

US Presidential Election: Deeply Flawed Candidates. Who Will Win and Who Deserves to Win?

A British Viewpoint

By [David Morgan](#)

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It has been widely commented that the two main contenders in the US presidential race are both deeply flawed candidates, even that they are both unfit to hold high office. Whoever next takes up residence in the White House will become the most powerful person in the world at the conclusion of this coming week's voting and the fate of all the peoples of the world will be in his or her hands. It's a frightening prospect in itself that one individual can exercise so much power.

Hillary Clinton has a long record in office that is far from laudable. Everyone knows how she operates.

She uses politics to accumulate personal wealth; she is that modern type of politician who regards politics as a business for personal gain. "Public service" is but a cover. The UK has endured such politicians operating in Westminster too and the recent rise of Jeremy Corbyn as Labour Party leader was in part a demonstration that people had had quite enough of dishonest, self-serving politics.

There are legal cases involving Clinton from the Whitewater controversy – which concerned property and real estate – at the start of her political path to power right up until today with the questions surrounding the email releases; let's be quite clear, the worry is not just about missing emails or abuse by Clinton of private email or her mobile phone; it concerns what the contents of these communications reveal about Clinton's politics, her character, her true opinions and how they differ from her public statements. To sum it up in one sentence, the emails reveal her to be a scheming warmonger and duplicitous.

A Clinton presidency will mean more war. This much Trump is quite correct. Clinton wants a confrontation with Russia in Syria and in Europe over Ukraine and NATO's relentless expansion eastwards.



Clinton has assisted ISIS to grow and enabled al Qaeda to flourish in order to wage war on Iran and its allies in the region, such as Syria – which also happened to be a Russian ally.

She views jihadi terrorism as a tool to be manipulated to further US foreign policy in the Middle East, as Seymour Hersh and WikiLeaks have revealed. The Syria conflict will only worsen if Clinton is victorious.

Clinton will supply more sophisticated arms to the so-called rebels which are largely al Qaeda inspired although operating under a different name (al Nusra front or whatever their latest name change might be).

A “no-fly zone” which Clinton wants to impose over Syrian airspace will lead to a direct confrontation with Russia. US jets will be required to shoot down Russian planes and Russian helicopters. That could trigger no less than World War Three.

By contrast, Trump actually has a less aggressive foreign policy position. He wants to talk to Putin and has even called for talks with Assad to find a solution to the crisis over Syria. He wants America and Russia to join forces to combat the threat from Islamist terrorism. A new detente is therefore more likely if Trump were to triumph in the presidential race. A new détente would surely be a huge gain for the entire world. The new Cold War is totally ludicrous and to see the West behaving as if Russia is still the USSR is simply mind-boggling.

✗ However, it is necessary to turn to Trump’s controversial domestic policy agenda; by talking about “building a wall” to keep Mexicans out of America, where they work in the “black economy”, Trump has exacerbated social tensions within the US, fuelling animosity between Americans and migrants, especially Hispanics, many of whom are American citizens too.

This aspect of the Trump phenomenon is obviously to be deplored. But this is virtually the only policy of the Trump campaign that has attracted media attention. The corporate media in the main has dwelt on it like an obsession. In reality, the anxieties about mass illegal migration are an expression of real public fears about the consequences of globalisation and the impact of free trade deals on their daily lives; this means job losses, working more for less and lower living standards. These concerns are not being addressed by mainstream politicians or by the media: hence the rise of the radical right in Europe and of Trump in the US. Trump has championed the “little man” and vowed to protect American jobs.

This has proved to be a popular policy. It is inevitably tainted with racism when the free movement of people has been deliberately engineered to create flexible labour markets and

weaken organised labour by forcing it to compete with cheap imported labour and unregulated labour in the illegal economy. The politics of austerity insists that people must accept the inevitable dismantling of regulation and fiercer competition within the jobs market. The same harsh message from mainstream politicians has gone out to workers in the US and Europe:

“Unless you work that much harder your jobs will go to China, India or wherever”.

Trump has positioned himself as the candidate who will defend jobs and protect US industry. He has achieved success by addressing these concerns by proposing what many see as demagogic solutions. He has pledged to cancel free trade deals, impose higher taxes on foreign corporations which relocate jobs overseas and says he will bring jobs back home. This had a popular appeal.

During the race for the Democratic nomination, Bernie Sanders also addressed similar public concerns from a socialist perspective and achieved enormous resonance among the public which surprised many commentators that an avowed left-wing message could attract so much supporters in capitalist America. Sanders is now campaigning for Hillary Clinton.

During her campaign, Clinton has not given much priority to the social agenda espoused by Sanders, however, preferring instead to dwell on undermining Trump’s personal character and stoking up anti-Russian sentiment in a manifestation of extreme red-baiting rhetoric the likes of which US politics has not seen since the McCarthy mania of the 1950s. It will be interesting to see if the groundswell of popular support for Sanders will automatically transfer to voting for Clinton despite her obvious flaws and her close connections to corporate America and Wall Street.

She is clearly the candidate of the privileged elite and in this respect it is illuminating to see her take the stage with Hollywood luminaries, pop stars and TV personalities.

The big question will people continue to see Clinton as part of the problem or is she now part of the solution?

How many of the former Sanders supporters will hold their noses and vote for Donald J Trump?

How many of the first time voters and those long alienated from the system will come out and vote for Trump?

Which one of the two is perceived to be the candidate of change? These are some of the crucial deciding factors as Americans go to the polls and we will all soon see the outcome.

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