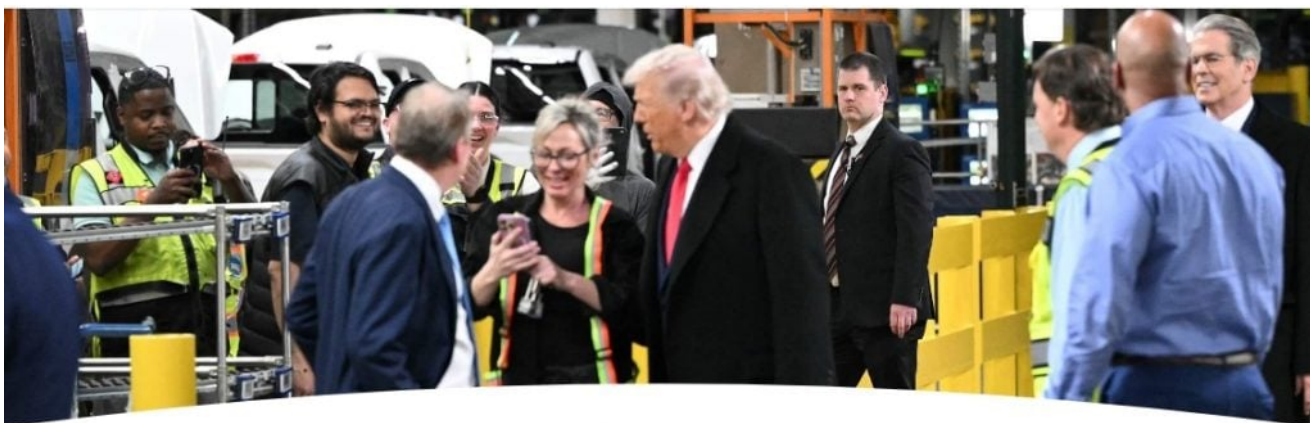


The Left Is Baffled—but Still Repulsed—by the White Working Class

By Victor Davis Hanson

After failing to win Congress and the presidency in 2024, the Democrats conducted an internal postmortem of what went wrong. While they predictably did not divulge the full results, everyone knew what they had found.



Their obsessions with the low side of 30/70 issues had especially alienated Democrats from white middle- and working-class voters. Yet middle-class whites still comprise about 40–50 percent of the population and are perhaps overrepresented in voter turnout.

Democrats realize that their fixations on biological males competing in women's sports, open borders and millions of illegal entries, radical green agendas, DEI-driven racial essentialism, and massive government entitlements rife with fraud have alienated the middle classes in general and white middle- and working-class voters in particular.

But since Democrat ideologues cannot shed their ideological straitjackets, they have instead tried to finesse the very

problem that cost them the 2024 election.

They recall, in particular, the successful blueprint that won them the 2020 election. During that campaign, Joe Biden largely remained out of public view, hiding in his basement, while his handlers reconstructed him as a kind of waxen effigy of “good ol’ Joe from Scranton,” a throwback to the 1970s.

Once the cognitively diminished Biden was elected, his hard-left, Obama-era operatives behind that ossified, working-man veneer enacted the most radical four-year agenda in modern American history.

On the one hand, Democrats claim they will field candidates who can at least playact as good ol’ boy farmers and salt-of-the-earth welders.

The 2024 Democratic vice presidential candidate, Humpty Dumpty lookalike Tim Walz, talked incessantly about driving a pickup truck. He assured us he could change its oil and tried to portray himself as a genuine hunter. Yet these claims often came across as inauthentic, strained, and condescending; the more Walz tried to present himself as a man of the people, the more he appeared buffoonish.

The 2020 Democratic presidential candidate, Pete Buttigieg, became a caricature of the sanctimonious, credentialed technocrat—self-righteously and arrogantly projecting expertise without much humility or even a shred of the common touch. As transportation secretary, Buttigieg used to pontificate about racist freeway clover leaves, rather than addressing the more immediate problems posed by the gridlocked and decrepit condition of the nation’s highways.

Now, as the 2028 election looms, Buttigieg has followed Democratic central casting and undergone a complete reboot, reemerging with a beard, a trucker cap, and a flannel shirt.

No matter, he still sounds as pedantic as ever in his riff on

green energy and “diversity.”

Wannabe president and lame-duck California governor Gavin Newsom is also suddenly reinventing himself. He is now surrealistically claiming that, as the son of an appellate court judge, and raised as an intimate of the billionaire Getty family, that he scarcely survived on Wonder Bread and macaroni, was disabled by dyslexia, and struggled in a broken home typical of the poor white working classes.

To win back the white working class this time around, Democratic insiders are apparently not content merely to recycle—or astroturf—familiar, anemic candidates into veritable Obama-era “clingers.”

Now they are seeking out brand new faces to present as supposedly more authentic white working men. They believe that they have at last found the real thing in traditionally red Texas state legislator and Presbyterian minister James Talarico.

He talks nonstop like a left-winger, but with the voice of an evangelical Bible thumper. Talarico just won the Texas Democratic Senate primary over radical, racist bomb thrower Jasmine Crockett. Surely, his handlers believe, he will do the impossible and flip the good old boys of Texas to the new Democratic agenda?

He may yet, but the Harvard-educated Talarico’s Christianity seems more like Latin American left-wing “liberation theology” than Texas-style evangelicalism. Talarico certainly has a long history of radical elite social media commentary, and he urges Texans not to demonize trans people and illegal aliens but instead go after “billionaires and their puppet politicians.”

Perhaps such class warfare is seen as a good start for the Left’s new, supposedly working-man’s radical populist. But it turns out Pastor Talarico is actually to the left of radical left Democrats. In the past, he had pandered to the very wing

of the party that had lost its elections, with offerings like “God is non-binary” or notions that Christians have divine guidance to let transgender males play in women’s sports.

But the damning *pièce de résistance* of this supposedly authentic, blue-collar, white evangelical preacher was a previous post from Talarico: “Radicalized white men are the greatest domestic terrorist threat in our country.”

Democrat politicians and handlers also perhaps thought they had finally found the real thing in current Maine Senate primary candidate Graham Platner. Despite growing up in affluence and attending the tony Hotchkiss preparatory school, Platner’s makeover seemed far more genuine.

Indeed, *The Washington Post* gushed about him, saying he was “a rugged guy,” while Politico bragged that at last Democrats had found a MAGA everyman but—better yet—to the left of Bernie Sanders.

Platner joined the Marines, saw combat tours, and was variously a bartender and oysterman. But Platner may have gone a bit too far to serve as the Democrats’ new white working-class poster boy.

It was recently revealed that he had been tattooed with a skull that was the exact insignia of the SS-Totenkopfverbände (“Death’s Head Units”). These particular SS units were the worst of the worst of the psychopathic paramilitary organizations of Hitler’s Third Reich, often having been chosen to serve as guards in Nazi extermination camps.

Platner’s past social media postings didn’t help his often-lame excuses for the tattoo—although he knew as a leftist he would survive the brouhaha, given the antisemitic saturation of the new Democrat Party, and the exemptions provided to the “right people.” Indeed, he trumped Talarico’s disdain for the very demographic he was supposed to sew up, with the

revelation that he had once described white rural Americans as “racists and stupid” while claiming that he was a communist and calling for armed resistance.

The reason why these white working-class veneers will likely not work is not just that they are strained facades, designed to make palatable an otherwise unpalatable agenda to Middle America.

They also ring untrue because the white working class has been so demonized by the Left that it will likely never return to the Democratic Party.

Consider just the pejoratives that Hillary Clinton, Barack Obama, and Joe Biden have employed to stereotype and ridicule Trump supporters and the social-economical-rural environment that supposedly produced them: clingers, deplorables, irredeemables, dregs, chumps, semi-fascists, and garbage.

In other words, the hatred of and the condescension toward the white working class is baked into the new bicoastal and elitist Left and Democratic Party. It cannot be finessed or masked—as the postings of even their supposedly new working-class heroes attest.

Just recently, liberal comedian Jimmy Kimmel went off on the new Homeland Security Secretary, former Oklahoma senator Markwayne Mullin, blasting him as a mere “plumber”: “We have a plumber protecting us from terrorism now. It worked for Super Mario. Why not Markwayne?”

Aside from the fact that plumbers are among the most skilled and important of all the critical tradesmen, plumbing was just one chapter in Mullin’s rich and varied career. He has an impressive record as a former ten-year congressman and a U.S. senator. He also helped turn his family business into one of the largest plumbing supply services in Oklahoma. But to Kimmel, all that was condensed to being a “plumber,” as if his left-wing audience would likewise see a plumber reaching the

highest levels of government as a joke.

The View cohost Joy Behar just trashed Trump by claiming his supporters (half the country) were “poorly educated”—an odd thing to say when her liberal cohost, Whoopi Goldberg, is a high school dropout.

While it is true that leftist news and commentary outlets have greater percentages of college graduates in their audiences, that fact hardly translates into them being better-informed listeners.

Some polls, like the 2021 Heartland Institute’s survey, showed that the conservative talk radio followers, on average, were better at answering factual questions about politics than their leftist counterparts. That sounds reasonable given the current epidemic of campus grade inflation, nonmeritocratic admissions, therapeutic curricula, and the ubiquity of off-topic, left-wing faculty propagandists on campus.

In truth, the new radical left-wing Democratic Party is an elitist entity with a poorly disguised contempt for the white working class. That hatred is omnipresent and so emerges in the most unexpected fashion.

Remember the private text exchanges between disgraced FBI paramours Lisa Page and Peter Strzok, in which Trump voters were casually caricatured as Walmart shoppers defined by their supposed stench?

Or recall CNN reporter Marc Caputo’s snide jab at Trump rally attendees: “If you put everyone’s mouths together in this video, you’d get a full set of teeth.”

The locus classicus target of this bias was the vice-presidential candidacy of Sarah Palin, who, throughout the 2008 campaign, was smeared by leftists as “poor white trash.”

To *New York Times* columnist Maureen Dowd, Palin was nothing

more than a “gun-toting hockey mom.” Talk show host David Letterman joked that Palin had bought makeup from Bloomingdale’s to update her “slutty flight attendant look.” The smug Letterman then added, “One awkward moment for Sarah Palin at the Yankee game, during the seventh inning, her daughter was knocked up by Alex Rodriguez.” Palin’s daughter Willow was 14 years old at the time.

The Left simply does not get it, or rather, has it backward. You do not need to look or act like the white working class to feel genuine affinity with it. Billionaire and former Manhattanite Donald Trump is proof enough of that.

The key is not whether you wear a suit or a trucker’s hat or grow a beard, but whether you show sincere concern for an often now-demonized demographic long written off by coastal elites as losers during globalization’s heyday.

So far, the smugness and lack of any such genuine empathy will doom the latest silly Democrat gambit. Sincerity cannot be finessed with tattoos, beards, or trucker caps—not by the media or Hollywood, and certainly not by the likes of Pete Buttigieg, Tim Walz, or James Talarico.

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