

The U.S. Presidential Election: A “Criminal” Versus a “Con Artist”

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The 2020 U.S. presidential election campaign has evolved into a bitter contest between a politician and a plutocrat, both of whom advance policies that favor the rich. One is a criminal; the other is a con artist. Joseph Biden is the criminal. Donald Trump is the con artist.

The American people will choose their president on November 3. What they cannot do is elect a candidate that will pursue their interests. The two-party system restricts campaigns to a competition between corporate Democrats and corporate Republicans, none of whom have the peoples’ interests in mind. The upcoming election will allow voters to select which party will rule the country on behalf of an owning class that has become obscenely wealthy at the expense of working people, most of whom face a desperate struggle for survival.

To deceive voters, candidates use populist rhetoric to conceal [plutocratic rule](#) behind a facade of democratic governance. U.S. elections ensure the continuity of plutocratic rule, not its interruption. That’s the essence of American politics . No election is democratic that costs [\\$11 billion](#) to finance. In a dollar democracy, the White House is transformed into the most expensive brothel in America, followed closely by the Capitol Building, where the prostitutes are more numerous, if not more profligate.

Stripped of ideological subterfuge, American citizens vote to select their slave-masters. By so doing, they legitimate a government of, by, and for Wall Street banks, multinational corporations, the military industrial complex and the national security autocracy. Popular representation is a fiction in a government awash in corporate money and ossified by bureaucratic power.

The election will also sanctify imperialism, as the entire political establishment is committed to protecting U.S. empire. These truths can never be told to the electorate. They must be hidden within a matrix of ideological deception.

The Democrats don the mask of identity politics to conceal their allegiance to the American plutocracy. They pose as defenders of economic and social rights for women, sexual minorities, immigrants, racial minorities, and workers. The politics of the ‘New Democrats’ reeks of hypocrisy as their deeds contradict their words.

For example, under Barack Obama, Democrats claimed to advance the universal rights of women while [prosecuting wars](#) in seven Muslim countries that destroyed the lives of Afghani, Pakistani, Iraqi, Libyan, Syrian, Somali and Yemeni women, not to mention American women who lost sons and daughters fighting those wars. They advocated for

LGBTQ rights while supporting countries like Saudi Arabia, Brunei, Qatar and Oman that persecute and execute gay people. They supported DACA while expelling record numbers of [undocumented immigrants](#). They endorsed voting rights for minorities while imposing mass incarceration on the Black and Latino underclass [disenfranchising millions](#) of convicted felons. They favored a centrist version of the [neoliberal agenda](#) by promoting international trade agreements, capital flight and corporate bailouts, to the detriment of American workers. Let anyone forget, Joseph Biden was Barack Obama's vice-president for eight years and bears full responsibility for the criminality of the Obama administration.

The Republicans hide behind the flag and the bible to advance their vision of free market fundamentalism on behalf of the owning class. They use the [politics of fear](#) inspiring loyalty from a segment of the population threatened by globalism, multiculturalism, secularism and economic insecurity. They appeal to the victims of free trade, capital flight and the outsourcing and offshoring of jobs they say, with some justification, resulted from the policies of Democrats, despite their complicity in promoting the mobility of capital.

The Republicans pander to social prejudice in a society they helped fracture by stoking the fires of racist, xenophobic, sexist and homophobic prejudice to win support for an extreme version of the [Washington neoliberal consensus](#) they present as economic liberty. They favor a completely privatized economy that will do away with corporate regulations, reduce taxes on the rich and the corporate sector and eliminate social benefits, including [Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid](#). Along with their Democratic counterparts, the Republicans support a domestic police state to augment an interventionist foreign policy based on international gangsterism and war. Donald Trump is the leader of this party of murderers and bandits.

In sum, the Democrats and Republicans are two militaristic [neoliberal parties](#) that manage the global affairs of the American plutocracy. As for the specific policy choices of the standard bearers, history provides a stark record of their venality.

[Joseph Biden](#) is an unapologetic [interventionist](#) in foreign policy who promotes aggression and war to maintain the U.S. empire. He is a self-admitted [Zionist](#). He is pro-AIPAC. He is a war-criminal. Biden was Barack Obama's [front man](#) in the aftermath of the 2014 coup d'état in Ukraine that subjugated that country to the [IMF](#) and provoked a civil war. Along with Obama and Hillary Clinton, he refused to condemn the 2009 right-wing coup in Honduras led by graduates of the School of the Americas in Fort Benning, Georgia. While serving as Obama's vice-president, he supported regime change in [Libya, dirty war in Syria, Saudi war in Yemen](#), and the [pivot to Asia](#). As a U.S. senator, he supported [Bill Clinton's war in Yugoslavia and George W. Bush's war in Iraq](#). In the second presidential debate with Trump, he called the leaders of Russia, China and North Korea "thugs," a perfect projection of his own persona.

Domestically, Biden is a '[law and order](#)' Democrat who masqueraded as a liberal for his entire political career. He is a [crypto-racist](#). He is a globalist who supported Clinton's NAFTA, Obama's Trans-Pacific Partnership, and Reagan's attempt to undercut [New Deal legislation](#). He supports [fracking](#), which is good news for the oil and gas industry. With friends like Biden, peace activists, environmentalists, workers and racial minorities do not need enemies.

Donald Trump is a member of the owning class. As a real estate mogul and celebrity

entertainer, he used to buy politicians who created a tax code that allowed him to pay only [\\$750.00 in federal income taxes](#) in 2016-2017 and no income taxes in 10 of the 15 years prior to his becoming president. Tiring of the hired help and wanting to advertise his brand name, he ran for the nation's highest office in 2016 and to the surprise of many, himself included, won.

Trump was clever enough to exploit popular hatred of Washington's swamp of corruption and fear of immigrants having learned the dark arts from his mentor, the notorious [Roy Cohn](#). He used the fake right-wing populist rhetoric of Steve Bannon to defeat the miserable Hillary Clinton. Once elected, Trump failed to deliver on his promise to bring jobs back to the United States, rebuild the country's infrastructure, build a wall across the entire Southern border and end the country's interminable wars.

Trump did give fellow members of his class an astonishing \$1.5 trillion in tax cuts to be paid for with deep cuts in Social Security and Medicare should he be sent to Washington for a second term. Militarists can rest easy, as no cuts are planned for a [Pentagon budget](#) that mushroomed during Trump's first term, with the support of corrupt Democrats.

Trump has exposed himself as a fraud who traffics in the politics of illusion. He sells a pollyannaish optimism that is divorced from social reality. The American dream has become a nightmare for millions who grimly face the reality of a gutted economy. That does not stop the orange billionaire from intoning that his administration created the [greatest economy](#) in the nation's history prior to the covid lockdown. It may have been a great economy for the investor class, but not for workers.

At heart, Trump is a committed capitalist entrepreneur. His administration's economic policies can be characterized as [neo-liberalism on steroids](#), operating behind a veneer of economic nationalism. Trump does not oppose globalization and free trade. He wants a better deal for American corporations within the globalized economy. On the domestic front, he signed executive orders that further deregulate the [financial](#), [fossil fuel](#), [food](#) and [nursing home industries](#). As a 'law' and 'order' president, Trump repressed [Black Lives Matter](#) protests with the same intensity that Barack Obama repressed [Occupy Wall Street](#), but with less finesse, an Obama forte, making himself an easy target for [racial justice advocates](#).

In foreign policy, Trump's 'America First' strategy has caused him to run afoul of the political and military establishment because his unorthodox and impulsive approach to foreign relations is unpredictable. Policy differences notwithstanding, Trump is an imperialist commander-in-chief who defends U.S. empire as ruthlessly as his predecessors, despite his efforts to befriend Russia and withdraw troops from Afghanistan.

His attempt to normalize relations with Russia was subverted by the national security autocracy and the Democratic party during [Russiagate and Ukrainegate](#) witch-hunts that were designed to block détente and remove him from office. The first scheme succeeded while the second one failed.

Trump's proposal to withdraw troops from Afghanistan was [opposed by Democrats](#) and key members of the Republican establishment who are firmly committed to anti-Russian aggression that aims to assert U.S. global hegemony.

His proposal to [withdraw troops from Syria](#) was fraudulent, as those forces were merely

deployed to Syrian oil fields in a blatant display of Imperial aggression.

Elsewhere in the Middle East, Trump continues the U.S. military occupation of Iraq and support for Saudi Arabia's war in Yemen. In occupied Palestine, he moved the [U.S. embassy to Jerusalem](#), recognized Israel's annexation of the [Golan Heights](#), brokered a peace deal between the settler state and the [United Arab Emirates](#), and gave a green light to Benjamin Netanyahu to begin annexation of the West Bank. Trump pulled out of the [Iran nuclear agreement](#), assassinated one of Iran's top [generals](#), and imposed killer sanctions on that country.

On other fronts, he orders unremitting assaults on socialism in [Venezuela](#) and [Cuba](#), wages trade war with [China](#), and continues [Obama's drone war](#). To hide imperial aggression, he is attempting to have Julian Assange extradited to the United States to face charges under the espionage act, launching a direct assault on the First Amendment's guarantee of [freedom of the press](#).

The American people desperately need to face reality by rejecting the politics of illusion. The Democrats and their supporters think that by removing Trump, they will bring the country together and "Heal America's Soul." The Republicans think by re-electing Trump, the economy will rebound and they will "Make America Great Again." Both are mistaken.

America's problems are deeply rooted in the failure of neoliberal capitalism, a system that begets privation, war and environmental destruction. It is globally unsustainable. Only systemic change will save the planet and its people. Unfortunately, no viable candidate will appear on the November ballot to offer that option.

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