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Chris Hayes

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MSNBC: All in with Chris Hayes

CHAYES

English

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[20:00:00]

JOY REID, MSNBC HOST: And that's tonight's REIDOUT. "ALL IN WITH CHRIS HAYES" starts now.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

CHRIS HAYES, MSNBC HOST (voice over): Tonight on ALL IN.

JOE BIDEN, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES: The FDA has given his full and final approval. The moment you've been waiting for us here.

HAYES: A big announcement from the current president as the last one cowers before an anti-vax crowd.

DONALD TRUMP, FORMER PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES: I did it. It's good. Take the vaccines. But you got now -- that's OK. That's our all right. You got your freedoms.

HAYES: Tonight, why the pandemic is somehow worse than ever in states like Florida. How a failure of leadership helped make it so.

And why FDA approval of Pfizer could change the game with vaccine requirements.

Then, how Stephen Miller and the anti-immigrant zealots in the Trump White House helped create the refugee crisis in Afghanistan.

And what we're learning tonight about the latest alleged MAGA bomber charged with threatening to use a weapon of mass destruction to blow up Washington when ALL IN starts right now.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

HAYES (on camera): Good evening from New York. I'm Chris Hayes. I can't believe I'm about to say this, but here it goes. Right now, in the state of Florida, as of today, more people are dying per day than at any other point in the COVID pandemic. I mean, just think about that for a minute as you look at this chart. Look at this chart. It's August of 2021, right? We've been battling this implacable viral foe for nearly 18 months. Through incredible human ingenuity, diligent work by scientists and public health workers, we have a variety of safe and effective vaccines, one of which received full approval from the Food and Drug Administration today.

We are also the richest country in the world. We are sitting on the world's biggest stockpile of vaccine doses. People around the world are desperate for the vaccines that we have. Those vaccines are the best tool for fighting this thing that has been ravaging our fellow Americans, our fellow humans across the world. And yet this, that spike, this is what's happening in Florida, a seven-day rolling average of fatalities, of deaths exceeds every other previous wave since the start of the pandemic. How is this possible?

The answer to that question is complicated, of course. The Delta variant really is more transmissible. There are a lot of factors. Some of it is probably random, honestly. We've seen this a lot. But the key regulatory moment that tells a lot of the story about what's happening in Florida didn't happen in Florida. It happened in Alabama, it happened this weekend. Let me set the scene for you.

The disgraced twice impeached ex-president who is nothing if not a junkie for the adoration of funding crowds, has held a big rally on a farm north of Birmingham. It's the heart of Trump country, a right-friendly group coming out to see Donald Trump in front of a big Alabama crowd. And before them, up on stage, he does something I have to say somewhat unexpected.

He endorses the vaccines. But the way that he does it and what happens after is the real story. We're going to play it for you now and just try to take it all in.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

TRUMP: You know what, I believe totally in your freedoms. I do. You got to do what you have to do. But I recommend take the vaccines. I did it. It's good. Take the vaccines. But you got -- no, that's OK. That's all right. You got your freedoms. But I happen to take the vaccine. If it doesn't work, you'll be the first to know, OK.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

HAYES: OK, so what just happened there? He said, essentially, I got the vaccine, you should too. Take the vaccines. And someone, maybe a few people, maybe a few dozen people in the crowd booed him. They booed Donald Trump for recommending the vaccine. And you can see the panic in his eyes as he makes a hasty retreat. You've got your freedoms. And you can hear him screwing up what tiny bit of courage he has before he enters the riff, knowing this is probably going to happen, looking as terrified as a 9-year-old and a high diving board trying to get himself to jump.

This Mr. Braggadocious, Mr. Donald Trump, everything is great and bold and beautiful and I'm the best, and he's terrified of what he's going to say because Donald Trump fears that crowd. He knows some of them hate vaccines. And he fears they will reject even him, their dear leader, if he says the simple, obvious truth which is that they should get vaccinated. And then his worst fears are proven in that moment. And so he retreats like a coward.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

TRUMP: You know what I believe totally in your freedoms. I do. You got to do what you have to do. But I recommend taking the vaccines. I did it. It's good. Take the vaccines. But you got -- no, that's OK. That's all right. You got your freedoms. But I happen to take the vaccine. If it doesn't work, you'll be the first to know, OK.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

[20:05:02]

HAYES: But don't, don't beat up on me. I'm still your guy. You know, whatever. You got your freedoms. Maybe it will work. I don't know. Think about this. There were thousands of people at that Alabama farm on Saturday night. Right now, 56 percent of the eligible population of Alabama has received at least one vaccine dose. That's not high enough, but that is a majority of people who can get it.

So, just -- I would bet, a fair number of people at that rally were vaccinated. And again, you can see the crowd right behind him. It's not like tens of thousands of people booed in unison when he said, go get the vaccines. He got heckled a little bit. And those people, the kind of people who not only show up to a Donald Trump rally in Alabama in August outside, but boo Donald Trump when he says you should get the vaccine, they are statistically, I think a tiny portion of the population in this country. They were a tiny portion of the crowd. And yet they have effectively seized veto power over American Public Health Policy.

That is the story when you look at this chart of COVID Destin, Florida, at least in part, those kinds of people, the ones who show up at, you know, school board meetings and scream at public health officials and follow them into the car and say everyone is going to know your name. They are not the majority of our fellow Americans, of all political persuasions. They're not.

These are the people driving public health policy in the Republican Party, one of only two viable political coalitions that govern this country. And that public health policy is getting people killed. In fact, no less a figure than radio host Alex Jones who's, you know, the persona -- personification of destructive, fringe, conspiracy madness, a guy believes Sandy Hook and 9/11 were inside jobs. That guy tore into Donald Trump for having the temerity to recommend the vaccine.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

ALEX JONES, RADIO HOST: Shame on you, Trump. Seriously, hey, if you don't have a good sense to save yourself and your political career, that's OK, at least you're going to get some good Republicans elected. And you know, we like you, but my God, maybe you're not that bright. Maybe Trump is actually a dumb ass.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

HAYES: OK, that guy, a ridiculous, disgraced carnival barker. That guy, think about this. Donald Trump is scared of criticism from that guy, from Alex Jones. And so, in his own way, Alex Jones has some veto power over public health policy in the Republican Party, Alex Jones and the fringe far-right people who booed Trump at the Alabama rally this weekend. So, that is how you get a situation like what is happening in Florida.

Republican Governor Ron DeSantis wants the votes and support of those hecklers. And he has treated the pandemic largely like a liberal bogeyman. Last year, he looked at all code restrictions on businesses way back in September well before the vaccines were available. Now, with the state's vaccine rate lagging behind other large states, about 59 percent of eligible population fully vaccinated, this disaster is raging. It's just an objectively a terrible situation. Hundreds of Floridians dying and Governor DeSantis is not taking care of the citizens he represents. Instead, he has been busying himself with nonsense like shadowboxing with Joe Biden over the border and assuring people that Florida's hospitals are "Open for business which what the -- open for business?

He has displayed not one iota of the kind of normal seriousness an elected official of either party should when presiding over a disaster, a tragedy, a mass death event. He has shown he is capable of it. This is not a dumb guy.

Earlier this summer, when that condo tower collapsed near Miami Beach, do you remember that? Gov. DeSantis played the role of completely normal official overseeing a terrible tragedy. He mourns the dead, provided information, pledged to find out what happened, met with President Joe Biden. They had an event together. That was completely amicable and serious.

Ron DeSantis can do that. He's capable of it. He just will not do it with the pandemic. Because if he does, if he admits that this is a crisis for his state right now, more people dying than at any point that the state needs to take some necessary steps to save its people, that they need to push vaccinations more strenuously, he will face the same backlash from the kinds of folks who heckled Donald Trump. And if he does that, he fears his political future in the Republican Party is over.

So, that's where we are. All the posturing, the ridiculous fights like about masked mandates in schools which I think the evidence shows tangibly make Floridians and Florida students less safe, but also those fights they serve a vital function for Governor DeSantis, an expressive function. They are his wink and nod to the hecklers in the crowd showing them that he is on their side. And you cannot defeat the virus if you cater to those hecklers.

Again, we're not talking about a majority. Look at the numbers. This is new polling that we have from NBC. It shows the populace -- that the populations, the sort of sub demographics least enthusiastic about getting vaccinated are basically the ones you would expect, Trump supporters and people in rural areas. But even among those populations, which are the least supportive, still a 50-50 proposition.

[20:10:19]

It's not like they overwhelmingly reject the vaccine. And even the hardest core Trump people, those who tell pollsters they are Republicans and sort of are Trump people first as opposed to Republican Party members first, it's a smart division by the pollsters here, they're at 47 percent vaccinated or planning to get it as soon as they can.

There are millions of people who are conservative who like Donald Trump who own MAGA gear, voted for Donald Trump, watch Fox News, and got vaccinated, who want to get vaccinated, who think other people should get vaccinated. I think there are a majority on the right. We're talking about a small fraction of Americans who were driving this. And honestly, they are a huge part of why we are where we are.

They are a huge reason this chart looks the way it does, because ultimately, those yahoos who booed the former President when he meekly almost apologetically said, hey, safe and effective vaccine could prevent you from dying from a horrible disease. I got it because, you know, I don't want to die. They're the ones who have managed to seize a veto on COVID policy for a huge part of America.

Kristen Soltis Anderson is the co-founder of the polling and analytics firm Eschelon Insights and a columnist at the Washington Examiner. Jeff Sharlet is contributing editor of Vanity Fair where he reports on right-wing politics.

Kristen, the polling on all this stuff is complicated. You can slice and dice at a bunch of ways. And I think it's a little bit of a moving target. But I do think that when you talk about vaccines, it is still a majority -- like, a healthy majority of Americans either got the vaccine or want to get the vaccine, and that's not even that controversial. It is really a subset of one part of Americans. And it extends across all political ideologies, but particularly strong in this part of the Republican Party that is kind of an outlier.

KRISTEN SOLTIS ANDERSON, CO-FOUNDER, ECHELON INSIGHTS: I'm very grateful that you have shown all of that data about a majority of Trump voters, for instance, being vaccinated, because I think so often the conversation around vaccines and our politics conflates people's views on the vaccines itself with policies like vaccine mandates.

So, you can look at the modern GOP and you can see about a third of Republicans, maybe a little less outright say, I'm not getting vaccinated, I don't want it, no, thank you. But most are pretty -- they've either said they've gotten it themselves, they're open to it. They don't think it's a bad idea. Whether you do lose them is on mandates.

And part of that is early on in the pandemic, you had, you know, this crisis moment where people's ideological priors got set aside. I liken it almost to how after -- immediately after 9/11, a lot of people set their ideological priors aside. On September 10, a lot of people might have said, I don't feel like we should go invade a foreign country even for national security who on September 12 felt very different.

Early and COVID, a lot of Republicans said, I'm fine with lockdown, I'm fine with masks. But as the crisis wore on, as you went from 15 days to slow the spread, to 15 weeks, to 15 months, that atrophied. And so, now you have a lot of Republicans who are interested in protecting themselves, but are not interested in government telling anyone what they have to do.

HAYES: Right. But there's -- so the -- I think it's important though because there's a few different segments here, right? So, there's an opposition to mandates or requirements, right? And even that is not -- again, we should be clear, there's a lot of Republicans who support those, OK.

ANDERSON: Yes.

HAYES: This is not like some overwhelming crazy 90-10 issue, OK. So, there's that. But then, what has festered, and this is the problem is in a numerical sense. You know, if we want to actually stamp out the virus, and we have the vaccines to do it, because God Bless America, we're sitting on tens of millions of vaccines. You need thresholds of compliance and vaccination that are hard to get with this hardcore crew.

And Jeff, I feel like one of the things we saw and, you know, not to get too biblical here, but I know you've studied religion. It's like, there's a little bit of like, you know, give us Barabbas moment in front of that crowd with Trump looking like Pilate, where it's like, oh, I don't know. What do you guys want? You want the vaccines? You don't want the vaccines? Like, he's catering to the crowd. He's not telling them this stuff is not coming from him, it's coming from somewhere else.

JEFF SHARLET, CONTRIBUTING EDITOR, VANITY FAIR: Yes, I think that's such an important point. While we focus on Trump, on DeSantis, on Greg Abbott, we focus on these villains, we have to recognize that this kind of anti- vaccination hysteria has deep historical roots in the right. It goes back to the 19th century where you start encountering terms like medical tyranny, medical liberty, natural immunity, and then it's conflated with whiteness.

This idea that white people somehow through their good genes, very good genes, as Trump would put it, have that immunity. So, Trump, DeSantis, Abbott, all these folks are pulling on a right-wing populist and a religious thread in American life and pulling it, you know, horribly into the present. They didn't invent it. They exploited it.

HAYES: And here's where the rubber hits the road, Kristen, I think when you think about these different factions is what I have observed in Republican politicians and DeSantis is an example, and Abbott too was it wasn't they were going around being anti-vax. They were -- they were not only pro- vaccine, they said, you know, take it, but they weren't really putting their back into it.

Like, I know what it looks like when Ron DeSantis wants to ride an issue. I've seen it. I know what it looks like when Greg Abbott wants to ride an issue. I've seen that. This was not an issue they wanted to ride. It just wasn't. It wasn't like -- they weren't doing a bunch of events. They weren't showing up in the cameras. They weren't going on Fox. Like, all of the proactive stuff. And it was because within their faction, there was this division that they would rather avoid than confront.

ANDERSON: I disagree with you a little bit on that. I mean, DeSantis actually took blowback early on in the pandemic because he had set up a bunch of vaccination stations at Publix, a very popular grocery store in my home state of Florida. He focused very heavily on seniors. And he got flack because originally the guidelines

said oh, well wait, you're not necessarily just supposed to do it by age, you're supposed to look at all of these other categories.

HAYES: Right, but --

ANDERSON: So, to push back on this idea, even with Sarah Huckabee Sanders who just a couple of weeks ago, she's running for the governor in -- governor's race in Arkansas, she puts on an op-ed saying, please get this vaccine. So, I would push back a little bit on the idea that these Republican politicians have not been pushing the vaccine.

HAYES: I disagree, and I disagree for this reason. To me, it's a difference between being on the record and deciding it's something you want to say. I mean, we have seen Republican politicians, Phil Scott in Vermont, right, do the thing where they really go out day after day to make sure that their state is vaccinated. There are Republican governors who have done that. I think Mike DeWine has done it to a certain extent.

But I think that the veto power of the heckler, the hecklers veto, Jeff, that we saw from that crowd, it cows everyone. Like, that is the thing. They are scared of those people. They do not want to get crosswise of them.

SHARLET: That's the militancy of today's Republican Party. I mean, when we look at -- we look at anti-vaccination sentiment and its roots and QAnon. QAnon which already had this deep fear of big pharma and this idea that elites were harvesting strange substances and putting it -- trying to put it in their bodies or our bodies or who knows what, these conspiracy theories.

QAnon is a fringe movement, but it's a fringe movement that we know at this point, in many ways drives Republican Party. So, what you're saying really resonates with me. I have to say, as a Vermonter, I'm a Vermonter, not a Republican but I appreciate my governor, Phil Scott, for giving me the best vaccination defense in the nation. Not listening to QAnon, not listening to that single heckler in the crowd.

HAYES: Kristen Soltis Anderson Jeff Sharlet, that was great. Thank you both. I really appreciate it.

ANDERSON: Thank you.

HAYES: Tonight, the Pfizer vaccine becomes the first COVID shot to get full FDA approval. Now, this might not sound like that big of a deal. I mean, millions of shots have been distributed after all. People have been getting that for the last nine months. So, what changes today? It could be a crucial turning point in the fight against the disease? Let's hope so. I'm going to explain why right after this break. Don't go anywhere.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

[20:20:00]

HAYES: We finally got it. Today, the Food and Drug Administration granted Pfizer full approval for its Coronavirus vaccine for people 16 and up. For the past nine months, the Pfizer vaccine has been distributed under what's called an emergency use authorization, something granted in public health emergencies like a pandemic.

Now, more than 200 million doses of that vaccine, the Pfizer vaccine have been administered shots in arms. Now, with more time and data, the FDA is giving the vaccine the strongest endorsement a drug can get. Immediately following this announcement, the Pentagon moved to require all military service members to be vaccinated. That's a blanket requirement. Also, New York City public schools, the largest school in the country requiring shots are basically all staffing at schools, not just teachers, basically everyone is going to -- every adult in that building.

And the question now is with this full approval, will it pave the way for further vaccine requirements and will it convince more people to get vaccinated? Dr. Atul Gawande has been nominated by President Biden to lead global health development at the U.S. Agency for International Development. He's also a staff writer from New Yorker. And Dr. Julie Morita is the executive director of the -- executive vice president at Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, formerly served as a commissioner for Chicago's Department of Public Health. Together, they both served on President Biden's transition COVID-19 advisory board. And they both join me now.

Dr. Morita, let me just start with you on the kind of -- I just sort have a technical question here. You know, you never want to be the kind of -- the guy at the bar just being like, oh, what's the matter with these people? Why don't they approve it? But I felt a little bit that way about the FDA process. Like, it does seem a little weird there was this emergency use authorization, there's literally hundreds of millions of shots going into arms. Like, what's the difference? Why now? What does this mean?

JULIE MORITA, FORMER MEMBER OF BIDEN'S TRANSITION COVID-19 ADVISORY BOARD: It's a great question, Chris. And I think you're not alone in asking those questions at this point. The emergency use authorization is something that's only used in a time of a public health emergency, like a pandemic, as you pointed out. And in that situation, the FDA will review the vaccines and look at them for as long a period of time before they actually approve them for use.

So, what's different about the licensure that occurred today was that the vaccines had been studied for six months, which allows them to look at more safety data, more efficacy data for that period of time. In addition to that, the FDA actually looked at the manufacturing processes and some chemistry aspects of the vaccine that weren't looked at in as great detail when the emergency use authorization was made.

The key thing from my perspective is though, that by issuing the emergency use authorization, we have saved lives. The use of the vaccine when the -- for that approval after it as a result of that approval has really led to many, many lives being saved.

[20:25:08]

HAYES: Dr. Gawande, there's a question -- I mean, if you -- if you hang out in, let's say, vaccines skeptical social media spaces, which I sometimes do just sort of out of curiosity, you will see that it is a fairly frequent talking point this idea about emergency use authorization. Like, it does get invoked. You can hear it from people who are a little vaccine-hesitant.

And I guess there's a real question and I think it's kind of an open empirical question about, you know, whether it matters in terms of people's hesitancy and whether there's some marginal set of people that wouldn't have gotten it before and will now.

ATUL GAWANDE, BIDEN NOMINEE TO LEAD USAID GLOBAL HEALTH DEPARTMENT: I would agree that the effect on people -- changing people's minds will be modest. There probably are some people who have been waiting for their approval before jumping in. But for many people, that was more of an argument to make, and the goalposts often move in these debates. So, once you've met the one goalpost, someone will push to the vaccine or just move it further.

The really big deal is what you outlined which is that many places, now that it's approved, will feel much more comfortable at an institutional level, requiring vaccination, especially in places where people are at a lot of risk, such as in public venues, or in health care and hospital setting. My own hospital, because we're holding off on mandating vaccination for everybody until approval and, you know, that is now coming out and will be underway.

HAYES: It's interesting you note that because this has been a surprising thing for me to learn. Dr. Morita, we had Dr. Collins who runs the National Institutes of Health on a few weeks ago, and they have obviously a functioning hospital there. It's I think thousands of employees. And he made the point that at the National Institutes of Health, they couldn't or weren't requiring the vaccine for employees in that hospital until it reached full approval.

Again, I found the logic they're like a little tenuous, to be totally honest. But how much of a difference does it make? I mean, maybe it's just a kind of bureaucratic (INAUDIBLE) or sort of institutional comfort thing, but it sounds like this could be a big deal for employers, public institutions and the like.

MORITA: Yes, Chris, there was a little grayness regarding whether or not having a licensure would really be required before mandates could occur. Although the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission had weighed in to say that mandates could occur as long as reasonable accommodations were made for people with disabilities or people with religious reasons. There was still a reluctance to actually issue mandates.

I think we're going to see in the coming days and weeks increasing numbers of mandates, because we know that mandates actually are highly effective in getting people vaccinated. We have years and years of experience with childhood vaccines as well as healthcare worker vaccination with influenza vaccine, Hepatitis B vaccines, and measles vaccines, and they are incredibly effective in getting high rates of coverage and protection within our communities.

HAYES: Yes, I always think about someone I know close to me, Dr. Gawande, who at some point, was required to get a -- get a flu vaccine for the work that she was doing. And that was the thing that I was like, oh -- I always -- you know, I knew the flu vaccine was out there. I figured it was effective. I never was like a flu vaccine person until that moment where it sort of hit home to me. Like, oh, this is really important. And it did have an effect I think in not just in, you know, that individual but in the in a broader kind of social expectation on that specific vaccine.

GAWANDE: Well, so, this has been a common part of public health, right, to go to schools in order to prevent outbreaks of everything from diphtheria to whooping cough. We've had effective vaccine regimens that would

never have worked without some basic requirements in order to get the levels up high enough that you could eliminate these diseases. We've seen measles come back because of weakening in those categories.

And, you know, this is a disease that is killing people in nursing homes, hospitals, who are at high risk even when vaccinated because of their immune resistance. So, you know, there are settings where this is going to be very important.

HAYES: Yes, it's going to be really interesting to watch. We got the New York City public schools today, we got the Pentagon sort of what the next few weeks are like and what happens to those daily numbers because we do have real time data. Dr. Atul Gawande who's got a great piece about public health and mortality and life expectancy in New York you should check out, and Dr. Julie Morita. Thank you both.

As thousands more flee Afghanistan each day, there's been a continued scrutiny over the hobbled evacuation of Afghan citizens who have helped the U.S. military in the last 20 years who should have protection under a special visa process. According to one former Trump White House official, there's something about this we're missing, something that goes back to the Trump administration and his former immigration adviser Stephen Miller. Olivia Troye is here to tell us what she knows ahead.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

[20:30:00]

HAYES: Last Thursday, 49-year-old Floyd Ray Roseberry drove from North Carolina to Washington D.C. and parked his black Chevrolet pickup truck on the sidewalk outside the Library of Congress. That's right, near the U.S. Capitol and the Supreme Court. He went on a tirade about a coming revolution. He said he was a patriot. He threw money out of the window of his truck at one point, demanded to speak with President Joe Biden or he would blow up two and a half city blocks with an explosive device.

Congressional offices at nearby homes were evacuated amid a tense back and forth negotiation between the man and law enforcement. And after about five hours of that, he eventually surrendered peacefully, so good news there.

Now, at first, and I was on vacation at this point, so sort of monitoring the story in the periphery, police said no bomb was found in the truck, but possible bomb-making materials were collected. Which to be honest is a bit vague. But I kind of came away from the story thinking like, this was like someone sticking up a bank with a note and a finger in their pocket and no actual gun. But no, that's not it. It was quite a bit more serious than that.

[20:35:23]

In fact, according to charging documents, he had threatened to use a weapon of mass destruction against a person and property within the United States. In a video from that morning, Roseberry was holding an old metal can that appeared to have been fashioned into an explosive device. You can see it here in this image.

And after Roseberry's arrest, the can was recovered in front of the truck. It was old and rusted. It had approximately one to two inches of an unknown powder in the bottom of it. A fabricated trigger was attached to the top of the can. So, this isn't just about a bomb threat from a guy who has a beef with the government. I mean, it looks like, as far as we know, he had materials in his car that could be used to make explosives, maybe he tried to make one and it just didn't work.

This is of course, the monster that the Trump administration created over the last four years and particularly in the wake of the election. In Facebook, and a live stream that took place before and during the standoff, this man ranted about you aren't surprised to learn, election conspiracies, saying "Once Biden is out of office, Democrats sitting down there in the F- ing jailhouse, our President is going to be Donald Trump."

He also went on about the lack of access to health care while claiming it all goes to immigrants and Afghan refugees. My wife goes to the doctor, she's got cancer, and they told her, it wouldn't cover it anymore because it's cosmetic. Where's your insurance at Biden, Obama? You keep on letting all these illegal Mexicans in here, all these illegal immigrants in here from Afghanistan. You're giving it to them. You're giving it to them.

That rant is essentially indistinguishable from what you can hear at a Trump rally over at Fox News night in night out and at a number of right- wing Web sites. You just go on there right now. And the racist hysteria, the zero-sum configuration about health care being zero-sum, and some people get it and some people don't, and the invading hordes of brown people are getting all the health care and the so-called unvetted refugees.

It's not just rhetoric. It's deeper than that. It's been operationalized in our politics and much more dangerously in our government, which is a huge part of the story of why the airlift out of Afghanistan has been

so chaotic and fraught. It is in part because people like Stephen Miller whose views on immigration are shared apparently by the would-be bomber wanted it that way.

In just a moment, I'll talk to someone who worked in the Trump administration who was in the room when Stephen Miller turned racist hysteria into the U.S. policy that helped create this chaos. That's right after this.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

[20:40:00]

HAYES: Before he's a senior policy adviser in the Trump White House, Stephen Miller appeared on Steve Bannon's right-wing radio show to warn how bipartisan immigration bills would decimate the United States. And Miller has never really hid the fact that his goal is to curb all immigration in this country, including totally legal channels. He's been clear about that.

In 2018, he was pressuring the Department of Homeland Security to limit legal immigrants from obtaining green cards. He's obviously now at the White House, but that has not stopped him. Last week, he tweeted "It is becoming increasingly clear that Biden's radical deputies will use their catastrophic debacle in Afghanistan as a pretext for doing to America what Angela Merkel did to Germany in Europe.

Miller is referring to German Chancellor's decision to welcome hundreds of thousands of migrants back in 2015, people in desperate straits fleeing death and destruction of war. He's arguing this country should not be accepting legal refugees from a crisis we helped create with 20 years of war while also dog-whistling to the white nationalist great replacement theory which posits that immigrants are seeking to reshape America's very image that Democrats are importing them to replace white people.

We know this hardline anti-immigrant stance was Miller's near singular focus in the White House. Now, we're seeing the fallout unfold in real-time in Afghanistan. Olivia Troy served as a top aide to Vice President Mike Pence where she says she saw the government's ability to bring Afghan translators and other refugees to this country hollowed out under Miller's watch. "There were cabinet meetings about this where Stephen Miller would peddle his racist hysteria about Iraq and Afghanistan. He and his enablers across government would undermine anyone worked on solving the Special Immigrant Visa issue by devastating the system at the Department of Homeland Security and the State Department."

And Olivia Troy joins me now. A lot of people read what you had to write, had to say over the weekend with a lot of interest including myself. And in doing a ton of reporting on this as I've sort of come back into this story, the Special Immigrant -- the special visa has been a huge obstacle here. Can you just explain what we're talking about it and why it's so central to understanding the story?

OLIVIA TROYE, DIRECTOR, REPUBLICAN ACCOUNTABILITY PROJECT: Yes, no, it's critical because what it is, is that it's a special program set aside for people that really assist us when we're on the ground. You know, translators interpreters, or people that work for the U.S. government directly, whether it's the embassy or other operations, the military, Intelligence Community.

And so, these -- it's a special set of visa set aside for people that work and has worked with us since the programs. There's also other SIV Programs that also assist with people who are helping with programs that are us funded on the ground. And so, this is a case game. There's also you know, the P-2 program that you'll hear about, which we'll talk about refugees which also falls under that, which is also assist in you know, other lanes when SIV is you know, that program comes to an end like it did in Iraq, they qualify for P-2s.

Biden just actually instituted the P-2 pipeline to help open up this process for Afghan. So, that's also opening up the refugee process for that as well.

[20:45:07]

HAYES: So you've got this -- you've got this bureaucratic category of folks that were translators who maybe worked with USAID who maybe worked with American NGOs, right, who people who have both helped the U.S. been allies, but also have credible fear of reprisal when and now the government has fallen to the Taliban.

And you're saying that even years ago, that Miller was sort of really focused on shrinking and getting rid of the category, right? Like, essentially deconstructing it. So you couldn't use it as a category to get people in.

TROYE: Yes, but he does it -- you know, he does it in a very crafty way. Because what's happening here is that what probably the public saw where the reporting about the refugee ceiling that was being decreased on a yearly basis under the Trump administration, you see the travel ban order, you see the anti-refugee where they're not going to do refugee resettlement at the very beginning at the start of the administration. All of



these things contribute to a scenario of the -- like, the reduction of resources at DHS and these offices that work these issues, the reduction of resources at state.

HAYES: Right.

TROYE: And so, what you see is the concept of this narrative developing. And so, the reason I put my tweet was because I was getting so upset at watching the images of these people who really have been by our side, and then watching the narrative start to surface that they don't belong here, that these people don't belong here, which is such Stephen Miller rhetoric that I heard repeatedly during my time working around the Trump administration.

HAYES: And part of it too is just -- I mean, one of the things that -- it's such a frustrating reality we've seen, I think that the Biden administration shares a significant part of the blame for this at least in terms of using this SIV route which many people warn them had been -- was that there's this maddening bureaucratic bottleneck. It has been unstuck a bit. We're seeing tens of thousands of folks airlifted out.

But that bureaucratic bottleneck, my understanding was that like, in some ways, Miller was the architect of the bottleneck because he wanted -- he didn't want the bottle to flow, right? He wanted -- he wanted to create an end sort of interrupt the processes as arcane as they are by which these kinds of people can be brought in.

TROYE: Yes. And this is already, like you said, a very challenging and cumbersome process. And let me tell you. The vetting that goes into the people that apply for these visas, this is some of the most stringent vetting in the national security system. It's well known that this is very tough process to get through.

But what happened under Stephen Miller's watch is that the people doing the vetting and the processes, like they start to become even more cumbersome and it becomes even more challenging.

HAYES: Right.

TROYE: And so, you can kind of see the narrative coming together where he is clearly going out of his way. And look, here's the bigger issue, during these cabinet meetings, there was discussions about SIV's and the P-2 translators especially when it comes to Afghanistan, Iraq, where generals and intelligence community people and where we pushed back on this narrative.

And so, we say, OK, the decision was made to prioritize these populations. But when you look at the numbers, the numbers speak for themselves when you see that not many make it through the system, not many are issued. And so, it may have been said that we did prioritize them, but we certainly -- that's not exactly how it played out and what happened.

HAYES: So, you're saying even under the last administration, there would be an agreement in the cabinet meeting to prioritize them, and then the operational part of that would not happen?

TROYE: Exactly. And that is where we realized many of us were working in this process where we were kind of making phone calls, trying to understand what's happening here. But we all clearly know, and this is where you get the coalition of the willing behind the scenes watching what has happened and trying to figure out how we walk on eggshells around Stephen Miller, who's known to be a very powerful figure in the White House or even in cabinet members.

I will tell you, like, Pompeo, you'll see the reports on refugees where some of that language is Stephen Miller rhetoric and language that he inserts there. So, that just tells you the power that this man had.

HAYES: Olivia Troye, thanks so much for joining us tonight.

Don't go anywhere. If there's one person in the Senate to talk to you about tonight about the situation in Afghanistan and what Congress should investigate, it's Senator Chris Murphy. He joins me next.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

[20:50:00]

HAYES: According to the Pentagon, as of right now, there are 200 military aircraft flying nonstop evacuating Afghans and U.S. citizens out of Afghanistan. Nearly 40,000 people have now been evacuated since the Taliban took Kabul less than two weeks ago. 16,000 leaving Afghanistan over a 24 hour period this weekend.

Obviously a massive undertaking, military planes, private air carriers alike taking part. Other partner countries helping the effort fairing tens of thousands out of the airport in Kabul to destinations like the U.S. Air Base in Ramstein, Germany. Since Sunday, at least five flights have landed at Dulles International Airport in Washington D.C. according to the Pentagon, like this United Airlines Flight arriving from Germany this morning.

Now, many in Congress, including Democrats, are calling for investigations into how the withdraw is being conducted. Senator Chris Murphy, a Democratic Connecticut sits on the Foreign Relations Committee which announced it will investigate the circumstances around the withdrawal, including the Trump administration's deal with the Taliban. He thinks the committee needs to look beyond even that and he joins me now.

Senator, first, let's just start with the most sort of recent developments in the last say three or four days. It does seem that the pace, the efficacy of the airlift has appreciably improved and we're getting more people out. What's your reaction to that?

SEN. CHRIS MURPHY (D-CT): These images are heartbreaking to watch. Babies being lifted over walls, to hear the stories of Afghan families, people who helped us over the last 20 years, having difficulty getting to the airport, having their lives threatened. All that being said, the number are starting to speak for themselves. We have now taken out around 50,000 individuals just in the nine days since the country fell.

And whether or not we should have known that the government and military are going to collapse overnight, we've put this all together in a period of nine to 10 days. So, well, I think it's hard to label any of this a success. It is extraordinary the effort that's underway. And I guess what I worry is that we're going to allow the people who cheer-led us into this war and to stay for 20 years, try to make the world and the country believe that there was some way to conduct this effort in a way that did not look chaotic.

I think when the government and the military fall overnight, like they did, there is no way to avoid some of the chaos that we are seeing. And I do applaud all the -- all those that are involved for getting to the numbers that we see today. 10,000 people every day being airlifted out.

HAYES: Yes, I want to -- I want to follow up on that. And first, I want to just talk about there's a -- there's an Intel briefing on the House side and some of those members coming out of that briefing. Jason Crow said that after -- that he doesn't think it's possible to get everyone out by this August 31 deadline, urging Biden to keep troops there despite what the Taliban is saying which is basically look, we're sort of going along with this. It's not like they've been handing people roses and water, but they have not been, you know, pulling off large scale attacks.

They're saying that changes after the 30 -- August 31. Crow is saying, these are our people. I just -- I don't know. What do you think about this idea about the 31st and that is a deadline?

MURPHY: I don't think we should let the Taliban decide when we stop airlifting Americans or those who were most closely helping us out of the country. Of course, it would be better to get all of this done by the 31st. But it may be that we will have to call the Taliban's bluff here.

So, I leave that to the judgment of the administration. But I would certainly be willing to support U.S. for staying there for as long as it takes. This is, you know, an essential mission for the United States of America not leaving any of our people behind. At some point, we'll have to have a really hard discussion about how many Afghans we can pull out, what is our obligation.

Obviously, there were 300,000 people fighting for the Afghan army at the time that we left. We can't bring all of them out of the country, but certainly those that were working most closely with us we should. And it may take us beyond the end of this month to do that.

HAYES: You said something before that I -- that resonates with my reaction to watching this unfold. And again, I've been away. But I sort of feel like this is what it looks like when you lose a war. I mean, no one wants to say that. No one wants to utter those words. But we all know what the images of the Saigon helicopter or the U.S. Embassy was. And the reason that happened is because the army that we were fighting defeated the army that we were supporting quite quickly.

In this case, the army we were fighting defeated the army we were supporting after 20 years, in about as much time as they probably would have back in 2002, frankly. And I just feel like that is the fundamental core of the thing here that people don't want to reckon with.

MURPHY: Yes, of course, there was going to be chaos. Of course, there was going to be panic on the streets of Kabul after their government and military fell apart overnight. Now, again, there will be a question as to whether we should have seen that coming, but the people of Afghanistan did not see that coming.

And so, when they heard that the United States of America was airlifting people out, of course, there was a rush to the airport. And so, again, I worry here that the same people who sort of fed us this story for 20 years that there was some magical way to train the Afghan army to be able to fight for itself are now sort of feeding us this story that there should have been a way for us to withdraw. And then in the wake of the collapse of the government and military, to avoid this kind of chaos.

I mean, the scenes, again, are devastating to watch. I'm just not sure that there was any way to avoid it, given what happened, given the fact that our 20-year occupation and training mission was a total complete failure. And when that came to light, there was inevitably going to be a (INAUDIBLE) situation on the ground and we're trying to manage it.

HAYES: Senator Chris Murphy who's on the Foreign Affairs Committee, thank you so much.

MURPHY: Thank you.

HAYES: That is ALL IN for this evening. "THE RACHEL MADDOW SHOW" starts right now. Good evening, Rachel.

RACHEL MADDOW, MSNBC HOST: How is your time off, Chris? We missed you terribly.

HAYES: Oh, that's kind of you. It was it was blissful. A lot of time with my family, a lot of sun --

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