Focus on your base, Trump and other commentary

September 17, 2020

From the right: Focus on Your Base, Don

"President Trump has work to do to ensure he can replicate his strong 2016 showing among working-class white voters, crucial to his Electoral College victory," warns the Washington Examiner's W. James Antle. A recent Fox News poll found his support among non-college whites down 11 percentage points from the last election, and Reuters has him off by 20 points, with his edge over Joe Biden among these voters narrowing from 21 in May to just 12 in August. Trump has been pushing the message that "Biden spent his entire career outsourcing the dreams of American workers, offshoring their jobs, opening their borders" and sending their kids "to fight in endless foreign wars." And that's a "sale" Team Trump "is going to have to make" to repeat his 2016 showing among his blue-collar white base.

Libertarian: Perverse City Priorities

For many businesses "heavily damaged or destroyed" in this summer's riots, Walter Olson blogs at Cato.org, "the Minneapolis city government adds a special insult: It won't let shop owners install exterior shutters to protect against break-ins, a common practice in other cities." Officials say such shutters make an area look "unsafe" and "troublesome" — just as Philadelphia in 2017 banned store plastic barriers because they cause "indignity." "Notice," Olson fumes, "the objection is not to a neighborhood's being physically dangerous, as to the display of visible cues that might alert people to that fact. Make the visible cues go away!"

COVID journal: Give Trump Major Vaccine Credit

When Dr. Anthony Fauci first predicted a coronavirus vaccine in 12 to 18 months, recalls Politico's Joanne Kenen, she rolled her eyes. Yet today, though we still don't have a vaccine, it's "plausible" we'll get one "within a few months" — so a shot may wind up being "approved on the early side" of Fauci's timeframe. Kenen credits "amazing science over the last eight or nine months" but also the White House's Operation Warp Speed. "The Trump administration has helped push the vaccine science and given the industry the cash to jump-start productions." It's at least one aspect of the White House's COVID response that her science and public-health sources "give, at a minimum, begrudging respect."

Media watch: Nothing To See Here, Folks

"The Democrat-media complex has a new mission: to distract our attention from President Trump's incredible — and I mean incredible — progress on both economic and foreign policy," gushes Andrew Puzder for The Federalist. Instead of focusing on last month's historic job growth or the important steps toward peace in the Middle East, The Atlantic first tried "casting doubt on the president's patriotism," The New York Times launched a "smear campaign"

claiming he's been inconsistent on China and Bob Woodward accused him of hiding info on the virus. These "hit pieces" were "never intended to be rational" but to "draw attention" from Trump's successes. As November nears, expect more of them. And if a suspicious "eyebrow-raising" narrative seems to dominate the news, it's "likely another example of 'fake news' — which really isn't news at all."

Foreign desk: Accords Are a 'Nightmare' for Iran

The Abraham Accords are "a crack in century-long Arab enmity to a Jewish, democratic and liberal state at the heart of the" Middle East, notes Benny Avni at The New York Sun. They're also "a new weapon in weakening the Mideast's most malign power." Indeed, they're a "strategic nightmare" for Iran: "Until now, Israel relied on one Iranian neighbor, Azerbaijan," to "run to after conducting heroic intelligence feats like the theft" of documents proving Iran's nuclear ambitions. "Now, in the UAE and Bahrain, it has allies to the west and south of Iran's borders." President Trump brokered those deals, while his rival, Joe Biden, notes Avni, has indicated that he'd "return America to a course of appeasement" — and "with it all the carrots offered to Iran before Mr. Trump tried the stick."