

The U.S. Elections: Bi-Partisan Vote Buying. Corporate PR Campaigns. Déjà Vu All Over Again

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Eventually the tired game will exhaust itself. Beneath the billions of dollars U.S. elections are lifeless events. The predictable flopping from Democrat to Republican and back again, with voters given no real choice but to punish the party in power — by electing the party that was punished previously. This endless, irrational dynamic is the foundation of the U.S. electoral system.

The motor force pushing this logic is money, billions worth per cycle. The richest 1% threw [nearly \\$4 billion](#) to influence voters and to prepay for political favors from the winning candidates.

U.S. Elections have become corporate PR campaigns, with corporations doling money out equally to both parties. This bi-partisan vote buying guarantees that, aside from a couple of fervently debated social issues, a consistent, core economic agenda is firmly in place that favors the 1%.

This is why voters always punish the party in power. The ruling party earns the hatred of working-class voters by proving their love for the corporations and billionaires. The economy — and specifically jobs — has always been a priority for voters, but the economy is used by politicians to enrich the already-rich, who under Obama have received [95 percent of wealth](#) created since he began as president. Such brazen inequality doesn't happen by accident, but by policy, and no politicians are complaining about it.

During the “heated” debates of the midterm election, there was virtually no discussion of the economy. The two parties have nothing to debate about on this issue; they're in total agreement. The same is true about foreign policy and the \$700 billion dollars annually spent on the military.

Neither party complains that U.S. taxpayers have spent, according to a reputable study, [\\$4-6 trillion dollars](#) on the ongoing wars of Afghanistan and Iraq. Bi-partisan consensus prevented the topic from reaching the campaign trail, while guaranteeing that the insane and completely futile war policy continues.

Most Americans understand that U.S. politics equals legalized corruption. And consequently voter turnout sank to a new historic low of 38 percent. But even this number is highly misleading. One need only imagine if national congressional elections were voted on separately, instead of sharing the ballot with state elections and local ballot initiatives that voters actually care about. If this happened voter turnout would plummet to the teens, or

lower, and could not be mislabeled “democracy.” The popularity of the U.S. Congress hovers around 10 percent, which means that 90 percent of the population consistently views this body as an alien entity, serving the interests of the parasitic super-rich.

The money that has stolen U.S. elections still provokes quite the fight between the Democrats and Republicans, who have their individual self-interests to protect. This is because the election winners get to reward their party campaigners with government positions and their donors with for-profit legislation. And after “following through” with passing legislation, the politician is rewarded yet again.

For example, when the politician inevitably becomes hated by everyone except the rich, the big money injects millions into the politician’s re-election campaign. And if the politician ends up losing he is rewarded for being loyal and is hired and paid millions as a “consultant” for the corporation, in effect a glamorized lobbyist.

What can we expect from the new Republican-controlled Congress? Many people will likely be surprised at the high level of cooperation between Obama and the Republicans, who have much in common. Most likely, a quick bi-partisan consensus will be reached on continuing and expanding the wars in the Middle East, with the ultimate and insane goal of toppling the Syrian and Iranian governments.

A new consensus will be reached regarding the U.S. economy, as both parties will “work together” to lower the U.S. corporate tax rate and give other “incentives” to the corporations and rich investors to actually invest their money in something productive other than their Wall Street gambling.

Obama and the Republicans will continue to work on their bi-partisan public school agenda, which aims to privatize the public schools through charters schools, an idea first proposed by the Reagan administration.

And while Republicans moan about Obamacare, they agree with its central feature, that “the market” should determine who gets health care and of what quality, based on what you can afford. The Republicans will loudly crow about this or that aspect of Obamacare they want eliminated, but the central logic is bi-partisan.

Ironically, as Obama continues to act in favor of the very wealthy, the Republican-controlled congress will give the president a chance to regain his lost popularity among Democrats. The Republicans are likely to use their control of the House and Senate to put forward legislation to appease their Christian fundamentalist base, targeting either abortions, immigrants, homosexuals, etc.

Obama will then get a chance to act as a “progressive” by using his veto power. After doing nothing for working people during his six years as president, Obama can become a “hero” again over a couple of social issues, just in time to re-energize Democratic voters for the 2016 election, which will falsely be labeled “the most important election of our lifetime.”

The veins of the U.S. body politic are too clogged with cash to be cleansed. Many progressive activists are demanding the repeal of the Supreme Court decision Citizens United, which opened the floodgate to corporate cash into elections. But in reality this floodgate already existed, Citizens United merely legalized what was happening on a hundred different levels. Massive accumulation of money will find its way into politics, one

way or another.

Labor unions have an unfortunate role in propping up this two party dynamic of corporate cancer, since unions give undeserved legitimacy to this process by funding Democrats and telling their millions of union members to campaign and vote for a party that has participated along with the Republicans in attacking unionized and non-unionized working people for the last 30 years.

Third parties don't spring out of the air. They are built by organizations with pre-existing resources and large memberships, like labor unions and other large community organizations. The various failed attempts at creating third parties in the U.S. can be blamed on the lack of any large national working class organization investing in them.

A workers' party financed and co-organized by the unions has that ability to smash the two-party system. Such a party can't compete with the Wall Street cash, but it can use its resources and membership to rally the broader country around a progressive platform of green job creation to fight climate change, raising the minimum wage to \$15 an hour, and taxing the rich and big corporations to pay for better schools and other vital social programs. Such demands would reverberate across the country in a political landscape where working people's aspirations are complete ignored.

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