



## **Anti-Trump positions based on faith, not facts**

July 24, 2018

President Donald Trump's overall support has risen by 6 percent since late 2017. So, how does the so-called "resistance" keep getting it so wrong?

"After each purported outrage – Charlottesville, separating children from their immigrant parents, now Helsinki – they confidently contend that this latest event will finally force Trump's supporters to abandon him. Yet not only does this not happen, Trump's support has actually risen by 6% since late 2017," Henry Olsen, a senior fellow at the Ethics and Public Policy Center wrote for The Guardian on July 23.

Donald Trump speaks to supporters at the Atlantic Aviation Hanger on March 10 in Moon Township, Pennsylvania. / Getty Images

To quote Ronald Reagan: "The trouble with our liberal friends is not that they're ignorant; it's just that they know so much that isn't so."

The anti-Trumpers believe that because the 45th U.S. president "is so unconventional in style, his coalition must be equally unconventional," wrote Olsen, the author of "The Working Class Republican: Ronald Reagan and the Return of Blue-Collar Conservatism".

But Trump's coalition is not not so unconventional, Olsen noted. "The data clearly shows that Trump's political coalition is pretty much the traditional Republican coalition. And the often virulent behavior of anti-Trump partisans has made partisan Republicans especially unwilling to abandon their leader even when he stumbles."

Trump also "has made sure to give each faction what they most desire just like any good politician would. That keeps them in his camp even as the media flays him with each supposed transgression," Olsen wrote, adding that Trump's nomination of Brett Kavanaugh to the Supreme Court solidified the president's support among evangelicals.

Trump's voters, Olsen stressed, are not "united by racism and sexism, as many on the left presume. Analysis by the libertarian Cato Institute's Emily Ekins found that Trump's general election support broke into five groups. Only one, the American Preservationists, contained a large number of voters who could be said to be generally hostile to racial and ethnic minorities per se. They were outnumbered by another group, the Free Marketeers, whose attitudes towards racial and ethnic minorities were as or more tolerant than the attitudes of Hillary Clinton supporters. Each faction's continued support for Trump is based upon how he acts on their priorities, not on one overarching theme."

Olsen continued: “The news media’s behavior also keeps Republicans in line. It is impossible to overstate the degree of daily vituperation visited upon the president in the media. Comics and actors use their non-political programs to attack him, often to the implicit applause of the press. Virtually all coverage outside the conservative Fox News and isolated conservative outlets is negative, often couched in highly hostile terms. Virtually all of the columnists at the New York Times and the Washington Post, America’s two most respected dailies, despise Trump – and that includes nearly all of the conservative, libertarian and Republican columnists too. Trump supporters who follow news at all cannot escape the daily blast of negativity.”

“For better or for worse, much of what Trump says and does is already baked into the cake. And that might not only keep him politically alive, it might serve to re-elect him against a strong progressive candidate two years hence,” Olsen concluded.