The 2016 US Presidential Election: Produced for Your Viewing Satisfaction

Every four years, in an established display of political engagement, Americans line up on the right or the left and the game begins. Feelings that lay dormant or simmering for four years emerge with great forcefulness, as the campaign for US President occupies television broadcasts, news reports and barroom debates.

While the pundits earnestly discuss the merits of the candidates, there lurks off screen a question that is growing in magnitude. “Does it really matter?” has been joined by an equally dark concern: “Is this only theatre?”

Increasingly, that latter question demands our attention. The trajectory of American politics has resulted in a narrowing of the differences between right and left, between Republicans and Democrats. Some have gone so far as to say that there is really only one political party in the US at this juncture, and that would be the "Money Party." Others have likened the Presidential contest to a Punch and Judy show, with the hidden hand of the puppeteer creating what appears to be conflict and dialectic where none really exists.

It is not within the scope of this article to dissect the similarities between the red and blue candidates. Briefly, an overview on their war policies as well as their domestic policies reveals little separating them from each other.

The reality that the candidates may not be substantially different from each other constitutes one level of concern. Of even greater magnitude is that the election results may be predetermined. The entire campaign and electoral process may be a sham, a display to convince us that the race—and therefore the future-- is not fixed. In other words, the elections may be a charade to sucker us into believing that we have choice when we do not.

If we are living in a mock-up nation, wherein the program has been predetermined and we are objects, rather than subjects of our own future, one could conceivably see where the election could be contrived to convince us that we live in a representative democracy when we do not. If in fact we do not, the spin doctors may go to some lengths to engineer our delusion. The proof of this could be found in what is commonly termed “election fraud.”

Allegations of election fraud surfaced in 2000, in the Presidential race between George W. Bush and Vice President Al Gore. Gore took his demand for a recount in Florida, which appeared to be the focal point of election fraud, up to the US Supreme Court. In a patently bizarre decision, SCOTUS ruled that a complete recount in Florida would violate the Fourteenth Amendment’s equal protection clause because different counties have different ways of counting votes.

By 2004, many people had had their fill of Bush. And the allegations of election fraud in the 2004 Presidential contest between Bush and John Kerry went through the roof. Concerns about election fraud centered on several states—Ohio, Florida and New Mexico—featuring as pivotal battleground states. And, as we shall see, these three states, which determined the vote count to re-elect George Bush in 2004, were the critical states determining the re-election of President Obama in 2012. At both junctures—in 2004 for incumbent George W. Bush and in 2012 for incumbent Barack Obama—public support for the incumbent had turned sour for the men seeking a second term in the White House. And in each circumstance, the same states popped up Republican to support a Bush victory and then turned around and weighed in as Democrat to ensure Obama’s re-election.

Curious, isn’t it?

Ohio was “delivered” to Bush through a number of dedicated methods, including African American voter suppression; the utilization of voting machines pre-programmed to register Democrat votes as Republican ones; the
removal of voting machines in African American neighborhoods (African Americans are known to vote Democrat), resulting in lines so long that many people simply were not able to vote at all; as well as the destruction of new voter registration forms.

The fact that the problematic electronic voting machine companies were owned by Republicans was extensively reported in the news, as was the statement by Diebold’s CEO, Walden O’Dell, a major fundraiser for Bush, who stated that he was "committed to helping Ohio deliver its electoral votes to the President next year."

Exit polls, considered to be a reliable form of vote prediction, consistently showed that Kerry was winning in Ohio. "Exit polls are almost never wrong," wrote Republican pollster Dick Morris in The Hill. "So reliable are the surveys that actually tap voters as they leave the polling places that they are used as guides to the relative honesty of elections in Third World countries. . . ."

In defiance of the exit polls, the final vote tally delivered Ohio—and the country—to Bush. Writes Michael Parenti, “Bush Jr. also did remarkably well with phantom populations. The number of his votes in Perry and Cuyahoga counties in Ohio exceeded the number of registered voters, creating turnout rates as high as 124 percent. In Miami County nearly 19,000 additional votes eerily appeared in Bush’s column after all precincts had reported. In a small conservative suburban precinct of Columbus, where only 638 people were registered, the touchscreen machines tallied 4,258 votes for Bush.”

FLORIDA

The 2000 Presidential election was brutally close. As it eventuated, Florida determined that election. Factors resulting in Bush’s victory over Gore included Florida Governor Jeb Bush (George’s kid brother) ordering state troopers to engage in such confrontational tactics as car searches at polling places, which resulted in keeping individuals from voting. Other tactics included some precincts demanding two forms of identification (Florida’s law only requires one form of ID); voters turned away due to falsely being termed “convicted felons”; early closure of polls in Democrat precincts; and the infamous “hanging chad” ballots.

Florida election difficulties again emerged as a tool in George Bush’s box of tricks in 2004, when Bush faced disgruntled voters in the national election. In 2012, when Obama faced a disillusioned voting population, Florida, where election fraud is now considered to be state-of-the-art, went for Obama.

NEW MEXICO

New Mexico is another state wherein problematic voting machines may have fixed election outcomes. Writing about the 2004 election, Michael Parenti stated: “In New Mexico in 2004 Kerry lost all precincts equipped with touchscreen machines, irrespective of income levels, ethnicity, and past voting patterns. The only thing that consistently correlated with his defeat in those precincts was the presence of the touchscreen machine itself.”

In 2012, New Mexico helped ensure Obama's national victory.

What we see in these three states is that the depth of connivance in falsifying the vote tallies served to re-elect an incumbent President both in 04 and then in 2012. What this appears to point to is that there are certain states which will serve up a President--of either party--upon demand.

The US populace was keenly aware in 2008 that the country needed change. In 2008, Obama appeared to be the candidate offering this. His sweeping victory in 08 could have been viewed as a mandate for a new direction. Rather than steer the country away from the policies of Bush, however, Obama only continued them. He pursued Bush’s “War on Terror,“ advancing the methods to include drone kills and executive ordered assassination of US citizens alleged to be involved with Al Qaeda, in a shocking detour from the Constitutional imperatives for due process.

Obama also advanced the invasion of Middle Eastern countries to include Libya and Syria. His promise to close Guantanamo did not bear fruit and his promise to provide medical care for all Americans resulted in a mandated coverage scheme which excluded a chunk of poor Southern blacks and jacked up the rates for many others.

Such a yearning for “change” appears to be fueling the popularity of DC outsider Donald Trump. If you put them side by side, Trump would appear to be the polar opposite of Obama, in terms of personal style and apparent policies (although the New York Times has suggested that Trump may be the first “post-policy candidate”.)

Trump appeals, as did Obama, to the politically desperate and disillusioned, who think that the country is on a
problematic course and needs a "different kind" of leader who will steer the ship of state in a new direction. In this sense, Trump is playing the "change" card, as did Obama in 08, although he is certainly playing it in an extravagantly different manner.

When Bill Clinton ran for President in 1992, he was considered to be a DC "outsider." The Washington Times has stated that when George W. Bush ran for President in 2000, he ran as a Washington outsider. Obama's 2008 campaign was focused on his outsider status. This sort of spin seems to work well for candidates who wish to occupy the Oval Office. The fact that Trump has positioned himself as an "ultimate outsider" might well be viewed with an understanding of the usefulness of this perception in prior Presidential elections.

The game is on. While are settling into our stadium seats to watch the applicants duke it out, it might be helpful to remember that the entire extravaganza may be just that---a hunky big psyop.

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