



WTH is going on with the chaos in American cities? Sen. Tim Scott on the politicization of violence and racial unrest

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Danielle Pletka: Hi, I'm Danielle Pletka.

Marc Thiessen: And, I'm Marc Thiessen.

Danielle Pletka: Welcome to our podcast, "What the Hell Is Going On?" Marc, what the hell is going on?

Marc Thiessen: Well, what the hell is going on is we've got Senator Tim Scott on the podcast today, and we're talking about the violence that is wracking our cities, and what can be done about it. We just had a shooting the other night in Chicago, 14 people killed at a funeral. Before that, you had in one weekend in June, 106 people shot, 14 dead. Two weekends ago, 64 people shot, 11 died. In New York, shootings during one week in June were up 358% over the previous year. In Atlanta, murders are up 86%. Minneapolis, shootings up 47%. Philadelphia, shootings involving children up 43%, and 96% of the victims are black. Anybody who says that our cities are not on fire has lost their minds.

Danielle Pletka: I don't understand it. The statistics leave me at a loss for words. What are local governments thinking? These are not Republicans. This is not police brutality; this is the violence of citizens against other citizens. Why are the mayors and the governors in these states focused on the federal government and on Homeland Security troops and on standing up to Donald Trump when their people are being wantonly murdered?

Marc Thiessen: That's a very good question you asked.

Danielle Pletka: Oh, thank you so much, Marc.

Marc Thiessen: So here's the thing, since when are the Democrats the party of state's rights and local control? The Democrats want to have a federal mask mandate. They want to have a federal bailout of cities and states. They are criticizing President Trump for allowing governors to take the lead on coronavirus reform and fixing the coronavirus problem, and say the federal government should be in the lead. But all of a sudden, when the cities are on fire, and the President wants to send federal law enforcement to help quell the violence, it's an outrage. It's almost like whatever Trump does, whether he involves himself or doesn't involve himself — they're more concerned with Trump than they are with their own citizens, and their own citizen's lives.

- Danielle Pletka: With an eight year old little girl getting shot there, that it's more important to take a stand. Look, part of the problem, as you and I know, is that if Trump gave the speech that you just gave to me, then people would be forced to listen. The problem is that he doesn't give that speech. He too often pours flame on the fire of these controversies and calls attention to himself rather than calling attention to the failings of these local leaders. The fact that I look at the Washington Post and the New York Times every morning, and this outbreak of chaos, rioting, violence, and death. Unseen in New York City, for example, that this is not front page news. It's unbelievable.
- Marc Thiessen: Oh, I agree with you a hundred percent, and here's the thing — and we should get into a discussion of this, is should Trump intervene? Or, should Trump leave them to their Democratic leaders. Because there's arguments on both sides. Justice Brandeis famously said that states and localities are laboratories of democracy where we can conduct social experiments without harming the rest of the country. Okay, so we've got social experiments going on in defunding the police and in lawlessness in some of these cities. And there's an argument for letting it play out.
- Marc Thiessen: The people in these cities elected feckless Democrats. If they don't like living in a war zone, go and elect Republicans like the people in New York did in the 1990s when they elected Rudy Giuliani and restored law and order and it worked. At some point, they've got to decide — these are the leaders who approved the choke hold that killed George Floyd. That was a decision made by the Minneapolis City Council and the Minneapolis Police Department. That wasn't made by Donald Trump.
- Marc Thiessen: And then, if people don't like it, they can move. Milton Friedman famously said, "The great thing about devolved power in our federal system is, if I don't like the laws of my city, I can move to another city. If I don't like the laws of my state, I can move to another state." Come live in red America where we have law and order. The counter to that, Dany, is that, one, poor people can't move that easily. Only rich people can. Not everybody voted for these feckless Democrats, and their businesses, people put their life savings in there are being destroyed, and maybe the President does have a responsibility to step in over the objections of these local leaders, and do something.
- Danielle Pletka: Look, I think the President has a responsibility to all of the citizens of the country, whether they're red or blue or black or white, or any other color. The issue here is that he is not capable of building consensus around this issue, because he's Donald Trump. This is one of the things that I keep saying. You and I aren't suffering from this. This isn't a problem for us. This is a problem for the people of Baltimore, the people of Brooklyn, the people of Chicago. Oh my God, Chicago. This is their problem and they are suffering disproportionately. I don't understand the unwillingness of a lot of communities to speak out against their local leaders who are letting them down every single day.
- Marc Thiessen: Well, the fascinating thing is that all of these people who are capitulating to the defund the police movement, they're capitulating to woke, white, college educated people. It's not the black people in the inner cities who are demanding defund the police. One of the fascinating things that you see on Twitter is all these videos of white people yelling at black cops about racism, screaming at them. I just find the lack of self-awareness highly entertaining. But our colleague at AEI, Karlyn Bowman, just put out a really interesting piece about the polling on views about the police in the inner city community.

- Marc Thiessen: One of the things she said, most African Americans do report — no surprise, Tim Scott will tell you it's true — that they're more likely to be harassed by police than white people are. That is absolutely true. They're more likely to be pulled over for no good reason and all the rest of it. However, there's another side of the story. She pointed out that 41% of blacks compared to 33% of whites, and 21% of Hispanics say they have had an experience where a police officer helped keep them safe in a dangerous situation. So literally, almost half of blacks living in America have been protected — had their safety protected by a police officer.
- Marc Thiessen: 52% say that they approve of the way police in their community are doing their job. 61% oppose defunding the police in their communities and a 2014 survey, she cited, 72% of blacks say most police officers have a positive impact on the community where they work. So the defend the police thing — they do want to have more money towards community policing and mental health and all those things that Tim Scott supports and wanted to do in his bill. All those things are there. But this movement to defund the police is not coming from the African American community. It's coming from a far left African American elite and white elite of woke people who are taking advantage of this crisis to push an agenda that actually harms those people.
- Danielle Pletka: I wouldn't lump Nancy Pelosi with the woke community. I can't remember who said this. You're such a quote-meister today, and I'm racking my brain, and I'm really worried that Kanye West might've said this, but I'm going to repeat it anyway. Look, part of the problem is that for black Americans, the Democratic Party believes that they have a monopoly. Whenever you have a monopoly on the vote of a particular group you take them for granted.
- Marc Thiessen: That's what happened with the working class. They took the working class vote for granted, and lost it to the Republicans.
- Danielle Pletka: Right, and while I don't know that backlash is coming, I do think that the Democratic Party is putting politics ahead of the welfare of the people who they believe are their voters.
- Danielle Pletka: We've got just the right person to talk to us about these issues today. Tim Scott was elected to the House of Representatives for South Carolina in 2010. He served there from 2011 to 2013. He had also served in the South Carolina General Assembly and the Charleston County Council. He's got a fine record of service in government. Since January, 2017, Scott has represented South Carolina in the United States Senate, and he is an able spokesman for his state and a very passionate spokesman for the issues he cares about. Listen to what he says.
- Marc Thiessen: Senator, welcome to the podcast.
- Sen. Tim Scott: Hey, thank you very much, Marc. It's always good to be wherever you are, so thanks for having me.
- Marc Thiessen: Thank you so much. Well, look, we just had a terrible night in the city of Chicago, a large number of people shot at a funeral. There's violence erupting. Putting aside protests and riots and what's happening in Portland, there's just violence erupting in every major American city. Shootings are up. Murders are up. Shootings involving children are up, including African American kids. What's going on, and why isn't Congress doing something about police reform?

- Sen. Tim Scott: Well, one of the things that I'd say, Marc, you know this really well, I assume, that police reform is such a sticky issue. And frankly, I wish we would spend more time talking about why it is that Minneapolis and Chicago and Detroit and Philadelphia and Cleveland or Atlanta, they haven't done police reform on the local level.
- Sen. Tim Scott: Frankly, we all focus on the presidential elections — and they are really important — but the bottom line is, police reform is mostly a local decision. Every single mayor, every single council in those cities where we're seeing this violence erupt, they are led by liberal mayors with a liberal majority on their councils. They could ban the chokehold. They could fund the police with co-responders for mental health issues. They can do all the things that they're asking us to do that we can't do.
- Sen. Tim Scott: The truth of the matter is that part of the problem — part of the frustration is we keep looking for someone else to do what can be done better on a local level. You look at the violence that we saw, 14 people shot at a funeral. Now, you look at the reports, the people at the funeral shot back. That tells me that, likely, there was some, at least, gang or some competitive juices, to put it kindly, happening in that event. Such a sad state of affairs. But whether you're talking about an eight-year-old killed in Atlanta — I think it was a four-year-old — or a one-year-old shot in the face.
- Sen. Tim Scott: When you start demonizing the institutions of authority and especially law enforcement — when you start sending the signal that we're removing law enforcement from the streets of our major cities, you send a terrible, damning message to the law-abiding citizens in these communities that are about 99% of them. I grew up in a poor community. I grew up in real poverty. I grew up in a single-parent household. I grew up where my mother comes home at 11 o'clock at night, and she has to look to her left and to her right before she gets out of her car.
- Sen. Tim Scott: When you say you want to defund the police, you're saying to the criminal elements that it's going to be easier to take advantage of the good people. That is wrong. It is certainly not right, but it is a part of the consequence that we're seeing in the spiking crime rates. I think, Marc, you correct me here, but I think the murder rates in New York City up 79%, comparatively speaking, to the same time last year, shootings up 64%, robberies up 34%. Those numbers tell a story. When Mayor de Blasio removes the plain-clothes police officers, you can't be surprised by the violence that we see.
- Sen. Tim Scott: Frankly, at some point, we're going to have to wrestle with the other side of the issue. The other side of the issue is that we should value life no matter who's taking it. We're going to have to have a very hard conversation in the upcoming weeks as relates to this violence that we're seeing erupting in cities throughout this country.
- Danielle Pletka: Sir, thank you so much for being with us and for the hard work you're doing on this. Let me ask you about the victims because, as you say, race has become the prism through which we look at all of these issues because of the appalling George Floyd murder and for a whole variety of other reasons. At the end of the day, unfortunately, the victims are predominantly minorities. The people who are suffering are not in affluent neighborhoods in Fairfax County or on the Upper West Side, right? The people who are suffering are the people who you described, like your mom, who have to look left and right, who get murdered at a funeral. Where are those voices that we need to hear calling out for justice for themselves?
- Sen. Tim Scott: Danielle, I think we have to answer that question by saying they're silent, number one. Number two, I would say that we have to bifurcate the issue. When you are

talking about people who are given the authority and the power to eliminate your life, i.e., law enforcement, we should have a high standard, a high threshold. You think about qualified immunity and other things that protect officers. I support that protection of those officers, but we should use a very different measuring stick for our institutions of authority.

- Sen. Tim Scott: At the same time, that does not mean we eliminate any measuring stick for a crime that causes the elimination of a life at the hands of someone from the same community. That is no less a crime, but it certainly is no more a crime, but it is something that we should put a finger on as well. I am hopeful that as we start valuing life at a high level in those areas that, frankly, we haven't valued enough, we say in those areas, "I don't care who kills you. We are going to have an aggressive approach and response to that crime."
- Sen. Tim Scott: That's why I beg our cities' mayors and councils, take seriously all crime, not just from the institutions of authority, though we should take that at the highest level, but if you're eliminating a citizen in my city, we should come after you. We should take you off the streets and throw away the key.
- Marc Thiessen: You offered legislation to help do that. You offered a bill that had a lot of things that had bipartisan support. And the Democrats wouldn't even let it come to the floor for debate. You offered them unlimited amendments. You offered to filibuster your own bill if they weren't allowed to offer the amendments. You offered to vote for some of their amendments to make your bill stronger, and they just said, "No." Do they care more about having the issue politically than actually solving the problem?
- Sen. Tim Scott: I don't want to throw this into a complete political flame, but I will. You think about the issue of immigration. President Trump came to the table and offered, I think it was 2 million, DACA-age eligible individuals a path of permanence in this country. They said, "No," because they prefer the issue than the actual progress. It feels like, looks like it, I think, is, the same thing on the issue of police brutality. They prefer the issue to the solution because the issue, they think, is one of the waves they ride to victory in 2020 in November.
- Sen. Tim Scott: I oftentimes say I didn't know that November came before July, but when it comes to police reform, it must because, frankly, I can't find a Democrat in the Senate, other than the four that voted for the motion to proceed, that's willing to have a serious conversation about sending a signal to vulnerable people trapped in failing communities, too often African-American vulnerable people, that, "We hear you, we see you, and we're responding to your pain right now because two-thirds of a loaf is better than nothing."
- Sen. Tim Scott: Right now, they're saying, "I would rather have nothing, so that Republican Party—," so that the who, the who, is more important than the what. When that is the case, America loses. When that is the case, the poorest people in the country pay the highest price. That is not only unfair. I think it's immoral.
- Marc Thiessen: Did any Democrats come up to you after the bill went down and say, "I'm really sorry that this happened," that, "We should have voted on it, but that's just the politics of the moment"?
- Sen. Tim Scott: Let me tell you what. I had some painful conversations with some friends who I respect on the other side of the aisle that basically said that they were shut down

during their conference meetings. One said that 12 people stood up and said, "We should vote on Tim Scott's bill and, frankly, we should quit demonizing the bill." They found Speaker Pelosi's words repulsive, that somehow we were complicit. Can you imagine that?

Marc Thiessen: "Complicit in the murder of George Floyd," she said.

Sen. Tim Scott: I mean, frankly, I say this sincerely, it nearly brings tears to my eyes right now to hear those comments because what that tells me is that the — I say this sincerely, without hyperbole, that the political elite on the left know they can say the most damaging things to race relations in this country and have no responsibility from anyone. That is a scary thought. When Dick Durbin can say of my legislation, "It's a token," when Nancy Pelosi can say of Republicans and our efforts that we're complicit in murder, and not a single outlet covers that. And you wonder why there's rioting in the streets?

Sen. Tim Scott: In part, it's because when you feel like you are unheard, when you feel like you're invisible, there is this intensity that builds and builds. I've been there. I've been that kid. It's one of the reasons why I flunked out of high school as a freshman. I know what hopelessness feels like. I know what it looks like. I can't understand, for the life of me why the liberal elite continue to play politics with people and their lives. It's a burden on my soul, to be honest with you.

Danielle Pletka: I was going to ask you about your bill, but I want to talk about this. This is more important even though your time is so limited. How have we come to this pass? How have we gotten from the historic moment that we had an African American man elected to be President of the United States to the point where someone on the floor of the United States Senate can refer to something that you're doing as a token? How has this happened?

Sen. Tim Scott: Well, I will say this, the country is healthier than its leaders, especially on the left. I think that race relations, frankly, this is going to be apostasy, heresy, or something really bad. I think race relations in this country are better than they've been in a very long time. I think the headlines and the politicians that have monetized conflict are fomenting a major part of this issue in a way that is just unbelievable. We have strained relationships with law enforcement, in part, but if you look at most of the indicators, most of the indicators suggest that we are better off now than we've ever been. Listen, in 1965, when John Lewis walked across the Pettus Bridge, it was the law enforcement officers using systemic and institutional racism to oppress a peaceful march across a bridge. In 2015, when I was co-leading it with John Lewis, the 50th anniversary of the march, it was law enforcement that was there to protect us as we marched across the bridge.

Sen. Tim Scott: This is one of the dilemmas that we miss. And I know I said that no one covered the rebuke, but they covered my conversation, but they didn't rebuke it. And here's what I'm suggesting. That as you look at the story as it unfolded, whether it's the march 50 years later or our efforts as Republicans and conservatives to meet them in the middle, because we see the issue of racial justice as an existential threat to America. We want to be on the right side of history. We come to the table loaded to bear, so to speak, with a piece of legislation that takes the priorities of the Democrats into question and we embed it into the language of our bill and we say, "Let's have a honest debate, discussion and then find common ground and move forward." And they say, "I think I can do better in November. Let's just let this languish while the

people are rioting in the streets while they're, frankly, some of them nonviolent protesters, asking for justice."

- Sen. Tim Scott: I simply can't imagine a poorer statement from leadership. And that's when I say, people want to talk about President Trump. I'm not talking about President Trump. I'm saying there is poor national leadership from the left. When you are willing to take potent issues in places already on fire and pour gasoline on it.
- Marc Thiessen: Well, let's talk about President Trump for a second, because you told a story, you gave a remarkable speech on the Senate floor during the police reform debate, and you started to tell a story and I want to draw you out on it, about how after Charlottesville, the President asked to see you and you really didn't want to go see him. You really weren't looking forward to talking with him and he stunned you in that meeting. Tell us a little bit about that experience and what resulted from it.
- Sen. Tim Scott: Well, this is one of the reasons why I said that the President's not a racist. He has done some things that are racially offensive, but one of the reasons why I say he's not a racist, is because when I sat down with him and — he and I see history differently, we still do. I said it then, I say it now, that anyone who expects a 70 year old man — and he's older than that, I understand — a 70 year old man to change his mind after 45 minutes or an hour conversation has never met a three year old because a three year old, a 54 year old, and 70 plus year old dude, we don't change our minds because of one conversation. We may be reflective, we might be reflective. We will look at the situation, but we're not about change our minds after one conversation.
- Sen. Tim Scott: Marc, what happened was that the President simply said at the end of a conversation something I'd never thought he would say. He said, "Tim, how can I help those I've offended?" He listened. He didn't wait for his turn to talk. He listened. He came out and said, "Let's do something together." Knowing that he was not going to get credit for doing it by the way. When the President does something good on race relations, no one covers it. It just didn't happen. But this moment, no cameras, me, my chief of staff, the Vice President, the President, sitting in an office, he says, "Tell me something." I didn't walk in there with opportunity zones. It just fell out of my pocket, literally. I was shocked when I said. I wanted to help kids growing up in neighborhoods where I grew up; hopeless, feeling abandoned, have hope, and I thought opportunity zones would bring more resources and more hope to those communities.
- Sen. Tim Scott: And he said, "Count me in." I explained it to him, what it was. The next day on Air Force One, he was talking about it. That's a man that lived up to his commitment. I didn't try to shame him into doing something. I didn't embarrass him into doing something. I didn't prod him into doing something. I just shared my story. I shared my life story. I shared my grandfather's story, as a black man born in 1921 in South Carolina, what he went through. The President was moved by that. I saw the same thing when the President listened to the family of the victims who lost their lives because of police brutality. The President sat there for an hour and he listened to those victims' family members. And he said, "Let's do something about it." And he instructed Attorney General Barr to do something.
- Sen. Tim Scott: Ahmaud Arbery's mother was in that room. And he said, "We're going to continue to watch this case." There was not a camera in the room. When you hear the President's heart, I wish we heard it more, frankly. I wish we heard it more on TV, to be honest with you. You walk away and say, I misread this guy sometimes. And I'm

sorry, I went on for very long. I know that I have a vote, but I hope I didn't go on too long. I just really wanted to ... I'm trying to be honest. I think so often we have these cute conversations and Marc you and Danielle have been willing to have a serious conversation about a serious issue without a filter and I really wanted to take advantage of this because America needs to hear both the good and the bad, the ugly and the beautiful.

Marc Thiessen: What are some of the things that came out of that because you said there was opportunity zones, but there was also historically black colleges.

Sen. Tim Scott: Oh my gosh, listen, listen, listen.

Sen. Tim Scott: People miss the point that the President's hyperbole sometimes leads to one conclusion. Whenever the President says something that I'm like, "Oh, cringe-worthy," what I find is that what happens next is typically something good from a policy standpoint. I've criticized the President four or five different times. And what I hear from the President is, "Tim." He'll call me and say, "I shouldn't have said that." I'm like, "Yes, sir, that's true." And then we'll find something to do together. So literally, we've had criminal justice reform.

Sen. Tim Scott: Making up for the Democrats' 1994 Crime Bill. President Trump set more African American men free that were improperly sentenced than any other president in recent memory. And frankly the 1994 Crime Bill, supported by Mr. Biden, locked up more African American men than should have been and with longer sentences. Think about the historical level of funding for HBCUs. The head of the United Negro College Fund said, "Under this administration, we are having record breaking funding, and..." This is a good part "And permanent funding for the first time that we couldn't get done under any other administration."

Danielle Pletka: That's a hugely impressive list. And it gives me hope that the President listened to you and understood the impact that your life story and that your family's story had on him. Here's a question for you though. Marc interviewed the President for his Washington Post column and they went back and forth a lot on this question of celebrating the Confederacy. Whether it's Confederate statues or it's Confederate base names. Why is the story and the history that you shared with him not something that he retained to understand that those things? Admittedly, we're Yankees — but why doesn't he get it?

Sen. Tim Scott: I don't have a good answer for you. I wish I did. Here's what I would say is that the President... I'll just be blunt because I have no choice at this point. President Trump is still evolving as a human. I'm still evolving as a human and so, Danielle, you've sat before the most powerful people in the world and just speak truth, but you do it with such emphasis on the right points. The President is still becoming a better president, I think every day. Sometimes when it comes to these issues that are open, like open nerve endings in the party and in the country, I think his default position is to let everybody have their say and assume that there's good on every side.

Sen. Tim Scott: I think that's where he was trying to go with like the ... In South Carolina, we have these bumper stickers with the Confederate flag on it that says "Heritage, not hate." I think that's where he was trying to go. It's just caused so much pain and misery that it's important that even if you believe that, Romans — I think it was either Romans 15 or one of the last chapters of Mark or Romans — talks about, if it offends your brother, sometimes you've got to let it go. Not every time, but sometimes you've

got to let it go. And frankly, as an African American, I am thankful that I can remember history of the Confederacy, but I don't have to celebrate the history of the Confederacy.

Danielle Pletka: Amen.

Marc Thiessen: Senator, we know you have to go vote, so thank you so much for spending time with us on the podcast. We're really privileged to have you.

Marc Thiessen: Dany, that was a really interesting discussion, and particularly the story he told about his meeting with Donald Trump, which presents a side of President Trump that most people don't see. It wasn't just talk. Donald Trump asked him, "What can I do to make it up to the people I've offended?" He said opportunity zones and Donald Trump said yes. He said increased funding for historically black colleges and Donald Trump said yes. He said increase funding for sickle cell research, which primarily affects African Americans. Trump said yes. It seems like Senator Scott, a) doesn't think Donald Trump is a racist, b) he's actually taken action in ways that even the first African American president didn't to help the African American community so what gives?

Danielle Pletka: Well, first of all, here's the problem from my perspective. That's a great story and good for both Senator Scott and Donald Trump for listening to each other, for taking the time to talk about it. The problem is that the President's actions do not appear to come from a wellspring of principle. He is a man who is hugely empathetic when it comes to these stories that pull at your heart string. Remember the story of the children in Syria. A little boy who drowned as a refugee. That was the backdrop to his decision to bomb Syria. But that really didn't reflect a philosophical commitment to what was going on in Syria or to solving the problems of the Syrian people, whether they were children or men or women.

Danielle Pletka: I'm not interested in people who call Donald Trump a racist. That word has become such a throwaway line for people who others don't like or agree with, that it has ceased to have any meaning and given a pass to actual racists in our midst. But at the same time, it's like that conversation we had about the Confederates. He doesn't get it. The fact that he got it then, but then stopped getting it, and gets it sometimes, is part of the problem of Donald Trump.

Marc Thiessen: Well, as you know, I had a long conversation with him about Confederate memorials in the Oval Office a week ago. I asked him, point blank, "Why are you so adamant about defending Confederate memorials?" He said, "I'm not. I'm adamant about defending history." I asked him about the Confederacy. He said, "Look, I don't support the Confederacy. I'm a New Yorker. I'm a Yankee. I was on the other side. I have no love for the Confederacy." But he said, "Look, two years ago, when everyone was tearing down statues of Robert E. Lee, I said, 'Who's next? George Washington?'" Everybody said, "Ah. Ha ha ha. Very funny. We can tell the difference between George Washington and Robert E. Lee." Apparently we can't. He's kind of been vindicated. They're tearing down Washington. They're tearing down Lincoln. They're tearing him down Ulysses S. Grant. They're tearing down Frederick Douglass.

Marc Thiessen: Some of them are just ignorant. They don't even know. They're just tearing down anything that's made a bronze and looks like it was made in a different century. But his argument is, slippery slope. The one area where I pressed him pretty hard was on

the names of Confederate bases because that's something he can control. He's the Commander in Chief. I suspect if he wanted to rename the bases, he could. He didn't seem to think that he could control the outcome, that he wouldn't control who it was named if he took off those names. He said nobody knows who General Bragg is.

Marc Thiessen: It's interesting. Colin Powell was on Face the Nation this weekend. They asked him about. He said, "I trained at Fort Bragg and it never occurred to me that General Bragg was a Confederate. I didn't even know at the time." Trump was right that nobody's thinking, until now, nobody was thinking about General Bragg, Confederate general. He said, "Well, aren't people superstitious?" All those arguments ... I guess what I'm saying is that, I disagree with where he comes out on it and I pushed him on it.

Marc Thiessen: I think that it would be — if he changed the name of the base in Louisiana named for a Confederate to Fort Lafayette for the American Revolutionary general from France, I don't think anybody in the community would be upset about that and it would be a pushback on the cancel culture because then they'd be in the position of saying, "Whoa, but all these people, you have George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, they're all racist because they had slaves. You can't name bases after our founders." Then they'd lose the national argument. I think he's making a mistake, but I don't necessarily think it's coming from a bad place. I think he's just mistaken.

Danielle Pletka: I think that you are a more articulate exponent of the President's view than he is. That's the problem. I don't think it's coming from a wellspring of principal, as I said. I will say this. Listening to Senator Scott, I was offended as I have not been offended heretofore by the way that liberal leaders have exploited the most powerless, the most vulnerable of their constituents and of the American people in order to further a political agenda.

Danielle Pletka: When you care more about scoring points off Donald Trump than you do about life and death, maybe you've made a wrong turn somewhere politically. Politically, morally and in every other way. You're right. I wish the President got that more and didn't just view this as the usual mud wrestling that enthralls our nation day in and day out.

Marc Thiessen: But this is why, for all his flaws, I think it's really important that he win reelection because those are the people who will replace him. As much as some people would like it to be, this election is not just a referendum on Donald Trump. It is a binary choice between Donald Trump, imperfect, flawed, in all the ways that you and I agree, and a Democratic Party that has gone so far left and is so willing to exploit suffering in order to score political points because everything is about defeating Donald Trump. It's not a referendum on Donald Trump. It's a choice between two possible outcomes, and I'm terrified of the prospect of what will happen if these people who are exploiting this crisis come to power.

Danielle Pletka: Okay, Marc. Well, you've got August, September, and October to continue to sell me on that point. I'm not there yet.

Marc Thiessen: We'll work on your, Dany. You're teachable.

Danielle Pletka: Oh, thank you. High praise indeed. I think I'm going to hang out with Senator Scott when I want praise. Thank you all for listening. Thank you all for being with us. Don't

hesitate to share your views, your suggestions, and of course, as always, your criticisms of Marc. We'll be back next week. Thanks.

Marc Thiessen: Bye.