



THE U.S. PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

Stunning Revolt Against the Establishment, But They Still Don't Get It

by *Harley Schlanger*

November 8—Donald Trump was elected President of the United States on Tuesday, completing a stunning reversal of his defeat by Joe Biden in 2020. His victory is especially remarkable, given the obstacles he had to overcome to succeed: the open hostility of the legacy media in the U.S., which included the persistent promotion of the fake Russiagate story against him; two impeachments; a felony conviction and three pending federal and state indictments; two assassination attempts; and more than a billion dollars of campaign funds to Harris, much of it from billionaire donors. His opponents accused him of misogyny, racism, being an authoritarian fascist, even a “new Hitler.” His win in 2016 was dismissed by detractors as an “historical accident,” falsely attributed to “Russian interference.”

Yet, with only a small percentage of votes yet to be counted, Trump received more than 73 million votes, while his opponent, Democratic Party Vice President Kamala Harris, totaled just above 69 million, making him the first Republican since 2004 to win the popular vote. Needing 270 electoral votes to win, Trump has secured 312. In addition, the Republicans won a majority in the U.S. Senate and are poised to hold onto the House of Representatives. More than just a comeback, an analysis of the results points to a crushing defeat for the Democrats and a fundamental realignment in U.S. politics.

The vote highlights a decisive rejection of the trend of “mainstream” politics, reflecting the anger of millions of voters, in all demographic categories, against the narratives spun by the establishment. The arrogance of the political class, expressed by the hapless Biden when he recently referred to Trump supporters as “garbage,” echoed the contempt expressed by Hillary Clinton in 2016 when she called Trump voters a “basket of deplorables.” These two comments encapsulate the detached elitism of the Democratic establishment toward the party’s former working-class base, which had existed during, for example, the Franklin D. Roosevelt (FDR) and John Kennedy administrations. But since then, the party leadership has abandoned that tradition, aligning itself instead with the post-Cold War neo-liberal War Hawks of the pre-Trump Republican Party. The vote on Tuesday was an expression of contempt for the party’s embrace of utopian imperial “geopolitics,” anti-growth “globalization” and “identity politics” as the pillars of their hypocritical “liberal democratic” Rules-Based Order, and was reflected in higher vote totals than usual for a Republican from among Hispanic and African-American voters.

This demographic shift of minority voters to the Republican Party, combined with working-class and middle-class wage-earners voting for Trump, has propelled him into a dominant position in the party, which enabled him to brush aside well-funded challenges from former South Carolina governor Nikki Haley and Florida Governor Ron DeSantis in the Party’s early primaries. The shift of many former traditional Democratic voters to the Republican Party is part of the same realignment which has weakened the Democrats. In early 2016, while the media was having fun ridiculing his campaign as unserious, Trump demolished both the Bush networks in the Party and the traditional fiscal conservatives. His ascendance enabled him to remove two Republican House speakers, Paul Ryan in 2018 and Kevin McCarthy, ousted in October 2023, and diminish the role of Senate fixer Mitch McConnell.

What pundits dismissed as Trump’s trolling his opponents, often done in late night tweets, endeared him to voters who felt ignored and victimized by the establishment. Trump turned their resentment into a weapon. The heavier the fire against him from self-promoting elites, the more he was accepted by the downtrodden as their champion. And while his opponents described his trolling of Hillary and Harris as “misogyny,” his supporters took pride in his toughness.

They Still Don't Get It

The shocked post-mortems offered so far by the authors of this disaster show a stubborn refusal to face reality. Living comfortably inside their fantasy-ridden bubble, Democratic strategists ignored polls which showed that 70% of voters said the country is “moving in the wrong direction.” Instead, they insisted that voters facing a declining standard of living and uncertainty over providing housing, food, and medical care for their families, succumbed to what an editorial in the Washington Post (WaPo) on Nov. 7 described as “grievance politics,” allowing the Trump campaign to link economic concerns “to a grab-bag of other right wing hobby horses.”

Presumably this “grab-bag” included the Trump campaign

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putting a spotlight on the failure of the Biden-Harris administration to address the immigration crisis and inflated energy costs. Further, the diversion of hundreds of billions of dollars and resources to faraway wars in Ukraine and Southwest Asia, at a time when funds were depleted for emergency relief to victims of Hurricane Helene, evoked anger at the tone-deafness of the Biden-Harris regime. While the Washington Post acknowledged that the “condescension of elites” was a major factor in the “protest vote” for Trump, an op-ed in the New York Times noted correctly that the Democrats were offering “a litany of explanations ...[which] fit neatly into their preconceived notions.”

A prime example of this was the tortured self-criticism of never-Trumper E.J. Dionne, Jr., of WaPo, who asked on behalf of many discredited pundits, “Why did I get it so wrong?” His answer reveals that he still suffers from the disease of “Trump Derangement Syndrome,” as he lamented the “misogyny of the Trump-Vance ticket,” while nostalgically referring to the “honorable and remarkably successful ‘resistance’ to Trump’s first term,” that is, the slanderous lies about Trump being a “puppet” of Russia’s Putin.

Such self-delusion was effectively ridiculed in a column by journalist Matt Taibbi, with a headline capturing the absurdity of such phony self-criticism: “Giant Electoral Asteroid Strikes America’s Intellectual Class, Which Fails to Notice.”

Democrats Self-Destruction

Such self-delusion was typical of the Democrats in recent years, as the party has functioned as though it could ignore the concerns of its constituents. The roots of Russiagate can be found in the manipulation of the nomination process in 2016, when the Democratic National Committee violated party rules to prevent Bernie Sanders from defeating Hillary Clinton, then concocted the story of Russian collusion to defeat Trump, aided by the Obama national security team colluding with British intelligence. It continued this in 2020, when Biden’s opponents—including Kamala Harris—were pressured to step aside to give the nomination to Biden. The exclusion of Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. from the Democratic primaries in 2024, despite his familial connection—as both his uncle, President John Kennedy and father Robert, Sr., are revered Democrats in the Roosevelt tradition—followed by concerted efforts to keep his independent candidacy from qualifying to appear on election-day ballots, exposed the undemocratic nature of a party which accused Trump of being a “threat to democracy.” RFK Jr. subsequently endorsed Trump, as did former Democratic presidential candidate and Congresswoman Tulsi Gabbard, a fact which exemplifies the Democratic Party’s abandonment of its principles.

Such actions were in the tradition of suppression of debate within the party, which characterized decades of Democratic Party attacks, in league with the FBI, on the Democratic Party campaigns for President by Lyndon LaRouche.

Following Biden’s disastrous performance in the June 27 debate with Trump, in which his cognitive impairment became a national scandal, he was forced to step aside in an undemo-

cratic “soft coup,” handing the nomination to Harris without her receiving one vote. Ironically, she received fewer votes than Biden in 2020, despite incessant media hype about the benefits of her relative youth and her adoption of the “politics of joy.” Untested in primaries and unwilling to take hardball interviews, she appeared unprepared for the rigors of a campaign, much less running the country. When asked in a friendly interview on “The View” what she would do differently than Biden if elected, Harris responded haltingly, “There is not a thing that comes to mind....”

This answer indicated that Harris would do nothing to stop the administration’s support for the war against Russia in Ukraine, or its complicity in Israel’s genocide against the Palestinians, both of which threaten to become World War III. While Harris told Ukraine’s President Zelensky that he could count on her continued support for what is generally acknowledged as a lost cause, Trump said he would make a priority of ending the war at once, through negotiations. Trump’s intent to end that war is reflected in a shift of Republican war hawks, with even neocon Sen. Rubio saying the war is a failure and should be ended. The Ukraine war was largely ignored in pre-election polls, though opposition has increased with the recognition of the danger that it could lead to a war between NATO and Russia, and possibly nuclear war.

Likewise, Harris’s repeated defense of the hypocrisy of the Collective Biden approach to Israel’s expanding war was unpopular, especially among younger voters. While asserting, “I will not be silent on Gaza,” she repeated the formulation of Secretary of State Antony Blinken that we want a “more humanitarian” war, while pouring lethal weapons into Israel and vetoing UN Security Council resolutions which called for an immediate ceasefire. This exposed her as a captive of the same Military-Industrial Complex which has launched multiple endless wars since the 9/11 attacks on the U.S. This was reinforced by her highlighting the support for her campaign from war criminals, such as Dick Cheney and his anti-Trump daughter, Liz.

While it remains unclear what Trump will do about the war in southwest Asia—he has called on Israel to end it quickly by crushing Hamas and Hezbollah—the vote confirms that the American people are prepared to leave behind the post-neo-liberal world, in which the U.S. and NATO are enforcers of a Unipolar Order on behalf of billionaires and their corporate cartels.

In commenting on this development, the Schiller Institute’s Helga Zepp-LaRouche stated:

“I think it’s definitely a moment of a break in a very tense strategic situation. Trump has promised to stop wars. Obviously, we have to see if the words are followed by deeds; but also [JD] Vance, his Vice President, said something similar. So, I would take the attitude that he’s a newly-elected President, and let’s see if he follows through with his promises.”

Zepp-LaRouche called on the people of the collective West to take the vote of Nov. 5 as a first step, and to now act as responsible citizen-activists in support of a new strategic and development architecture.