

The 2020 Presidential Race: Is Mayor Pete Buttigieg the Real Deal?

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*It seems totally implausible that the 2020 Presidential race has already reached a near fever pitch as the previously obscure Mayor of South Bend, Indiana **Pete Buttigieg** has taken third place in the latest polls leaving at least five US Senators in the dust – just as he delivered a [well-aimed arrow](#) with doubts that Vermont Senator Bernie Sanders can beat President Trump in a general election citing that “people were refreshed by the novelty of that boldness” in 2016 but those ideas ‘are now less exciting.’*

From the get-go, Mayor Pete’s candidacy appeared to fit neatly into a manufactured identity with the creation as a ‘perfect’ candidate label as if he was deliberately groomed to be totally inoffensive and politically correct; even tempered with no edge. The latest bright, shiny penny to gain prominence, Buttigieg experienced a meteoric rise in the polls raising \$7 million and qualified for the June debate before he formally announced he was IN. His unparalleled success as a virtual unknown in a matter of weeks may be credited to some very effective behind-the-scenes movers n shakers willing to fund and provide the necessary organizational support to increase his credibility.

His ‘perfect’ status as a candidate has been noted with attributes carefully shaped to satisfy a wide cross-section of American voters: he is gay, 37 years old, compares himself to JFK, is an elected municipal official, a [‘devout’ Christian](#) and an Afghanistan war veteran with ‘executive government experience.”

Clearly, millennial Mayor Pete has had friends in high places for some time. The first news article suggesting Buttigieg as a Presidential candidate was a June, 2016 NYT article [“The First Gay President?”](#) That article appeared two weeks after President Obama happened to swing through [South Bend](#) and before Mayor Pete ran for DNC Chair in 2017.

All of these interviews and articles occurred in 2019, many of them before he formally announced his candidacy with multiple appearances on The View, Morning Joe, CNN, MSNBC, CBS and other outlets: [Morning Joe](#), [The View](#), [Bill Maher](#), ABC with [George Stephanopoulos](#), Fox News with [Chris Wallace](#), [Rachel Maddow](#), [Tonight Show](#) with Jimmie Fallon, [CBS Sunday Morning](#), [MTP Daily on MSNBC](#), [The Ellen Show](#), [The Late Show](#) with Stephen Colbert, [The Van Jones Show](#), [Buzzfeed](#), [NPR](#), [Vice News](#), [TMZ Live](#), [The Breakfast Club](#), [Vox](#) News with Ezra Klein, [CNN Town Hall](#), Late Night with [Seth Meyers](#) as well as assorted print media articles including but not limited to three [New Yorker](#) features, multiple [Washington Post](#) and [NY Times](#) articles, a [New York](#) magazine article, [NBC News](#), [The Hill](#), [USA Today](#), [The Economist](#), [The Daily Beast](#), [Business Insider](#), [Newsweek](#), [The Financial Times](#), [People](#), [Rolling Stone](#), [Esquire](#), [Slate](#) and [Vogue](#) magazines.

In addition, Buttigieg participated in the American Jewish Committee [tour of Israel](#) in 2018;

prior to publicly announcing his presidential aspirations, and then received an [endorsement](#) from the former AIPAC President **Steve Grossman**. Mayor Pete has since repudiated Rep. Omar's comments regarding Israel.

So how exactly does a previously unknown mayor from Indiana, who has not yet announced his candidacy or staffed up for a national campaign, warrant that kind of first rate attention from prominent media outlets and why would they be willing to provide that level of air time worth millions and millions of advertising dollars? Clearly, this intensity of media exposure, within weeks of each other, does not occur overnight or spontaneously or coincidentally without some high level sophisticated orchestration; high powered people with connections.

As the benefits of a well coordinated media campaign dramatically increased the Mayor's identity and political viability, it especially encouraged two dozen of the [big Democratic money](#) elite to link up with the Mayor to schedule a series of fund raising events. These are many of the same funders who were reliable HRC and Obama financial backers. You might say the wheels are greased.

It is easily apparent from the roster of interviews that Mayor Pete prefers to steer clear of specific policy pronouncements and focus instead on appealing personality traits. He is a verbally facile, a political centrist with a glib smoothness and enough smarts to [dodge](#) any off-script policy discussion that might end up in the weeds. It is fair to say that he appears clueless with a 1950's understanding that the Empire is failing as he exhibits a confident persona trained to smile on cue; all of which makes me wonder when we will see our first AI candidate and how will we recognize that machine when it appears?

While Buttigieg has touted his military background as an Afghanistan 'war veteran' including the claim that he has "[more military experience than I think anybody to go into that office since GHW Bush](#)," he is vague about the details which he says remains classified.

Here's the background: He enlisted as a Navy Reservist in 2009 and served until 2017 as a Navy Intelligence officer earning the rank of Lieutenant. In 2014, Buttigieg was [deployed to Afghanistan](#) for six months as part of the Operation Enduring Freedom shutdown in December, 2014. He was assigned as an 'individual augmentee' in what appears to have been a desk job in Kabul with a "[counterterrorism organization called the Afghan Threat Finance Cell](#)" whose "[mission is to protect the homeland and target the most dangerous drug trafficking organizations in Afghanistan](#)."

Given his short time in Afghanistan, Buttigieg's experience may not measure up to what the public thinks of when they hear someone self-described as an Afghan "war veteran." In addition, someone might let the Mayor know that JFK was a bona fide 'war hero' which I know to be true because my mother's cousin served on PT109.

The Mayor may be surprised to discover that **Rep. Tulsi Gabbard** has been a Major in the Army Reserve for fifteen years, served two tours in Iraq with a medical unit and not only has a higher rank but also served more time out of country.

Buttigieg made a '[coming out](#)' statement as a homosexual in 2015 at the age of 33 soon after his return from Afghanistan. In a recent [Slate](#) article, he was referred to as a 'finely tuned gaydar' with limited identification as a gay man and not particularly integrated into the gay community. While his status is mentioned in almost all interviews, he does not wrap himself in gayness as a seminal issue but rather as a matter-of-fact life experience more

akin to an upper class, establishment ethic. His recent comment that “*people like me get strung up in Iran*” establishes the underlying message justifying gay support for a war against Iran.

It is audacious of Buttigieg to not wait four years on his way to the top until you cogitate on one possible scenario and this scenario may apply not just to Buttigieg: it is reasonable to expect that most of the twenty or so other candidates would be more than content to take the second spot as the Democratic Vice Presidential candidate – and it is speculated that either Biden or Bernie will be at the top of the ticket as the Democratic candidate for President, The reality is that both are well into their 70’s which may or may not be a factor regarding their longevity in the Oval Office – which makes the Vice Presidential selection of more critical importance than ever.

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