

MSNBC's *The ReidOut*

09/15/21

6:59:42 p.m.

15 minutes and 12 seconds

JOY REID: We begin *The ReidOut* tonight with a message to Republicans: Okay, we get it! Covid is the precious and you love it. You love Covid so much you want it to spread into schools, in the office, in the Walmart, on the cruise ships, and at the club. That great, spongy ball with the red spikes. You want it pumping through your veins with an ivermectin chaser. Why do you love it so dadgum much? Well, we have absolutely no bloody idea. But here's the thing, you weirdos. Everyone else, everyone else hates Covid. It is ravaging classrooms and hospitals across the nation like in southern Illinois where zero ICU beds are available. Similar shortages are happening all over the south, including in Alabama where a man's family said he died after being turned away from 43 hospitals. While in South Carolina, 20 children need critical care due to Covid-19. And do you see this beautiful couple? They both died in their 30s from Covid, leaving behind five kids, including a newborn daughter. So yeah, the rest of us hate that this is happening. Even the Pope. The Pope hates Covid too, and he loves everybody. He also says get vaccinated. Yet, you — you Republicans seem to be a-okay with Covid running wild. And then you came for California, trying to boot a Democratic governor from a blue state and hand it over to the Covid candidate.

[LARRY ELDER CLIP]

REID: If misinformation could kill. It all helps to explain why Governor Gavin Newsom beat the recall effort and by a lot, winning support from more than 60 percent of the electorate. According to exit polls, the most important issue for voters was the coronavirus and when asked about the governor's job on Covid, 65 percent said his policies were about right or not strict enough. So Republicans, your thirst for Covid is why you lost. Nobody likes your policies that threaten our safety and our kids. You, you may want Covid. You may want to ingest horse dewormer and attend far too many funerals, but we, we don't. And instead of just saying that or tweeting that or fighting about that, California voted that. It is perhaps the first real tangible proof that your creepy little Covid-loving death cult ways are not going to work for you at the ballot box next year. In fact, it's political suicide and also apparently talk radio suicide because your brilliant little Covid plan is killing your right-wing hosts. The majority of us Americans want things like, I don't know, better infrastructure, good schools, gun reform, jobs and the right to vote. You know what else we want? We want to live. Not die from Covid. [INTRODUCES PANE] David, you're the political guru, not me. So, I don't know everything about politics, David, but I do know that being the people on the side of Covid strikes me as bad politics. Are you surprised that Republicans have seemed to embracing Covid as the precious and trying to get it into every school building, cruise ship, job place, Walmart, Texaco, everywhere? They're trying to get it in everywhere. Are you surprised that that turns out to be not so great politics?

DAVID PLOUFFE: Joy, sadly nothing surprises me anymore. But yeah, last night the recall is the first test post-2020 of how this may play out and I know everybody says California is unique, the recall certainly is unique. I hope we never have another one, but if you look at what

happened. So, out here, they're called no party preference voters — NPP, but they're independents. About 90 percent of them, so the exit polls suggest Newsom won them over 2-1. The Newsom campaigns believe they won over Republicans in the Bay Area by over 20 percent and did very well down south. So, if you're looking at '22, I think Democrats should have a more expansive view of the votes that are available to them and it's basically the vaccinated. So, you're talking — you're not going to get all of them. But when you talk about, hey, you're fishing in a pond of two-thirds as opposed to just like 54 percent, 55 percent, I think, you can make progress. And the Republicans clearly are going to continue to dig in and dig in and dig in. And I think, you know, ultimately it's a tragedy for the country, it's a tragedy for people, for families, for businesses. But this shows that we can never again have leadership in power who doesn't take something like a pandemic seriously. So, yeah, I think last night was really, really important and we have to carry some of the lessons from the recall out to the rest of the country. And certainly in governors' races where you've had Democratic governors doing the right thing, a bunch of Republican governors — with some exceptions — but DeSantis being a good example doing the wrong things, you have to make them pay a price for that.

REID: Indeed. Not even taking the pandemic seriously, Jason, but seeming to embrace the pandemic and seeming to want to push the pandemic and make it worse and say, “we want Covid.” They actually seem to want it in their lives and among their kids. I have to show this heat map. This is an incredible pair of maps. Look at the screen, everyone.

JASON JOHNSON: Yeah, yeah.

REID: This is a map in which you can see the blue, it's counterintuitive, but the blue on the map on to my left — the screen left is where people voted yes, recall Governor Newsom. On the right side, my screen right, the red down the middle is the Covid hot spots. So basically, Jason, where people wanted to recall Newsom is where's the most Covid. So, they're like, “give us more. Inject it in us. Is there a way we can drink it in a kool-aid cup? Because we want it. And we want it bad and we want this man to get out of our way and we want our Covid.” It's insane.

JOHNSON: They — they want their Covid, they want their iodine, they want their ivermectin, they want it injected into their rears. Whatever it is that these people want, I don't entirely understand. And — and Joy, look, I am — I am — I am stressing my brain to go back throughout history. I don't know if it's the old Republican Party, the old Democratic Party, the wig party, I don't remember a party being successful saying, “we're for smallpox.”

REID: Exactly.

JOHNSON: “We're for scurvy.”

REID: Smallpox! Smallpox!

JOHNSON: I don't know that's ever happened. Right — right. A pox party, yes. Pox upon all houses, right? I don't think that's a good plan. But — but here's the caution I have to have about California so people understand. It is incredibly easy to vote in California. They — they sent mail

ballots to everybody, right? There were apps that you could use. There was information available. So, yes, in an equal measure on a neutral playing field, the failure of Republicans to address Covid should be a huge boon for Democrats in 2022 —

REID: Yes.

JOHNSON: — but that's only in a state where voting is reasonably easy and accessible. So, that's not going to be the case in Florida, it's not going to be the case in Texas, and it won't be the case in Georgia.

REID: Well, that's why they're going to make it hard because I think that Ron DeSantis — look. He may be — may be a sociopath. We don't know what his pathology is, but he's not stupid and I think that he understands that if he is going to inflict death on schoolchildren, he's going to have to make it real hard for their parents to vote, right? And they're going to do, Republicans, anything they can in the states where they, for whatever reason, these governors love Covid. They heart Covid. This is how they feel about Covid. They want to spread it but also know they can't get re-elected because the majority of people probably feel like this. This is a California exit poll but I doubt that it's different in any other state. 65 percent of people in that exit poll said that they believe getting vaccinated is a public health responsibility. Only 32 percent said they think it's a personal choice. That exit poll also showed people wanted more strict policy, not less strict policy cause most people want their lives back. You had this — what is the guy's name here, who said that he wanted — Dan Crenshaw. Dan Crenshaw, Republican, said: I'm "honestly curious," he said "why Californians wouldn't want some balance in their government. Works well in deep blue states like Massachusetts and Maryland, both with Republican governors." Charlie Baker and Larry Hogan are the governors of those states. But David, they're not insane. They're not saying, "more Covid. Covid in your schools." They're not -- they're not pushing Covid. So the divided government —

PLOUFFE: Right.

REID: — argument in my mind won't work for Republicans this time around. Do you agree?

PLOUFFE: Well, by the way, Joy, any Republican who's been responsible in the pandemic is at great risk of losing a primary. That's where we are.

REID: That too.

JOHNSON: Yeah.

PLOUFFE: Yeah. So, I think that there's a third of the people out here in California who voted for the recall. There's a third of the people who say it should be a personal choice. Yes, the Republicans are making it harder to vote so that third has more power in general elections. But let's make no mistake, that third or 30 percent, that hardcore MAGA base, they're going to drive Republican politics and, therefore, a big part of our country's dynamic for a very, very long time. And they're not going anywhere.

JOHNSON: Right.

PLOUFFE: But I think at the end of the day, Jason makes a good point about voting. But I think the other thing to watch carefully, listen, when you're in a swing district or a swing state and you think the race is going to be like 51-49, you've got to scratch and claw for every advantage. And one thing to watch is let's look at Florida. I think we're not even at 55 percent, 58 percent fully vaccinated. But 90 percent of people over 65 are.

REID: Yes.

PLOUFFE: So here's people who have been vaccinated. And this is true all over the country. You know, Joy, Florida very well, joy. They're safe, they're happy to be vaccinated.

REID: Yep.

PLOUFFE: They like their kids and their grandkids to be vaccinated and I think you could make some inroads with seniors over this issue. You know, Biden did better than Hillary did in 2020, but I think now we might have an opportunity. I don't want to overstate it, I'm not saying we're going to win seniors by 20 points. But if you just overperform there by four or five points, because these are people who are less, I think, sensitive to disinformation because they took the vaccine.

REID: Right.

PLOUFFE: Even if they had questions, and they are healthy, and they're safe.

REID: Yes.

PLOUFFE: And so I would watch this very carefully. Can Democrats overperform with voters over 65 just by two or three points and that could make an enormous difference in a midterm election.

REID: Yeah, Jason, you know I'm the biggest Florida skeptic when it comes to elections there because they are difficult. And we know David knows how to win it because he did it before with President Obama. But Florida can be won but it is always close. And that is my question to you, Jason. Because the Democratic Party in Florida is not exactly always super savvy about these things, right? But there is a case that could be made, it's about also candidate choice, potentially Charlie Crist is on the ballot or potentially the current agricultural secretary, Nikki Fried. Both of them are very aggressive about making the case about kids and that might be the case that needs to be made. Obviously, Val Demings being on that Senate — on the senate side of that race, have Democrats maybe stumbled upon the right issue and the right potential candidates who could make that case? Charlie Crist used to be in charge of education in Florida, you know, in addition to being governor. So if it's about children, that might be a smarter way to play it.

JASON JOHNSON: I wish I could say that Americans in general cared about children, but after

Parkland, not seeing massive gun control in that state doesn't necessarily lead me to believe if you're not concerned about random maniacs coming in and shooting kids in school, most people aren't going to be as concerned as they need to be about a virus that makes kids sick and makes them, you know, possibly be in a hospital and some of them actually dying. I will say this, though, about Florida. Little Marco, Sleepy Joe, Slick Willie, there is no worse nickname in politics than Ron DeSantis, right? Like, like that sticks.

REID: Fair.

JOHNSON: It sounds terrible and that is a name that he has earned for himself.

REID: Yeah.

JOHNSON: If the Democrats can turn, and this is what didn't happen in California, that if the Democrats can make it a referendum on DeSantis rather than a choice, between DeSantis and whoever the Democrat is, they might be able to pull it off. You never want a referendum on yourself as the incumbent especially when you fail the way he has.

REID: I gotta let — let our expert here, David, what do you think about that — about that strategy?

PLOUFFE: Well, listen, we have to improve our performance in Miami-Dade, as you know. That being said —

REID: Yeah.

PLOUFFE: I think it's way too early to give up on Florida. First of all, in a presidential race, it's too many electoral votes. And I think you can piece this together with the right candidates. And I think you're right. I think we have some interesting ones. But yeah, I think these governors, legislative leaders who have stood in the way of vaccinations, who belittled Covid, who don't want masks in school. I mean, here's the thing, we're basically two-thirds of the country in support of mask mandates in schools. So again, they're speaking to their sick, perverted one-third of the country, you know, that gets injected by Fox News and Sinclair and Breitbart, all this stuff.

REID: Yeah.

PLOUFFE: Listen, I believe today, Joy, the only country that has a worse Covid outbreak than the United States is Mongolia. So if you can't make something of that politically as tragic as that is, maybe you don't deserve to be in politics and I think one thing is Newsom made this campaign about vaccines and Covid.

REID: He did.

PLOUFFE: And I think Democrats need to make these campaigns. Of course, because it's not just Covid, it's the economy, it's education —

REID: It's the economy.

PLOUFFE: — it's all the things we care about.

REID: Yes, yes. It's getting your life back —

JOHNSON: Right. Schools and everything.

REID: — and that has always been Biden's best issue. It is every Democrats' best issue. I've got to go to you on this, Jason. Cause the one thing I'm expert in, is what West Indians — older West Indians rebuking and scolding you in the — and this happened in Trinidad where — do we have the audio of it or do we just have a headline? We might just have a headline. Trinidad and Tobago's health minister said unfortunately we wasted a lot of time yesterday running down this false claim. That's the best I can do in my Trinidadian accent. And he said, you know, we wasted a lot of time. He rebuked the idea that somebody's cajones were extremely largo in Trinidad and Tobago because of the vaccine. Your thoughts.

JOHNSON: Can I just point out how ridiculous — like I said, I tweeted this. No one can ever say disinformation isn't real. They wasted government resources because of a crazy story that Nicki Minaj told and now she's sitting here, cozying up with Tucker Carlson. This is why she lost to the people's champ, Cardi B. Because nobody who cares about their fans, supporters or Covid would want to align themselves with tucker Carlson, especially against some nonsense that's killing black people at a higher rate than any other group — any other people in this country.

REID: So, I'm going to be just contrarian a little bit. I actually, you know, Tucker Carlson said he wanted to do a deep investigative report on the — the cajones.

JOHNSON: On swollen something?

REID: On the swollen cajones. And I think he should do that. I want him to go down there like he went to Victor Orban and I want him to talk with that gentleman and find out why it is that the — that his future wife left him and just how large these melons were. I think he should find out.

JOHNSON: Right.

REID: It's an investigative report that we need. Go and do it, Tucker. I know you wanna. You really, really wanna. Alright, thank you very much. David Plouffe, Jason Johnson, let me stop before we get in trouble. Thank you guys.