

TALKING POINTS ON WINNING AMERICAN WORKERS' VOTES

- The November 2016 election made one thing very clear. The Republican Party is the majority party in most states, and in this century has twice won the Electoral College in spite of losing the popular vote, because it is winning the votes of a great many American workers. American workers were once the backbone of the Democratic Party. Winning back a few percent of those voters will alter many election outcomes. Winning back most of the votes of American workers will create a different America.
- Following the November 2016 election President Obama said, “And the key for us -- when I say us, I mean Americans, but I think particularly for progressives, is to say, your concerns are real, your anxieties are real. ... Offering prescriptions that are actually going to help folks in communities that feel forgotten. That's going to be our most important strategy.”
- The concerns and anxieties of white Americans with less than a college education are real. In this century their mortality rates have increased due to alcoholism, drug abuse, and suicide. No other group of workers in the USA or in the developed world has seen a similar increase.
- No special policies directed toward whites are needed. What is needed is for the Democratic Party to re-learn how to be the party of all workers.
- American workers have been hard hit by technology and globalization. In December 2016, a report from President Obama’s top advisers concluded that over 80% of jobs paying less than \$20 per hour and nearly a third of all jobs paying between \$20 and \$40 per hour are susceptible to elimination due to automation. Mr. Trump won largely because he promised to bring back jobs that had been moved to other countries. The fact is that far more manufacturing jobs have been lost to automation technology than to outsourcing to other countries.
- Jobs for Americans has been a core issue for Democrats for generations. Franklin Roosevelt’s proposed Economic Bill of Rights emphasized the right to a “useful and remunerative job,” and the “right to adequate medical care.” But the last time that Democrats stood strongly for workers’ right to be heard was in 1935 when the National Labor Relations Act was passed. And Democrats have been complicit in allowing our de facto national policy to be that employers should use technology to replace workers as rapidly as technology can do so.
- The December 2016 White House report said that, “Policymakers should explore ways to empower worker voice in the workplace.” One way to stand up for workers and fight the growing wage gap is to follow the recent example of the British Conservative Party by promoting laws to assure workers’ right to participate as board members in their companies.
- That report also said between 2.2 and 3.1 million vehicle operator jobs could be replaced by automated vehicle technology. There are no new jobs in sight for so many workers to move to. A sure way to signal to America’s workers that the Democratic Party is on their side is to support a 20 year moratorium on replacing vehicle operators’ jobs with self-driving vehicles.

- Standing up for workers' rights -- to be heard and to work, no matter what technology brings -- will clearly signal that the Democratic Party is again the champion of American workers.

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