

The Country is With Biden on Spending

Steve Max
02/21/2021

President Biden can move ahead with his COVID Relief package confident that the country is with him, not just regarding COVID, but also generally on big spending to boost the economy.

A [Data for Progress](#) poll of 1124 likely voters found that 56% favored higher spending. The poll asked:

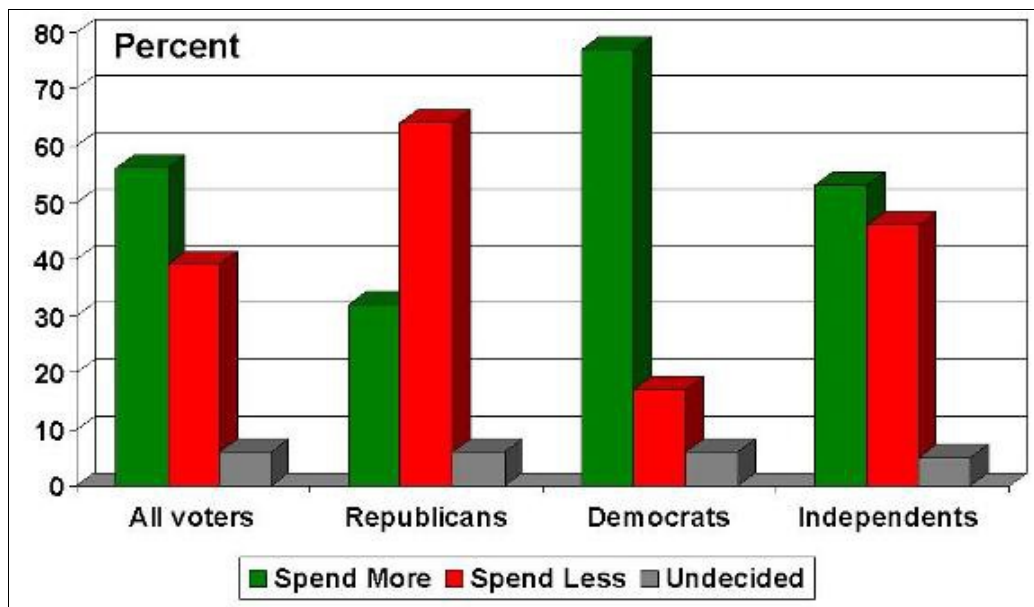
Some people think that we should be careful about how much money the federal government spends on economic recovery, because of the federal debt burden that may put on future generations of taxpayers down the line.

Other people think that the federal government should act to address major national problems like the pandemic, climate crisis or long-term unemployment, and that it is riskier for future generations to inherit a stunted economic growth.

Which comes closer to your view?

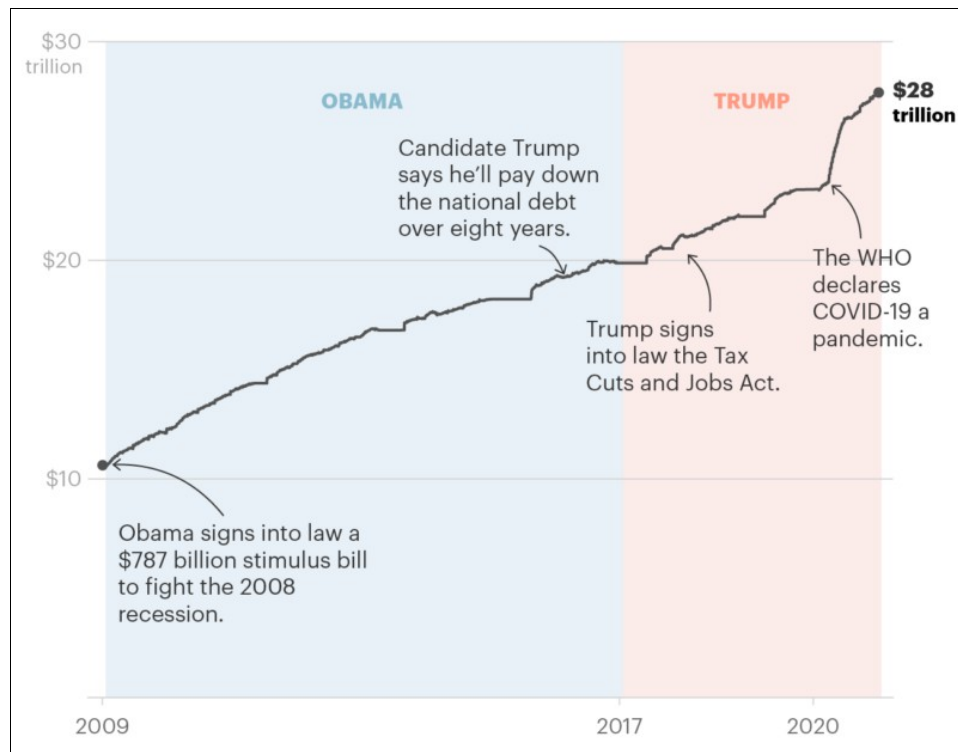
02/01/2021

Here are the results.



We have long known that Republican voters are living in a post-factual world in which things are true for no other reason than Donald Trump says they are. It is now clear that many of the same voters are also in a post-morality world in which the same thing that is good if Trump did it, becomes bad when Biden does it.

Take, for example, increasing the national debt. Trump had campaigned on lowering the debt which he blamed on President Obama, and then did just the opposite as this chart shows, raising the debt to give tax breaks to the rich.



Source: U.S. Treasury (Lena V. Groeger/ProPublica)

Given the bygone President's notoriously short attention span, perhaps he didn't realize what was happening. Not so:

"On Sept. 8, 2017, Trump signed a bill increasing the debt ceiling. Later that day, the debt exceeded \$20 trillion for the first time in U.S. history. On Feb. 9, 2018, Trump signed a bill suspending the debt ceiling until March 1, 2019. By February 2019, the total national debt was at \$22 trillion. In July 2019, Trump suspended the debt ceiling until after the 2020 presidential election. On Oct. 1, 2020, the debt hit a new record of \$27 trillion."*

The Washington Post

Senate passes two-year budget and debt ceiling bill, will send it to Trump

By
[Erica Werner](#)
August 1, 2019 at 12:18 p.m. EDT

"Budget Deal is phenomenal for our Great Military, our Vets, and Jobs, Jobs, Jobs! Two year deal gets us past the Election. Go for it Republicans, there is always plenty of time to CUT!" Trump wrote on Twitter ahead of the 67-28 vote.

Given that 64% of Republican voters have told pollsters that they oppose increasing the debt and oppose public spending even if it boosts the economy, you would think that there would have been some outcry from the Republican

base, but there was barely a peep out of anyone except Rand Paul. Indeed Mitch McConnell said “That [it] includes investing in our facilities here at home, like Ft. Knox, Ft. Campbell, and the Blue Grass Army Depot, which my state of Kentucky is proud to host.” *

Now that Biden has proposed a \$1.9 trillion dollar COVID relief and economic stimulus bill, the Republicans have suddenly resumed their traditional anti-spending posture.

[The Hill](#) reports,

“House GOP leaders, meanwhile, are actively whipping against the bill, calling it “Pelosi’s Payoff to Progressives Act” in a notice to their members. “It’s clear Democrats have no interest in approaching COVID relief in a timely and targeted fashion and are instead using the reconciliation process to jam through their liberal wish list agenda,” the notice from House Minority Whip [Steve Scalise](#)’s (R-La.) office states.”
02/29/2021

The Washington Post

Congressional Republicans balk at Joe Biden’s \$1.9 trillion relief plan, complicating push for quick passage

By
[Jeff Stein](#) and
[Erica Werner](#)
Jan. 15, 2021 at 4:50 p.m. EST

A growing number of congressional Republicans are expressing opposition to President-elect Joe Biden’s \$1.9 trillion economic relief proposal, complicating the incoming administration’s push to quickly inject additional aid into the ailing U.S. economy.

To this the [NY Times](#) adds:

“Those attacks have followed weeks of varying Republican objections to the package, including warnings that it would do little to help the economy recover and grow, that it would add to the federal budget deficit and possibly unleash faster inflation, and that Democrats were violating Mr. Biden’s calls for “unity” by proceeding without bipartisan consensus.”
(02/19/2021)

So, how do Republican voters manage to change their thinking so quickly? How to they go from believing that deficits are good when Trump creates them, but bad when Biden does? Perhaps we can not assume that thought is involved.