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Donald Trump, evangelical voters find common ground

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In the middle of campaign turmoil and negative press attacks, Donald Trump has some allies. Evangelical voters favor the presumptive Republican nominee, this according to a Fox News poll, which finds that 58 percent of evangelicals would vote for Mr. Trump if the election were held today, compared with 21 percent who favored Hillary Clinton. But there is work to do. On Tuesday, Mr. Trump meets with 900 evangelical leaders in a New York City hotel to make his case before this sizable voting bloc. Accompanied by former GOP rival Ben Carson, the nominee plans a “conversation about America’s future” and a call to arms for people of faith in tumultuous times.

“We know over the past four election cycles, an average of more than 25 million evangelicals registered to vote did not show up at the polls, and another 13 million are not even registered to exercise that privilege and responsibility,” says organizer Bill Dallas, CEO of United in Purpose, a nonpartisan group supporting cultural change in America through Judeo-Christian principles.

“The purpose of this event is not to tell leaders for whom they should vote but rather educate them on the issues at hand, motivate them to encourage their constituencies to engage the culture and activate them to vote for whichever candidate they feel best reflects their values and worldview,” Mr. Dallas continues.

Among the many to be present: Faith and Freedom Coalition Chairman Ralph Reed, Southern Baptist Convention President Ronnie Floyd and Family Leader President Bob Vander Plaats, a powerful political presence in Iowa.

LIBERAL BIAS ALIVE AND WELL

Heavy-handed liberal bias persists in news coverage, according to an expansive Media Research Center analysis released Monday. “Voters who have relied on the network evening newscasts for information about the 2016 presidential candidates saw four times more airtime devoted to controversies involving presumptive GOP nominee Donald Trump than to the scandals

surrounding his Democratic rival Hillary Clinton,” writes Rich Noyes, research director for the conservative press watchdog.

Broadcasters “feasted on Trump controversies,” conveniently ignoring questionable issues about Mrs. Clinton. The newscasts dwelled on claims Mr. Trump’s fans were violent, among 15 other tabloid-style topics.

“The only Clinton scandal to receive more than a minimal amount of attention from the networks during the primaries was the ongoing investigation of Clinton’s use of a private e-mail server and her mishandling of classified information while secretary of State,” Mr. Noyes said. “The networks paid little or no attention to a host of other Clinton controversies that likely would have been big news if they had been associated with her GOP opponent.”

And the numbers: Analysts reviewed 1,099 presidential campaign stories on ABC, CBS and NBC evening newscasts from Jan. 1 through June 7, for a total of 2,137 minutes of coverage. Mr. Trump was the subject of nearly half it, or 1,068 minutes. Mrs. Clinton warranted 583 minutes, and Sen. Bernard Sanders of Vermont, 366 minutes. The tone of the coverage itself reveals bias. Forty percent of Mr. Trump’s coverage was negative, and “controversies” were the focus.

“Only 18 percent of Clinton’s coverage was spent discussing similar controversies, as network reporters paid scant attention to stories that would have garnered far more airtime had Trump been involved,” Mr. Noyes stated.

LIBERTARIANS WHOOP IT UP

Now underway in the New Hampshire woods: The 13th annual Porcupine Freedom Festival — affectionately known as “PorcFest” among Libertarians, who describe this bodacious, five-day event as the largest gathering of its kind on Earth and maybe the known universe. Which amounts to about 1,700 Libertarians, now circulating through 300 assorted political, cultural and social events that range from serious policy discussion to a 1980s costume dance party.

“Lovers of liberty from all over the world are enjoying the company and beautiful weather here in northern New Hampshire. Many are talking about the presidential election, and there’s a lot of frustration with the two major party candidates. It’s just more motivation for all of us to offer a glimpse of how a peaceful, voluntary society might work,” Matt Philips tells Inside the Beltway.

He is president of the Free State Project, which organized PorcFest. The feisty nonprofit seeks to inspire liberty-minded activists to move to the Granite State and ultimately form a solid Libertarian voting bloc. Americans for Prosperity, the Cato Institute, The Atlas Society, the Charles Koch Institute and Students for Liberty are also represented at the event.

THE CHANGING WORLD

“Active Shooter Preparedness Resources for Your Small Business: The tragic events in Orlando are a reminder that small businesses are not immune from violence. The U.S. Department of Homeland Security offers free courses, materials, and workshops to better prepare you to deal

with an active shooter situation and to raise awareness of behaviors that represent pre-incident indicators and characteristics of active shooters.”

— New public advisory from the Small Business Administration, addressed to the nation’s grass-roots business folk

POLL DU JOUR

- 64 percent of registered U.S. voters say the federal government is not doing enough to prevent a terrorist attack on America; 89 percent of Republicans, 62 percent of independents and 46 percent of Democrats agree.
- 52 percent overall say “radicalized U.S. citizens” pose a bigger threat than “terrorists overseas”; 36 percent of Republicans, 56 percent of independents and 61 percent of Democrats agree.
- 29 percent overall say overseas terrorists pose the bigger threat; 38 percent of Republicans, 27 percent of independents and 23 percent of Democrats agree.
- 14 percent overall say both are equal threats; 22 percent of Republicans, 12 percent of independents and 10 percent of Democrats agree.

Source: A Monmouth University poll of 803 registered U.S. voters conducted June 15-19.