

Primary Black Voters Should Engage in Transactional Exchanges

Byron A. Ellis, Ph.D. – December 9, 2023



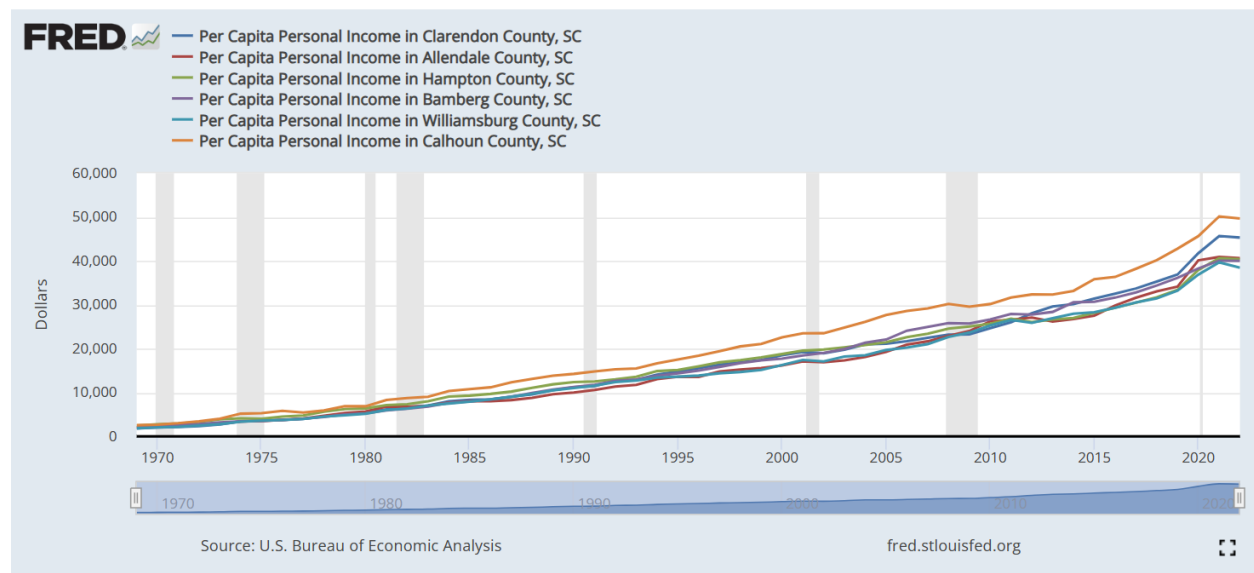
In the 2020 primary, Black voters in South Carolina revived Biden’s campaign and a lot of the credit was due to Representative Jim Clyburn who played a pivotal role by endorsing Biden. Clyburn represents the 6th District of South Carolina. [NBC.NEWS](#) noted that South Carolina had the highest proportion of African-American voters among the four early-voting states.

Black primary voters in South Carolina followed the Democratic National Committee (DNC) leadership and supported Biden’s incrementalism and rejected Medicare for all (universal healthcare), and free college tuition for their offspring.

South Carolina's 6th district includes Allendale, Bamberg, Calhoun, Clarendon, Hampton, and Williamsburg counties and parts of Charleston, Colleton, Dorchester, Florence, Jasper, Orangeburg, Richland, and Sumter counties. The main counties in South Carolina's 6th District income per capita under the Biden administration remained flat from 2020 to 2022. The table below shows that all five main counties experienced income per capita decreases from 2021 to 2022. An indication that South Carolina District 6th is slightly worse off under Biden and the Democrats.

Year	Allendale	Bamberg	Calhoun	Clarendon	Hampton	Williamsburg
2020	\$40,125	\$38,277	\$45,637	\$41,738	\$37,936	\$36,874
2021	\$40,888	\$40,052	\$50,139	\$45,667	\$40,594	\$39,668
2022	\$40,632	\$39,991	\$49,648	\$45,300	\$40,380	\$38,446

Furthermore, the graph below from the Federal Reserve shows that the steep income per capita rise experienced before the Biden administration came into office has waned.



Thus, Black people in South Carolina were not fully rewarded economically or with political cabinet positions for propelling Biden to the presidency. Therefore, Black people must engage, a priori, in transactional voting. That is, Black people should have the candidate sign a Memorandum of Understanding on the benefits that will accrue to Black people during the four years that the candidate will spend in office. For instance, of the top seven cabinet positions, four are occupied by Jewish people, even though their contribution to the Biden nomination was insignificant.

Likewise, there should be more Black candidates for the House of Representatives and the Senate. Moreover, Black people should use data to determine the economic and educational progress of Black people under any Party that they align with, as well as the incarceration rates of Black people. Additionally, Black voters must demand unambiguous economic support for Blacks in the United States and for African countries; and the support must be greater than the 10-year Memorandum of Understanding with Israel.

Therefore, it appears that South Carolina Black voters would have been better off with Democratic primary candidates Bernie Sanders or Elizabeth Warren who advocated Medicare for all and free college tuition.

Many countries in the world provide universal healthcare. [The Commonwealth Fund](#) noted that even "Israel provides universal coverage to citizens and permanent residents as part of its national health insurance law." So, too does tiny Costa Rica. Israel receives about \$3.3 billion in aid from the United States of America and given the fungibility of money, it supports their healthcare system.

The [International Citizen Insurance](#) lists countries with free or universal healthcare. And, the [World Population Review](#) provides a list of countries offering free college education, which includes Cuba.

During the 2020 primary, Biden argued that the largest economy in the world, the USA, did not have the money to pay for universal healthcare and free public colleges for high school graduates; he argued for the status quo. [The World Data.info](#) reported that in 2022 the USA with a gross domestic product (GDP) of 25.46 trillion dollars was by far the world's largest economy, followed by China in second place with a GDP of 17.96 trillion dollars. If US embargoed Cuba can provide universal healthcare and free tuition it seems deceptive to argue that the largest economy in the world cannot afford it.

Today, however, it is clear that the Biden administration has money to bankroll the Ukraine war and the genocide of the Palestinian people. [Politico](#) noted that some Democratic lawmakers are voicing displeasure with President Joe Biden's move to bypass Congress and approve the direct sale of tank shells to Israel, saying the administration needs to be more transparent about the weapons it is sending to the Middle East ally. His actions signal that he prefers wars to the healthcare and education of the voters who put him in office.

It will be interesting to see what narratives Clyburn and Biden will devise to convince Black South Carolina voters to reject universal healthcare and free college tuition again during the upcoming primary. Will Biden again claim that the country does not have the money when the voters know how ready he is to spend taxpayers' money on unnecessary genocidal wars?

[pbs.org](https://www.pbs.org) reported on December 2, 2023, that Biden told Democrats he wants South Carolina moved to the first position. They noted that the Washington Post reported the proposed order of early states. Accordingly, Biden wrote:

For decades, Black voters in particular have been the backbone of the Democratic Party but have been pushed to the back of the early primary process,” Biden wrote in a letter on personal stationery that did not carry the White House seal. “We rely on these voters in elections but have not recognized their importance in our nominating calendar. It is time to stop taking these voters for granted and time to give them a louder and earlier voice in the process.

Thus, Biden is keenly aware of the Democratic Party's reliance on Black voters in the elections. However, his cabinet does not reflect his use of Black voters in the primary, perhaps because they are not transactional voters or can be easily led. His cabinet is more reflective of Jewish voters, who have less voting power than Black voters.

[The Cabinet](#) lists the members of the Biden cabinet in order of succession to the presidency, see table below. The Cabinet’s role is to advise the President on any subject he or she may require relating to the duties of each member’s respective office. His Cabinet is diverse, but the important positions do not reflect the importance of the South Carolina Black voters in the primary nominating process. Rather, it reflects the importance of Jewish white voters who did not help to nominate Biden. The [Jewish Virtual Library](#) documents the 2022 Jewish population in South Carolina as 16,820 Jewish people, not all of voting age o democrats, and not enough to deliver Biden’s 2020 South Carolina nominating victory.

[The Jewish Virtual Library](#) also proudly reports the number of Jews in the Biden administration. The members of his Cabinet in order of succession and ethnicity are:

Biden Administration Cabinet					
Name	Position	Ethnicity	Name	Position	Ethnicity
Kamala Harris	Vice-President	Black	Dr. Miguel Cardona	Secretary of Education	Hispanic
Antony Blinken	Secretary of State	Jewish	Denis McDonough	Secretary of Veterans Affairs	White
Dr. Janet Yellin	Secretary of Treasury	Jewish	Alejandro Mayorkas	Secretary of Homeland Security	Jewish
Lloyd Austin	Secretary of Defence	Black	Michael Regan	Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency	Black
Merrick Garland	Attorney General	Jewish	Avril Haines	Director of National Intelligence	Jewish
Deb Haaland	Secretary of the Interior	Native	Katherine Tai	United States Trade Representative	Asian
Tom Vilsack	Secretary of Agriculture	Jewish	Linda Thomas-Greenfield	United States Ambassador to the United Nations	Black
Gina Raimondo	Secretary of Commerce	White	Jared Bernstein	Chair of the Council of Economic Advisers	Jewish
Julie Su	Acting Secretary of Labor	Asian	Isabel Guzman	Administrator of the small Business Administration	Hispanic
Xavier Becerra	Secretary of Health and Human Services	Hispanic	Shalanda Young	Director of the Office of Business and Management	Black
Marcia Fudge	Secretary of Housing and Urban Development	Black	Dr. Arati Prabhakar	Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy	Asian
Pete Buttigieg	Secretary of Transportation	White	William Burns	Director of the Office Central Intelligence Agency	White
Jennifer Granholm	Secretary of Energy	White	Jeff Zients	Chief of Staff	Jewish

Eight Jewish people, six Black people, five White people, three Asian people, three Hispanic people, and one native person make up the Biden cabinet. None of the Black cabinet members are from South Carolina.

A few weeks ago, [The Black Star News](#) said that “The Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) today condemned the Biden administration for giving the Israeli government the “green light” to resume bombing Gaza and called on the United States to join other governments in demanding the resumption of the ceasefire and negotiations to secure a just, lasting peace the outcome of the genocide of the Palestinian people.” Thus, his cabinet makeup might have influenced the genocide in Gaza.

If Biden and the Democrats cannot agree to a transactional relationship with Black voters, Black voters should bargain with the Republicans or any promising third Party to achieve better outcomes for Black people in the US and the diaspora.

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