



# Economists Slam NYT Propaganda that Dem Presidents Are Better for Economy Than GOP

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Three economists lambasted a *New York Times* op-ed claiming that the Democratic Party is better for the economy than the GOP.

*Times* senior writer David Leonhardt's main argument was that "The American economy has performed much better under Democratic administrations than Republican ones, over both the last few decades and the last century." Economists ripped apart the op-ed as "nonsense," "intellectually sloppy," and filled with "numerous false claims."

The piece further argued that Democrats have been more "pragmatic" by being "willing to heed economic and historical lessons about what policies actually strengthen the economy, while Republicans have often clung to theories that they want to believe — like the supposedly magical power of tax cuts and deregulation."

But Leonhardt wildly missed the mark. Economists Daniel Mitchell, Chris Edwards and Brian Riedl all hammered the op-ed for arbitrarily zeroing in on party affiliation, while dubiously brushing aside more important economic factors. Mitchell stated in a tweet that Leonhardt's article was "intellectually sloppy for one obvious reason (failure to properly account for business cycles) and one completely overlooked reason (policy direction matters, not partisan affiliation)."

Riedl outlined in a Twitter thread why focusing on party affiliation is a wildly inaccurate metric to use:

It just happens that over the past 35 years, we've elected new GOP presidents during booms that will eventually end (1988, 2000, 2016), and switched to Dem presidents during or just after recessions (1992, 2008, 2020) in early stages of recovery. That's the difference.

Edwards told the Media Research Center that "[t]here are numerous false claims in the piece." Edwards stated regarding Leonhardt's premise: "The article wrongly focuses on party labels and not whether presidential policies were pro-market or anti-market."

Riedl hammered Leonhardt's arguments: "I have a study in editing showing that the common 'Democratic presidents manage the economy better than Republicans' argument is nonsense." He continued: "The #1 predictor of GDP/jobs in a presidential term is not party - but rather the unemployment rate on inauguration day." Riedl also noted that "Presidents who take office at the top of the biz cycle usually preside over some decline Presidents who take

office at the bottom of the business cycle usually ride the natural recovery upwards. And its [sic] mostly unrelated to any presidential policy.” [Emphasis added.]

Edwards focused primarily on why Democratic Party affiliation does not mean de facto that a president governed progressively on the economy. Edwards outlined different instances where previous Democratic presidents enacted free-market policies that helped lift growth, shunning progressive stances. In addition, Edwards also outlined instances where GOP presidents have shunned conservative policy positions and actually governed progressively, damaging the economy:

Democratic presidents have often supported pro-market policies that have lifted growth. Jimmy Carter signed into law major deregulations of industries such as trucking and railroads that were major boosts to the economy ... Meanwhile, George HW Bush imposed damaging tax increases, and Richard Nixon was responsible for probably more damaging big-government policies than any president since FDR. The NYT calls Nixon a ‘conservative,’ but on domestic policies such as regulations he was very much anti-market.

For Edwards, it would have been better had *The Times* categorized historical policies by “whether they were pro-market or anti-market, not by often useless party labels.”

Mitchell pointed the MRC to an **article** he wrote in August, 2020, where he noted that he had graded “many of the modern presidents” based on their overall economic record. According to Mitchell, “there’s no obvious connection between good policy and partisan affiliation.” In his assessment, it was late President Ronald Reagan who was the “**star performer**.”

***Conservatives are under attack.*** Contact *The New York Times* at 800-698-4637 and demand it distance itself from Leonhardt’s intellectually dishonest and partisan propaganda.