Trump, the Economy and COVID-19

Editor's Note: This is the third of a nine-part series, with a new installment presented every day in Charisma Digital Daily. You can access the previous story here. These articles are excerpted from Stephen E. Strang's God, Trump and COVID-19, *which is now available to purchase. Click here to learn more.*

In March, just as the country was shutting down due to COVID-19, the overwhelming surge in unemployment filings came as a hard pill to swallow for our nation. With companies of all sizes hit by the fallout from COVID-19, many Americans began scrambling for their next paychecks. As with all historical economic slumps, minorities and young workers experienced a significant impact.

A recent report by Moody's Analytics chief economist Mark Zandi identified the hardest-hit industries. These include "leisure and hospitality (16.9 million people), transportation (5.7 million), employment services (3.7 million), mining (662,000), and travel arrangements (222,000)." Because 17.6 percent of Hispanic workers and 16.8 percent of African American workers are in these areas, compared with 12.5 percent of non-Hispanic white workers, experts anticipate that Hispanic and black Americans will lose jobs at higher rates during a coronavirus-led recession than other groups.

Up to this point, the Trump administration has been able to maintain the lowest black American unemployment rates in history. In February the Department of Labor reported a rate of 5.8 percent.

Will the great strides President Trump has made with the black community be lost because of this current situation? In *God, Trump, and the 2020 Election* I discuss why the president could lose in 2020, but a virus was never in the mix-until now.

The global spread of the coronavirus is heightening Americans' anxiety, which is reflected in the volatile stock market. With so much uncertainty surrounding both the economy and the 2020 election, many people are asking whether the pandemic is a "black swan" event. Just look at the headlines. *Politico* reported, "Trump Faces 'Black Swan' Threat to the Economy and Reelection."3 And then there was this opinion piece in the *New Yorker* titled, "As the Coronavirus Spreads, Stocks Fall Again and the White House Frets About a Black Swan."

It almost seems as though this is exactly what those who oppose our president wanted to happen. In fact, political commentator Bill Maher said on his HBO show *Real Time* in 2018 that he was "hoping" the economy would crash to "get rid of Trump."

The phrase *black swan* gained popularity during the Great Recession, largely thanks to essayist and investor Nassim Nicholas Taleb's best-selling book *7he Black Swan.* The 2007 book released just months before the banking and housing crises that brought on the devastating economic downturn and gave its readers a new way of thinking about potential risks that were both extremely damaging and extremely rare.

According to Taleb, a black swan is, first, "an *outlier,* as it lies outside the realm of regular expectations, because nothing in the past can convincingly point to its possibility. Second, it carries an extreme impact (unlike the bird). Third, in spite of its outlier status, human nature makes us concoct explanations for its occurrence *after* the fact, making it explainable and predictable."

With the Left hardly veiling its hopes that the pandemic will thwart Trump's reelection, some have gone so far as to think there could be a nefarious agenda in this whole situation. Others say the Democrats and those who oppose the president are simply maximizing this crisis for political gain. As the saying goes, “Never let a good crisis go to waste.”

The coronavirus came just as the black community was beginning to look at Trump differently due to his success in bringing benefits their way that the Democrats have never delivered.

Most black voters continue to follow Democratic Party lines although something strange happened in the 2016 election. Though only 8 percent of black Americans voted for Trump, many stayed home rather than voting for Clinton. The *New York Times* found that 4.4 million Obama voters stayed home on Election Day, and more than a third of those no-shows-1.6 million-were black Americans.

Before the COVID-19 outbreak, Trump’s 2020 campaign manager, Brad Parscale, said Trump could quadruple the 2016 black voter turnout in 2020, according to a 2019 article on RealClearPolitics by Philip Wegmann titled “Trump Bets on More Black Support in 2020. (He Might Need It.).” Wegmann quoted a Daily Beast article in which longtime GOP strategist Ed Rollins said, “Democrats can’t win unless they get Obama levels of black voter turnout. Unless they can get back to those levels, it makes it awful hard for them to win the White House.”

Despite Trump’s efforts to reach out to the black community and create economic opportunities for all Americans, an NBC News/*Wall Street journal* poll from February 2020 found that a mere 14 percent of black voters have a positive view of the president. But the Trump campaign sees an opportunity to make the case that Democrats have taken black voters for granted.

Of course, this was before we knew how serious the coronavirus is or that in three weeks of quarantine the gains in the economy would be wiped out. And of course, the coronavirus won’t last forever. The president is bullish on how the economy will come roaring back. During this shutdown dealing with one of the worst pandemics of our lifetime, it seems the election has been moved to the back burner. The presumed Democratic nominee, Joe Biden, was quarantined in his basement, while the president, who is the dynamic leader Biden has never been, is showing leadership at a whole new level. {eoa}

To be continued in God, Trump and COVID-19. *To purchase the full book now, click here.*