

# Presidential Elections: Powerful “Special Interest Groups” Won Again

By [Dr. Paul Craig Roberts](#)

Global Research, November 07, 2012

Region: [USA](#)

Theme: [US NATO War Agenda](#)

*The election that was supposed to be too close to call turned out not to be so close after all. In my opinion, Obama won for two reasons:*

*(1) Obama is non-threatening and inclusive, whereas Romney exuded a “us vs. them” impression that many found threatening, and*

*(2) the election was not close enough for the electronic voting machines to steal.*

As readers know, I don’t think that either candidate is a good choice or that either offers a choice. Washington is controlled by powerful interest groups, not by elections. What the two parties fight over is not alternative political visions and different legislative agendas, but which party gets to be the whore for Wall Street, the military-security complex, Israel Lobby, agribusiness, and energy, mining, and timber interests.

Being the whore is important, because whores are rewarded for the services that they render. To win the White House or a presidential appointment is a career-making event as it makes a person sought after by rich and powerful interest groups. In Congress the majority party can provide more services and is thus more valuable than the minority party. One of our recent presidents who was not rich ended up with \$36 million shortly after leaving office, as did former UK prime minister Tony Blair, who served Washington far better than he served his own country.

Wars are profitable for the military/security complex. Israel rewards its servants and punishes its enemies. Staffing environmental regulatory agencies with energy, mining, and timber executives is regarded by those interests as very friendly behavior.

Many Americans understand this and do not bother to vote as they know that whichever candidate or party wins, the interest groups prevail. Ronald Reagan was the last president who stood up to interest groups, or, rather, to some of them. Wall Street did not want his tax rate reductions, as Wall Street thought the result would be higher inflation and interest rates and the ruination of their stock and bond portfolios. The military/security complex did not want Reagan negotiating with Gorbachev to end the cold war.

What is curious is that voters don’t understand how politics really works. They get carried away with the political rhetoric and do not see the hypocrisy that is staring them in the face. Proud patriotic macho American men voted for Romney who went to Israel and, swearing allegiance to his liege lord, groveled at the feet of Netanyahu. Obama plays on the heart strings of his supporters by relating a story of a child with leukemia now protected by Obamacare, while he continues to murder thousands of children and their parents with

drones and other military actions in seven countries. Obama was able to elicit cheers from supporters as he described the onward and upward path of America toward greater moral accomplishments, while his actual record is that of a tyrant who codified into law the destruction of the US Constitution and the civil liberties of the American people.

The election was about nothing except who gets to serve the interest groups. The wars were not an issue in the election. Washington's provoking of Iran, Russia, and China by surrounding them with military bases was not an issue. The unconstitutional powers asserted by the executive branch to detain citizens indefinitely without due process and to assassinate them on suspicion alone were not an issue in the election. The sacrifice of the natural environment to timber, mining, and energy interests was not an issue, except to promise more sacrifice of the environment to short-term profits. Out of one side of the mouth came the nonsense promise of restoring the middle class while from the other side of the mouth issued defenses of the offshoring of their jobs and careers as free trade.

The inability to acknowledge and to debate real issues is a threat not only to the United States but also to the entire world. Washington's reckless pursuit of hegemony driven by an insane neoconservative ideology is leading to military confrontation with Russia and China. Eleven years of gratuitous wars with more on the way and an economic policy that protects financial institutions from their mistakes have burdened the US with massive budget deficits that are being monetized. The US dollar's loss of the reserve currency role and hyperinflation are plausible consequences of disastrous economic policy.

How is it possible that "the world's only superpower" can hold a presidential election without any discussion of these very real and serious problems being part of it? How can anyone be excited or made hopeful about such an outcome?

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