

Marginal Gains

November 2020

Biden Wins!



I don't wanna go!

By Guy Sandler

The 2020 election resulted in multiple firsts; the largest number of votes for a winning candidate; the first woman and person of colour to achieve the second highest office in the land; the largest turnout in mail-in voting in history.

However, President Trump declared that he had amassed an army of lawyers to fight the false results that had wrongfully deprived him of his obvious victory. Both John McCain and Mitt Romney accepted the results of their defeats in 2008 and 2012 respectfully, talking about the positives of their opposing candidate and their desire to encourage cooperation and unity. However, Hillary Clinton deviated from this approach in 2016, stating in her concession speech that although she respected the results of the election, she had gained 3 million more votes than Trump and that millions of Americans were 'rightfully' disappointed.

In 2020 the shoe is on the other foot. In a complete rejection of democratic norms Trump declared himself the rightful winner, despite Biden winning 4 million more votes and winning the



Screencap from a spoof video portraying Trump as a toddler throwing a tantrum when told it was time to leave

electoral college. This reaction was predicted by many but is still shocking. However the question remains, is this just the side-effect of having such an anti-establishment and unusual political agent in Donald Trump? Or in reality, is this just a symptom of a

growing breakdown in faith in the legitimacy of American elections on both sides of the isle? Is American democracy, as we know it, becoming a thing of the past? Joe Biden will have his work cut out to convince people that it is not.

US Networks pull plug on Trump's lies

By Greg Cook

On Thursday President Donald Trump addressed the nation as he wrongly claimed victory in the 2020 US presidential election. The speech contained an immense amount of falsehoods which led to some

mainstream networks dropping the coverage. Just 35 seconds into MSNBC's coverage of the speech anchor Brian Williams interrupted the president and flatly contradicted the claims he was making. The controversy arrived over the President's false allegations that there had been illegal votes counted in favour of the Democratic party and therefore that his opponents were attempting to 'steal the election'.

The President claimed that 'If you count legal votes, I easily win, if you count illegal votes, they could try to steal the election'.

The dilemma faced by broadcasting companies across the US therefore was this: Does the 'most powerful person in the world' deserve his speech to be aired, regardless of its blatant falsehoods, or should coverage be terminated in order to preserve democracy by preventing false information spreading?

This entertaining moment of political drama forged a fitting ending to the end of Donald Trump's four-year presidency. After having received 50.7% of the vote, and at the time of writing, 290 electoral college seats, President-elect Biden has overcome the Republican presidency and will now attempt to take on his predecessor's mission to 'Make American Great Again'.



Voter suppression the real fraud

By Lauren Webb

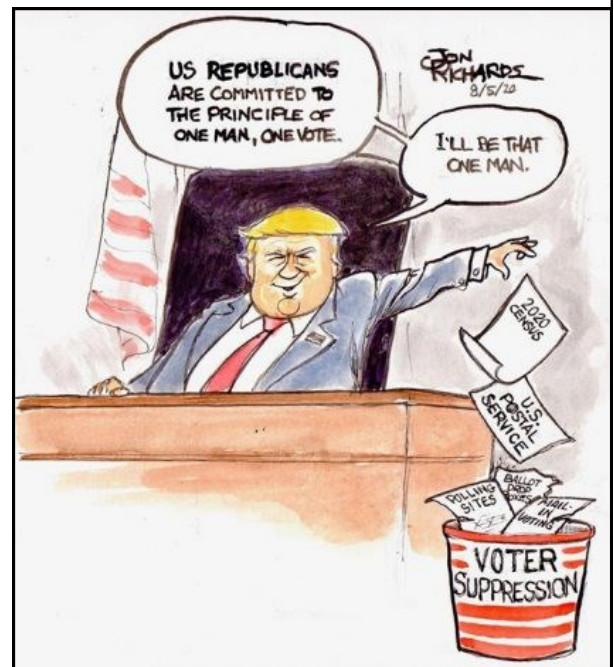
'Bad things happen in Philadelphia. Bad things.' Mr Trump is right: bad things do happen in Philadelphia. But the big problem is not, as his recent twitter tantrums would have you believe, voter fraud. There is absolutely no evidence that this election is the 'hoax' Trump claims it is. Rather, the US needs to concentrate on tackling an epidemic of voter suppression before it does too much to damage the integrity of their democracy.

Voter suppression has been rampant throughout the entirety of this election. In Texas, republican Governor Greg Abbott limited democratic Harris County, a land area larger than the state of Rhode Island and home to 4.7million citizens, to just one single booth for early voting. Eleven states have laws that permanently remove the ability of former prisoners to vote, disproportionately disenfranchising black voters. Law after law, from ID regulations to roll purges, each purportedly in the name of protecting against voter fraud but, in reality, strategically designed to reduce turnout in key groups, has added barriers to the vote. These measures

have dramatic tangible consequences. A restrictive Wisconsin voter ID rule is estimated to have prevented 300,000 people from voting during the 2016 election in a state Trump won by fewer than 25,000 votes.

In Philadelphia, the city which pushed Biden over the 270 mark he needed for the Presidency, the Trump campaign filed lawsuit after lawsuit to prohibit the ease with which citizens could vote by mail. Yet, despite the hurdles erected in their path, the city still turned out in large enough numbers to turn their state blue. Whilst this is a triumph of the ordinary people, it's a sad one. We are supposed to be past the era in which we must struggle for our fundamental right to vote.

The Trump campaign has brazenly admitted to employing the dirty tactic of voter suppression over the course of their campaign. Justin Clark, a senior official on Trump's re-election campaign suggested that,



'traditionally', the Republican Party had 'always' enacted a strategy of voter suppression. It does not bode well for democracy when the President of the self-declared worldwide capital of democracy is advocating to strip citizens of voting rights. America can only hope that their next President continues to show respect for the democratic process and does his best to enable citizens to cast their ballots with ease.

Why did Latinos vote for Trump?

By Mira Higgins

The idea of Latinos voting for Trump is counterintuitive. Donald Trump is arguably the most anti-Latino president Americans have seen in nearly seventy years. In Florida, around 55% of Latinos voted for Trump and shockingly this is an increase from the 35% he received in 2016. Exit polls suggest that this support is what helped Trump secure victory in the important swing states of Florida and Texas.

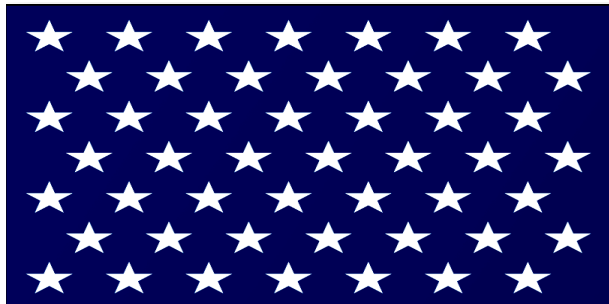
What's hard to understand is why so many Latinos would vote for a man who has, since he entered office in 2017, made battering them part of his White House brand? A large part of his pitch to white voters in 2016 was that a vote for him was in turn a vote for protection – against Mexican invaders whom he characterised as criminals,

rapists, drug traffickers and 'bad hombres'. Therefore, it's hard to see why Latinos would vote for a man who seemingly had so much hate towards them.

However, when looked at in more detail it's clear to see that one of the main reasons why so many Latinos voted for Trump was because Biden simply neglected to appeal to Latino voters and appeared to take their support for granted as he was more concerned with losing support from African-Americans who were vital to his election

victory. Latinos voted for Trump because in this election, they felt as though he was more on their side. Biden will now have to work to convince them he can do more for them than Trump would have done.





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Who is Joe Biden?

Joe Biden is a democrat politician who was a member of the Senate from 1973-2009, and who served two terms as Barack Obama's vice-president, from 2009-2017. He has run for the presidency three times: he was not selected as the candidate in 1988 or 2008, but won the nomination in 2020. He defeated Donald Trump in this month's election (although Trump has refused to accept the result). Pending the outcome of legal challenges he will become the 46th president of the United States on 20th January 2021.

Biden is the oldest man to win the presidency, and will be 78 when he takes office. He is widely seen as a moderate and has promised to work to heal the divisions in American society. However, this will be a difficult task as he will have to work with a Senate which will remain



Joe Biden during his first campaign for the presidency in 1988

under Republican control, and he has acknowledged that 70 million

Americans voted for his opponent. Despite this a Biden presidency will be significantly different to that of his predecessor, and changes he has already promised include:

- Re-joining the Paris Climate Change agreement
- Re-joining the World Health Organisation
- Restoring protection for children of undocumented migrants
- De-carbonising the US economy and creating jobs in green industries
- Appointing the most diverse cabinet in US history, starting with the first female, non-white, vice-president.
- Addressing racial discrimination in US society



Biden served two terms as Barack Obama's vice president