not under control at all”, while just 15 per cent of Trump voters said the same thing.

This is incredibly revealing. On issues that are central to the clerisy’s worldview — the idea that racism in America is as bad as ever, that the climate is heating uncontrollably, that COVID poses an existential challenge to the future of the nation — Trump voters deviate consistently from the elite narrative. That isn't to say that they don't think climate change or racism are problems we must address — I'm sure majorities of them do. But they clearly reject the fatalism and dominance of these issues in the body politic. They clearly balk at the

ceaseless discussions of America's inescapable racism and the idea that if Americans do not radically alter their lifestyles then they will fry in the heat-death of climate catastrophe. They push back, in their thoughts and their votes, against the identitarianism and apocalypticism of the new elites. And they do so even on issues for which you can be cancelled for disagreeing. Try going on to a campus and saying that racism and climate change are not major issues for the US. You would be finished. But not in other parts of America. There, free discussion, or at least free thought, appears still to reign.

One study, published in the *Journal of Social and Political Psychology* after the 2016 election, described the widespread support for Trump among working-class or less-educated communities in particular as a form of "cultural deviance". The study used over-psychologised language to describe people's voting behaviour, but it hit on an important point: the evidence suggests that Trump-voting for many people was a form of "cultural deviance... [from] the salience of restrictive communication norms". In short, the Trump phenomenon represents a revolt against the cultural supremacy of political correctness and its cancellation of any views or beliefs that are judged to be problematic. Trump became a vehicle for those who don't agree that America is broken or racist, or that climate change will kill us all, or that identitarian correctness is more important than the economy and jobs, or that Trump is Hitler — things it is increasingly difficult to say in a polite society so feverishly policed by the new elites.

#### The real resistance

Perhaps the most important act of "cultural deviance" carried out by the millions who chose Trump over Biden is their attempt to re-elevate class over identity. This is why the shift of working-class blacks and Latinos towards Trump is so important. It is also why Trump voters' overwhelming belief that the economy and jobs is the most important issue in the US right now — in contrast with very small numbers of Biden voters who think the same thing — is so relevant. What we have witnessed in the US is a reassertion of the importance of class over identity, of the shared social and economic interests of a significant section of society over the narrow cultural obsessions of the new elites and their supporters in the new knowledge industries. The emerging populist coalition of working-class blacks, Latinos and non-university whites is a quiet revolt against the stranglehold that the upper middle-class elites have over the political narrative, and against the elites' self-conscious promotion of the neoliberal myopia of identity and their diminution of the importance of class.

This is another reason why the elites are so furious in the wake of their own election victory. It's the key reason, in fact. Because they instinctively recognise that the economic concerns, and, more importantly, the economic consciousness, of substantial sections of society pose a threat to their ideological dominance. Witness the sneer, the naked contempt, with which the phrase "economic populism" has been uttered by Biden-backing observers in recent days. 'Economic populism' is a cover for racism, our moral superiors insist. They dread nothing more than the re-emergence of a more class-based politics because they know it would run entirely counter, politically, morally and economically, to the divide-and-rule identitarianism they have cultivated in recent decades.

Corporations, academia, the education system, the Democratic establishment, the media elites and the social-media oligarchies are heavily invested in the cult of identity because it is a means through which they can renew their economic dominance over society and exercise moral authority over the masses. Identitarianism has provided spiritual renewal for the

capitalist elites, new means of rebuking and censuring the workforce in corporations, and a sense of purpose for a political class utterly adrift from the working masses it might once have sought to appeal to. And they are not about to let some uppity blacks and Latinos and uneducated whites disrupt this new ruling-class ideology with their vulgar concerns about the economy and jobs.

Trump has lost. But so has the anti-Trump establishment. In some ways, the establishment's loss is far more significant. These elites see in the 70 million people who disobediently, flagrantly voted for "evil", and who question the doom and divisiveness and censure of the new elites, a genuine mass threat to their right to rule and their self-serving ideologies. And they are right to. For these unconquerables, these teeming millions who have not been captured by the new orthodoxies, are proof that populism will survive Trump's fall and that the self-protecting narratives of the new elites are not accepted by huge numbers of ordinary people.

This is the real resistance. Not the upper-middle-class TikTok revolutionaries and Antifa fantasists whose every view — on trans issues, Black Lives Matter, the wickedness of Trump — corresponds precisely with the outlook of Google and Nike and the New York Times. No, the resistance is these working people. These defiant Hispanics. Those black men who did what black men are not supposed to do. Those non-college whites who think college ideologies are crazy. These people are the ones who have the balls and the independence of mind to force a serious rethink and realignment of the political sphere in the 21st-century West. More power to them.

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