

US Elections 2020 and the Corporate Media

Ilhan Omar' Re-nomination

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Region: [USA](#)

Theme: [History](#)

In-depth Report: [U.S. Elections](#)

Irony is dead, or at least one might think so by observing several articles about Minnesota Representative Ilhan Omar's recent re-nomination. Article after article references her statement that U.S. officials' support for Israel is "all about the Benjamins", and then references her erstwhile opponent, one Antone Melton-Meaux as 'bankrolled by pro-Israel donors'. Omar complained, more than once, about Israel's influence on U.S. elections, a charge that, even to the most politically naïve, must be seen as legitimate.

But such dichotomies are overlooked by a media that certainly would like to see progressive members of Congress defeated. Prior to Tuesday's election, headlines such as 'Ilhan Omar's Career on the Line in Tough Primary (Politico); 'Ilhan Omar Fights for Political Survival (USA Today), and "Is Ilhan Omar One and Done? Why She Could Lose the August Primary' (The Hill) all predicted a close election, with the definite possibility of Omar's defeat. Today, with 100% of the votes counted, she won with 57.44%; her next closest competitor, Melton-Meaux, received 39.18%: hardly a nail-biter.

Michigan's Rashida Tlaib faced similar daunting headlines, before besting her opponent by almost 50%; she garnered 71,703 votes compared to her opponent's 36,493 votes. One must wonder why the self-proclaimed pundits didn't see such an overwhelming victory coming.

And so it goes. One can understand the 'fight for her life' or 'tough primary race' when the outcome is within a few percentage points; that amount, in pre-election polls, usually indicates a very close race since most polls are only accurate within a small number of percentage points. It is rare, but not unheard of, that an election seen to be very close turns out not to be, or the anticipated victor winds up being defeated. But with progressive incumbents, it seems that their defeat in a primary election is all but guaranteed by a corporate-owned media that will do the government's bidding. Does predicting such an outcome make it so? Apparently not.

One might take exception to the idea that the media follows lockstep what the government wants. After all, don't many outlets criticize Donald Trump relentlessly? Don't they document his constant lies, his blatant racism and his very obvious misogyny?

Certainly, they do. But how much opposition do they demonstrate against the bloated military budget?

Why did they not, like their European counterparts, decimate his 'Deal of the Century', which provides Israel everything it could possibly dream of, and Palestinians their worst

nightmare? Why have they not continually decried the U.S. violation of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), the withdrawal of the U.S. from the Paris Climate Accord or from the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty with Russia? Why has the media not continually pointed out the hypocrisy of a nation that claims to support the right of self-determination around the world, as it maintains brutal sanctions against Venezuela and Iran for claiming that right? Trump says that Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro is not a legitimate president; why does the media not emphasize that Trump himself became president when nearly 3,000,000 more citizens voted for his opponent than for him?

Let's add to this dysfunctional media mix the Republican Party's attempts at voter suppression. Yes, everyone is all agog over Trump's attempts to defund the USPS, so that mailed-in ballots will not be counted. How will this help him and his fellow Republicans? We will break it down for the reader:

1. More Democrats than Republicans accept that coronavirus is real and contagious.
2. Therefore, more Democrats than Republicans will hesitate to wait in line at a crowded polling place, knowing that many people on that same line will not social-distance, or wear a mask.
3. As a result, more Democrats than Republicans will want to vote by mail. If they are not able to do so, many will not risk their health, and will simply remain at home.
4. Voila! Voter suppression.

While this particular method of suppressing the Democratic vote is new, the concept isn't. Requiring photo identification, which lower-income and poor people (who generally vote Democratic) often don't have and requiring university students (who also generally vote Democratic; does anyone see a pattern here?) to vote in their home district rather than at school are just two ways Republicans use to suppress the Constitutionally-promised right to vote.

Let us summarize:

- The corporate media does its darnedest to portray non-progressive candidates as potential winners, stating, against the evidence, that the progressive opponent is in deep trouble for re-election.
- The Republican Party apparatus does its darnedest to suppress Democratic votes, despite the blatant violation of the Constitution, which they all proclaim to hold sacred, second only (if that) to the Bible, another document they are willing to spit on for their own purposes.
- Donald Trump, arguably the most corrupt and out-of-control president the nation has ever seen (yes, this even includes Richard Nixon), seems to have cast a spell on the Republican Party, causing them to overlook his ethics violations (this writer was astounded to see Goya products lined up on the desk in the Oval Office), abuse of executive orders, and blatant racism and misogyny. Nixon himself was unable to achieve such a feat, resigning the presidency with the sure knowledge that he'd be removed in a senate trial, with most, if not all, of the Republican senators likely to vote against him.

Likely Democratic nominee Joe Biden only looks good in comparison to Trump. There is

nothing even slightly progressive about him; he will maintain the pro-Israel, pro-police, pro-war, pro-wealthy philosophies of his many predecessors, to hell with what the people want.

This writer has long since surrendered, and repented of, his 'vote for the lesser of two evils' mantra. The lesser evil is still evil. He will cast his vote for the La Riva – Peltier ticket, which has no chance of victory. But the Party for Socialism and Liberation offers candidates and a no-nonsense platform he can believe in, so his political donations, time and vote will go with them. 'Lesser of two evil' voting only validates a broken and corrupt system. It is long past time for it to end.

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