Despite Record Reporting Bias, Trump's Base Remains Solid

By John and Andy Schlafly *May 23, 2017*

A recent Harvard study confirms that there has been record-breaking reporting bias against President Donald Trump. An astounding 80% of the stories about Trump by the mainstream media during his first 100 days in office have been negative.

The real story, however, is how Trump's base remains solid, unfazed by the persistent media negativity. Trump's approval rating has not fallen to the low ratings of former President George W. Bush and Vice President Dick Cheney, the prior Republicans in the White House.

For many of Trump's supporters, the unrelenting bias against him simply confirms the nature of the problem facing America. The swamp known as D.C. and their allies in the media are protesting too much, to paraphrase Shakespeare's famous expression from Hamlet.

Their hysteria against Trump underscores the urgency for someone to stand up against the entrenched interests in D.C. This unfolding battle reinforces how our country needs someone strong enough to get the job done against all odds.

There are 206 counties that voted for Obama in 2008 and 2012 but then for Trump in 2016, which Ballotpedia calls "Pivot Counties." Located in 34 states, these Pivot Counties comprised a total of 7.5 million votes in 2016, which was 5.5% of the electorate and provided the margin of difference for Trump to prevail.

The Allott Brothers are studying a subset of these Pivot Counties as a project of the Washington Examiner. Their work illustrates that Trump's most important support is not from the stereotypical rich white males as Trump's detractors pretend.

On Monday Daniel Allott released his analysis of Robeson County, North Carolina, which switched from voting for Obama in both of his elections to voting for Trump last November. It is the state's largest county, and was one of the six Pivot Counties in North Carolina that went from thoroughly blue to bright red, i.e., from Democrat to Republican, thereby enabling Trump to carry the state.

Obama had carried Robeson County by a landslide margin of 17 points in 2012, but then Trump carried it by 4 points in 2016. That is a 21-point swing in just four years.

Robeson County, like many of the Pivot Counties, is awash in poverty and what Daniel Allott calls "cultural despair." Prior to Trump, a Republican presidential candidate had not won the county since 1972.

Robeson County is not overwhelmingly white in race as one might mistakenly think. To the contrary, Robeson County is racially diverse, with more than half of its voters either American Indian or African American.

It has been devastated by the loss of manufacturing jobs, and its average income is only $30,000 today, far less than the national average. This is one of hundreds of counties in the United States which has been ravaged by the so-called "free trade" that deprives Americans of good jobs while enriching Wall Street.

Two-thirds of our country contains at least one Pivot County, and the biggest clusters of them are in Iowa and Maine. Pennsylvania, Wisconsin, Michigan, and Illinois all have their share of these counties too.

Equally telling are the states that have no Pivot Counties, where voters are so locked into the Democratic machine that not even a charismatic candidate like Trump can dislodge the grip. Liberal strongholds of California, Massachusetts, and Nevada, for example, did not have a single county that switched from Obama to Trump.

Western Pennsylvania is the region perhaps most crucial to the presidential election in 2020, as the prize of 20 electoral college votes from that state is difficult to make up elsewhere. When it became apparent that Trump had won Pennsylvania last November, the keys to the White House were his.

Trump's popularity in Western Pennsylvania has even increased amid all the media-bashing of his presidency. A 60-year-old Democrat there, Robert "R.J." Sokol, was quoted recently as saying "I think he's doing what he thinks is best for the country."

Sokol is a supervisor at a chemical plant, so he knows a thing or two about the need for manufacturing jobs. As to Trump's firing of FBI Director James Comey, Sokol said, "This country needs a shake-up."

Statewide, Trump's approval rating in Pennsylvania has risen nearly to that of its Democratic Senator Bob Casey, who is up for reelection. Given that Democrats have an advantage of nearly one million registered voters more than Republicans in Pennsylvania, it is phenomenal that Trump does so well there as a Republican, and Trump's approval rating has even improved significantly there since he took office.

A Washington Post poll reveals that 96% of Trump voters would cast their ballots for him again, while only 85% of Hillary voters would. The more Trump is unfairly disparaged by the elite, the more his supporters rightly stand by their man.

John and Andy Schlafly are sons of Phyllis Schlafly (1924-2016) whose 27th book, The Conservative Case for Trump, was published posthumously on September 6.